Features of the Transformation of Urban Public Spaces Based on Their Socio-Cultural Potential

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Abstract. Changes in the structure of public spaces of cities are conditioned by spatial-planning, environmental, social factors and often in post-Soviet cities have spontaneous and a little controllable character. At the same time, the set methodology of urban planning cannot provide an effective tool for environment formation, fully complied with new social needs, which makes the development of principles and technologies of the transformation of environment relevant, which is capable of evolution and self-development. The particularity of construction of public spaces of the Soviet city and the features of their social and spatial transformation in the post-Soviet period are considered. Urban public spaces, being in the process of development in space and changing in time, are characterized by the properties of incompleteness and enrichment of their environment with elements of time. On this basis, the typology of public spaces is considered on the example of the territories of the Krasnoarmeysky district of Volgograd as the main semantic structure-forming elements and socially significant dominants of the city, the types of spaces are defined according to the degree of completion of the formation: emerging, habitable, stable, subject to reconstruction and possible directions of their transformation are proposed. The conclusion about the need of preservation of the specific spaces of the city, containing outstanding historical elements, and their transformation based on the principle of historical continuity, built on the combination of historical objects and new components of the environment is made.

1. Introduction
Traditionally open public spaces reflect social processes, flowing in the city. Therefore, an understanding of their development trends is becoming increasingly important [1]. Accumulating over many decades, they represent a complex interconnected system of historical and new city building, communications, elements of the urban environment. The change in the socio-economic situation required a review of the appearance, social status of an open public space and the forms of its interaction with the city residents.

2. Social aspect
The current situation introduces the formation of the architectural space of a new active subject - the consumer. If, before the end of the twentieth century consumer was considered as the subject of perception of architectural forms, passively receiving the suggested architectural solutions, then at the current moment he actively evaluates and participates in the organization of his spatial environment [2]. And the main property of public space becomes sociability – the manifestation of various forms of
social life, multiple unplanned informal optional interactions between heterogeneous individuals and groups in which people can communicate, representing themselves to others [3, 4, 5]. Transformations of urban public spaces can form new social practices, which mean that it can lead to the emergence of new forms of urban life [6]. At the same time, most of the urban public spaces of post-Soviet cities were not ready for this, frequently the measures for their reconstruction are come down only to the improvement, which is understood as a trio: cobblestones – lanterns – fountains, which significantly reduces the variability of communications. Therefore, for the successful inclusion of public space in the social life of the city, it is necessary to consider the concept of its transformation not only at the level of architectural and urban planning practices, but also in the context of the sociology of architecture, where social subjects realize themselves through architectural communication suggestions with the help of "living space", to which they gravitate, adapt and under which they change [7, 8]. The modern city is successfully developing not due to the implementation of the genius urban planning theories and architectural ideas, but due to the diversity and flexibility of the mechanisms of self-regulation, the ability to match the changing social activity of modern man [9]. This way, as the main direction of socio-spatial transformation should become the creation and support of public space, having the potential of constructing sociality – inclusive, easy to implement various communicative practices that can activate interpersonal interaction.

3. Specifics of construction of public spaces of the Soviet city
Analyzing the model of development of the Soviet city, on the basis of the principle of rational planning, it is possible to allocate characteristic features of the organization of its public spaces, united in the following typological groups: system of the public centers (with accurate hierarchy of the city, regional and residential centers), system of highways and system of landscaping. The public center executed the most important political and ideological functions, embodied in urban planning ensembles of the central squares and avenues with significant monumental dimensions, proportions and corresponding ideological and artistic image (the use of a large number of political symbols). The need in carrying the parades and demonstrations led to the layout of this type of space: straight, long avenues provided directional movement of demonstrators, but were alienated and lifeless in terms of interpersonal interaction [10]. The landscaping system included a variety of facilities – from multi-purpose parks of culture and recreation to small squares in front of public buildings designed for a diverse recreation. But their presence is rather a necessary element of the socialist way of life, the care of the state about its citizens, rather than an opportunity for the development of local activity of citizens and independent development of the territory. The system of highways supposed to have transit traffic with difficult social interaction (urban space, designed to get to the place of work, study or home as quickly as possible). In general, there should be highlighted the main periods of development of public spaces of Soviet cities:

- 30s – urban areas are being actively developed, new parks are being built, the emerging environment is an illustration of a new way of life;
- 40-50s – the period of post-war reconstruction, the style of open public spaces is considered as a synthesis of architecture, green spaces and ideological problems;
- 80s the period of "lodgers" – a phenomenon in which social interaction of citizens has shifted from the central squares into residential areas, in empty "no man's place", forming the life that was alternative to the imposed one by the state;
- 90th – zero years- the predominance of commercial considerations and the transition from public to private spaces with limited access, the organization of space is determined by the market value of the land, instead of social significance.

