Role of cultural landscape in formation of urban identity by example of Ural towns

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Abstract. The article discusses the formation of the concept of the identity of the urban landscape in the context of the specifics of the cities of the Ural region. The authors interpret urban identity as a reflective necessity for belonging to a social group. And the urban landscape, which is always in front of his eyes, is an important means of forming identity. The town-plants of the Urals are distinguished by the specific spatial organization (cultural landscape) of the urban core. The article concludes that the cultural landscape created in this way is the constant in time, that provide constant reminder of the town’s history. The article demonstrates the importance of methods of architectural and landscape reconstruction as a tool of building urban identity.

1. Introduction

Recently, there has been a surge of interest in the problem of the formation of urban identity and urban brand. The initiative in this matter belongs to the government. In 2018, at the All-Russian Forum «Small Cities and Historical Settlements», the President of Russia said: «It is important for each small town and historical settlement to carefully analyze all its capabilities and competitive advantages, identify the principle directions for development, including for small business, for tourism» [1]. Within the framework of the Priority Project «Formation of a Comfortable Urban Environment», the Federal program and the contest «Historical settlements and small towns of Russia» [2]. What caused the interest in the subject specified in the title.

To search for new modern approaches to the formation of identity, consider the history of the issue. The initiative to form urban identity had previously come from commercial organizations, which introduced a marketing approach and began to intensively exploit the theme of the urban brand. Hence, the authors know about a dozen attempts to create a brand both in the Ural region as a whole and in the largest city of the Urals - Yekaterinburg. Attempts failed. The most comprehensive review of attempts to create a brand of cities is contained in the paper of M Yu Timofeev [3]. An impressive, full of drama, the history of the formation of the city brand «Perm - European Capital of Culture» is presented in the article by L Fadeeva «Struggle for the Design of Regional Identity: Perm case» [4]. One of the results of this struggle was the design of the two opposing parties, the «aliens» and the «locals». In the opinion of the authors, paradigm «aliens» - «locals», is applicable to any town and reflects different points of view on the concept of identity, as will be discussed below. The search for new approaches to the formation of urban identity is the subject of this article.
2. Understanding Identity
According to the well-known Maslow pyramid, one of the basic human necessity is the need to belong to a particular social group [5]. The authors believe that one of the forms to satisfy this necessity is identity. As an argument, we will give the definition: «identity is the property of the human psyche in a concentrated form to express for him how he imagines his belonging to various social, economic, national and other groups or communities, or identifying himself with this or that person, as an embodiment properties inherent in these groups or communities» [6]. Thus, identity is a conscious, reflected necessity for belonging to a social group. Samoshkina I. C. in his work on the study of identity [7] notes that:

- territorial identity can be considered as one of the types of social identity, which allows to organize its phenomenology in three structural components: cognitive, affective and value;
- identification with place of residence (sense of place) is central to the phenomenology of territorial identity and can be represented as the integration of all three structural components of territorial identity.

The practical meaning of the concept of identity is that identity is a marketing tool, in modern urban practice, the Towns brand is created on the basis of identity. In itself, the concept of a brand is quite vague. The founder of marketing theory, Philip Kotler, spoke most clearly about the brand: «A brand is any label endowed with meaning and causing associations. A good brand performs something more - it gives the product or service a special color and unique sound» ([8], p 21).

For the town, the brand has a wider range of interpretations. D. Vizgalov gives the following range of interpretations ([9], p 36-37). Because identity is closely connected with the concept of brand and identity is a necessary condition for the creation of the brand, we can say, the brand is commercialized identity. The above discussion on the formation of a brand in the paradigm «aliens» - «locals» just reflects a different understanding of identity, when «locals» understand their identity as identity «with the town», and «aliens» as the identity of the city only.

3. The role of landscape in creating identity
According to the authors, the landscape plays an important role in the formation of identity «with the town». Landscape is a concept borrowed from geography, where it originally meant «type of land», «type of terrain», «... a large, visible with the naked eye, surface area that differs from neighboring areas with characteristic individual features» ([10], p 6). Thus, the landscape can play an important role in the formation of identity for the following reasons: a) the landscape is what is in front of the eyes of a person from an early age, b) the landscape is individual, c) other people (identical as locals) is in the identical landscape. (It is commonly recognized that concept of landscape are now divide on a number of other concepts: cultural landscape, urban landscape and so on [11], [12]). The role of the landscape in the formation of identity is better to demonstrate by the example of modern urban practices.

An example would be the small town of Matamata, located not far from the large city of Auckland in New Zealand, where the famous Trilogy «The Lord of the Rings» was filmed. The scenery for the filming was the village of Hobbits. Subsequently, when the filming was complete, the Hobbit village has become the place of development of Tolkien tourism [13]. Figure 1 demonstrate the urban landscape that forms «Tolkien – Identity». The presented examples demonstrate the important role of the urban landscape in the formation of identity, since the landscape serves as a visual embodiment of identity.