The political and economic changes that took place at the end of the 80s influenced the role of urban public spaces and caused their significant socio-spatial transformations with the following features [11]:

- Ideological – the resource of national identity and collective memory goes by the wayside;
Economic – privatization and commercialization of public space has led to the emergence of new infrastructure elements: shopping and entertainment facilities as an alternative to traditional open public spaces;

Social – significant stratification and changes in the system of valuable orientations of citizens.

The result of this uncontrolled transformation was a socio-spatial crisis – a structure adapted to a certain phase of development, served as a barrier to the subsequent transformation of urban areas [6]. The inclusion of Russian society in the global socio-cultural environment creates the need in creating spaces – socio-cultural intermediaries focused on the flow of tourists and business representatives, allowing the individual to adapt to an unfamiliar environment. The competition for investment between regions is won by those who create unique public spaces that evoke an emotional response in the subjects of its perception. Socio-economic well-being of the city and the region depends on the creation of a successful brand and its implementation in the architectural space [12]. In this process, public spaces become a key conductor of communication and information exchange [13], and their transformation involves the creation of socially significant landmarks that allow to form the life world of the citizen [14, 15, 16, 17, 18].

4. Socio-spatial transformation of Volgograd public spaces

Proceeding from the stated theoretical provisions, the features of socio-spatial transformation of public spaces of the Krasnoarmeysky district of Volgograd as the largest and most remote from the center planned district of the city are analyzed. The planning structure of this urban ensemble was formed in the post-war period on the basis of four rays coming from the depth of the building towards the Volga embankment. But due to the prevailing socio-economic conditions, the use of urban ensemble at the moment does not correspond to its social status.

The social potential of the urban environment is understood as "the ability to develop the urban community through self-awareness" [19], i.e. the preservation and disclosure of cultural heritage and valuable landscapes, rehabilitation processes in the environment, continuity, individualization and aestheticization, taking into account the general orientation of cultural development. Increasing interest in the development of urban public spaces, taking into account their social potential and the revival of national regional "memorial sites", allows the community to preserve its identity. With this in mind, the following types of public spaces become the main socially significant dominants and semantic structure-forming elements on the example of the territories of the Krasnoarmeysky district of Volgograd:

- formed by an object or a number of objects that occupy a significant rank in the spatial composition of the city (Engels Boulevard, Bakhturov Street, Fadeev street);
- adjacent to the main types of cultural institutions and their complexes (the outpost of the cinema "Jubilee", the area of the Houses of culture "Metallurg" and "Himic»);
- representing the image of the city as an element of the historical environment in a concentrated form (town-planning ensemble of Stalinist classicism, formed along the Volga-Don navigable canal behalf of Lenin);
- uniting objects connected with historical events or people (square of the Freedom on the territory of the Museum-reserve "Old Sarepta").

The architectural work is a chronotope and has a specific field of time and space created for evaluation by many generations, that allows it to be a translator of values in the long term. Public space, forming from multi-temporal architectural objects, subject to constant interpretations that create layers of socially significant information, on which could be traced value preferences or "cultural codes" of a certain eras. Individual buildings, fragments of streets, squares are sometimes modified beyond recognition. In this regard, it is very important to preserve in the perception of the citizen the idea of the image of space, types of streets and squares, without reference to the changes taking place in the environment. Taking into account these features of environmental formation, modern urban public spaces are characterized by the following properties [20]: the property of "incompleteness" –
any element of space cannot be once completely solved, but only serves as a factor for creating an appropriate image, which does not cancel the completed self-sufficient classical samples. In the process of developing a new interpretation, changes in spatial patterns (scale, plastic, composition) and functional saturation of space occur. The property of enriching the environment with the elements of time – the development and growth of the system, sophistication, the restructuring of the structure pass from stage to stage with the change of social and spatial-functional status. Urban public spaces are characterized by a heterogeneous structure, consisting either of stable, long-acting parts (historical buildings, memorial complexes, entrenched in the collective consciousness), or of elements subject to rapid changes (filling the environment). According to the degree of completion of the formation, there are four types of urban public spaces.