Another example of this kind of story is the story of the American town of Leavenworth – a small town, stylized in Bavarian style, which is located in Washington [14]. At the time Leavenworth was one of the largest sawmills in the United States. Forests on the slopes of the mountains in the river valley were cut down for forty years and many residents were left without work. So thirty years ago, Leavenworth was remodeled in the Bavarian style. German appearance of houses on the main street, German national clothes in numerous shops and restaurants, German music and German beer with and
without sausages. Demonstrated on the figure 2. Why did it work? Historically, the US has a large percentage of immigrants from Germany. Therefore, the change of the cultural landscape of the town can satisfy the nostalgic necessity for identity, the need to touch their roots. Today the town is one of the most popular tourist destinations on the Pacific coast of the United States. It is obvious that this example is an example of «identity with the town».

Figure 1. Landscape forming "Tolkien-identity" (Matamata, New Zealand). Source: [13].

Figure 2. The cultural landscape of the city of Leavenworth. Source: [15]

4. Cultural landscape of the Ural factory town
The theme of the cultural landscape of the Urals dates back to V.I. Nemirovich-Danchenko [16], who characterized the natural landscapes of the Urals with the words: «Wild beauty and gloomy majesty». Wild beauty and gloomy grandeur of the natural landscape are transformed by the hard work of merchants, industrialists and workers. Hence, there is a specific cultural landscape of the Ural factory town. A typical way of forming the cultural landscape of a factory town: creating a dam as an energy source, arranging a plant that works on dam energy, arranging a settlement around a plant and a pond. All together - mining complex. In this way, almost all the cities of the Urals are formed.

Figure 3. Plan of the fortress Yekaterinburg. 1723. Source: Administration Museum

Figure 4. The current state of the dam. From here began the city. Source: authors.
The modern, complete expression of the specific Ural identity is described in the book by Alexey Ivanov [17]. The book proposes the concept of Ural «matrix» of «mining and industrial civilization». By the type of energy sources and the main types of equipment (hammer, blacksmith press) civilization can be called a hydraulic one. The concept of industrial culture is supported by different researchers, for example E G Animitsa and N Yu Vlasova [18].

In the formation of the town core: dams, reservoirs and surrounding buildings was laid sacred meaning, which is clearly seen in figure 3. In figure 3, the center of the composition is the dam, and its importance is emphasized by the size of the flowing water. The tradition of investing sacred meaning in objects built on water is typical for the whole territory of Russia. It is enough to recall how many fairy tales and myths are associated with mills, as objects built on the border of several media. As noted V.A. Nefedov «The most expressive panoramas and the contrasting combination of various functions» are connected with water spaces [19]. Features of the cultural landscape of the Ural factory town were that the town core was located next to the dam. The core of factory town included the factory office and the Church, which achieved a combination of natural, cultural and spiritual.

5. Current Trends in Attaining Identity
On closer examination, the concept of the Ural mining industry loses its integrity: modern Ural cities choose different paths of development. At present, a separation has occurred: in the first group, cities can be distinguished in which we experienced a decline in production and were able to fully recover. Now this group of cities is looking for new sources for development. Many of them hope that tourism will become a new source of development. The Tourism Development Strategy of the Sverdlovsk region as a promising direction of tourism calls industrial and mineralogical tourism, just concentrated in the Ural factory towns [20]. The second group is the cities that have managed to maintain their industrial specialization [21]. The third group of cities - cities that are closely old industrial
framework. First of all, this refers to Yekaterinburg, which sees itself as a center of education, high-tech production and high-tech service [22].

Paradoxically, the current situation only reinforces the public demand for urban identity. For the cities of the first group, the creation of identity is a necessary condition for the development of tourism and services. Cities that are successful in their direct purpose – metallurgical cities, are interested in emphasizing the continuity of development. Cities, which see themselves as developed diversified centers, are interested in the formation of the town brand as a condition for the further development of the town.

The principle method of identity formation is architectural and landscape reconstruction. The use of architectural and landscape reconstruction of urban core of traditional Ural factory town will provide effective ways to preserve the unique heritage of industrial architecture of the past centuries. Since the transition of former industrial facilities to a new quality requires the creation of an adequate environment with both functional logic and a harmonious cultural landscape. Landscape reconstruction will create a new environment that will correspond to the nature of the new production buildings, and can greatly contribute to the transformation of objects, keeping trinity of natural, industrial and spiritual. Special attention should be paid to the regeneration of coastal landscapes, for which it is necessary to eliminate the consequences of their man-made and natural destruction. This requires a set of measures to increase the share of natural components of the environment in their structure, the rational use of existing buildings, the arrangement of pedestrian communications and spaces using the most modern methods of landscape design.

6. Conclusion
Above we considered urban identity as a reflexive necessity to belong to a social group. This point of view is fruitful and makes it possible to justify the conclusion that the urban landscape, which is constantly in front of the eyes of the urban dweller, plays an important role in the reflection of belonging to the town and thus forms the urban identity.

Ural industrial cities, formed in the XVI-XVII centuries under the influence of industrial technologies of that time, differ in a certain spatial organization - a characteristic cultural landscape, arising from the fact that the energy source for the plants of that time was a dam. The article demonstrates how the architectural and landscape reconstruction of the existing landscape allows to preserve the unique identity of the cultural landscape of the Ural factory town.

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