1. The emerging spaces, where geometry, dimensions and the main compositional form are prefixed, and the space as a whole is aimed at identifying and consolidating the architectural and artistic idea. The type is represented by the square of the cinema "Jubilee", at the intersection of the planning beam of the street behalf of 50 years of October and prospect Kanatchikov. Yubileyny cinema (built in 1975) became the main dominant of the adjacent space and the center of attraction of local residents. However, in recent decades, the former greatness has not left a trace, the increased commercialization of the post-Soviet period has led to a change in the functional use of the building, and with it the surrounding area. It has completely lost its original social and town-planning status, the walking area with a fountain, stone flower beds, benches turned from a place of mass actions into an abandoned territory, with seasonal inexpensive trade tents. With regard to this situation, the main task – the return of social attractiveness through the formulation of a new unifying idea of space, the use of functional modeling, providing for the preservation of existing buildings, limiting space and saturating it with new social functions, special attention should be given to the development of issues of all-season exploitation of open public space.

2. Habitable spaces, where the main architectural and spatial characteristics have already developed, but the system of decorative and artistic solutions has not yet been determined, the functional and spatial basis (the nodes of attraction of citizens, the composition of the components of the environment) is being improved. This type includes the linear pedestrian space of Engels Boulevard. Its formation began in the 80s of the last century, during the period of mass standard housing construction. The appearance and content of the environment has changed many times. Now it subjects an alley with benches for rest. After a large-scale reconstruction, the place of attraction for citizens had become a fountain, a monument to the first teacher and the bench of the newlyweds. Despite the popularity among the residents, it should be noted the impersonality of the space and its lack of functional saturation. Therefore, the main methods of socio-spatial transformation of space involve the identification of individual architectural and artistic appearance and scenario modeling, focused on different socio-age composition of consumers.

3. Stable spaces suggest deformation of the appearance due to the secondary forms of the design environment with a relatively stable architectural background. An example of this type is the oldest public space of the district – square of the Freedom on the territory of the museum-reserve "Old Sarepta", that includes monuments of federal significance of the XVIII–XIX centuries. At the time of foundation, the main functions of the space were trade with the local population and the employment of workers. In the center of the square was a swimming pool fed from Ergeninsky springs, poplars were planted along the perimeter, which served as the basis for the setting up of the square here. In 1942-1943, Soviet soldiers and defenders of Stalingrad were buried in the center of the square in a mass burial, and later an obelisk was erected. Building limiting the area is preserved mainly in its original form, the houses are of the same type, simple in capacity, with steep roofs, and minimal decorations, except for the church, standing out with a small clock tower. Currently, the main functions of the space are short-term rest, transit traffic on sightseeing routes. The transformation of space in this case is possible with the preservation of the historical environment, its functional and emotional enrichment. Dynamic modeling of space is recommended, which involves the identification
of new qualities of cultural heritage in the daytime and in the evening using the means of environmental and landscape design.

4. **Subject to reconstruction**, when it is possible to transform the planning structure with subsequent changes in individual elements and boundaries of territories, structural relationships between them, internal functional and compositional organization. The type is considered on the example of a unique public space adjacent to the Volga-Don canal, which has a rich history and diverse semantic content. Visual and semantic dominant in former times, closing the main planning axis of the area, is a monument to V. I. Lenin – one of the highest monuments in the world. The first gateway of the Volga-Don canal is located at the Volga entrance to the Sarepta backwater, and is made in the form of a triumphal arch, with bas-reliefs in the form of banners. Opposite to it, on the Sarpin peninsula, there is a memorial lighthouse dedicated to the sailors of the Volga flotilla, topped with a colonnade with cast-iron rostrums. Next to the first gateway in the part behind-the-channel of the district is the management of the Volga-Don canal, in the style of Stalin architecture, with a colonnade in the central part. From it begins the embankment of the Volga-don canal, overlooking the monument to Lenin with the boulevard, and decorated in the style of buildings of the Volga-Don canal. As the main direction of the transformation is becoming social activation, providing for new functional content, improvement of the existing planning structure, the creation of pedestrian, compositional and visual connections with adjacent public spaces. It is possible to use several methods of socio-spatial transformation of the historical environment: figurative modeling with the identification of the optimal perception of monuments, scenario modeling includes the creation of exclusive routes for the perception of a bright artistic image of the space.

This way, in the planning structure of the city there are open public spaces of varying degrees of cultural and historical value, formed in the conditions of new construction and reconstruction, which requires an individual flexible approach to the development of methods of their organization. And one of the fundamental principles of socio-spatial transformation of these urban areas is the principle of historical continuity, providing for the identification and preservation of the historical environment with unique buildings and structures, elements of the landscape and filling the environment. At the same time, the constantly changing perception of architectural appearance does not imply immersion into the past through stylization and copying, but provides for the creation of stable links between the past and the present through the search for a harmonious combination of historical objects and new components that meet the modern requirements of comfort, aesthetics, social communication.

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