Features of the Kuban life environment historical formation

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Abstract. The specificity of the Kuban settlements’ historical formation is considered in the context of regional peculiarities, as well as the folk traditions and customs of the peoples inhabiting the indicated territory. The main socio-economic prerequisites for the living environment formation in the settlements are indicated. Much attention is paid to the historical settlements of the Kuban, the objects of cultural heritage, their preservation and restoration. The specific planning structure of the settlements and regional identity in the constituent territories’ diversity of these settlements are noted. Attention is focused on the settlement structure, on its formation over a long historical period of architectural and urban development. The following features have been proven: historical continuity, the transfer of cultural values, folk traditions from generation to generation.

Introduction
Kuban is the most ancient fertile region of Russia, where cultures of various nationalities have interacted for several centuries, while maintaining their artistic uniqueness. The excellent natural conditions of the three climatic zones of the Kuban: sea, steppe and mountain, left a significant imprint on the living environment of various settlements, which largely determined the way of life of the population living in this region. Especially significant is the fact that it was possible to maintain unity in diversity: since a real opportunity was established for each multinational people to preserve their traditions and historical and cultural heritage, which supported their sustainable development, promoted a peaceful neighborly existence and strong strategic cooperation, despite the existing multi-religious composition of the Russian Empire population.

It should be emphasized that the basis of traditions is the historical and cultural heritage, which includes the monuments of architecture and urban planning [1]. Particularly noteworthy is the traditional living environment of the Kuban - material culture, the basis of which is the architectural heritage, as well as the way of life of the previous generation. Therefore, the study is focused on identifying the patterns of formation and development of the specified environment, in order to solve the geostrategic tasks of the region under study.

Historical settlements, which have a unique historical and architectural value, play a special role in national architecture. The specificity of these settlements proceeded not only from the geographical location, but also from the social, historical and cultural heritage. These are the unique excavations of the ancient Greek policies’ antique era in the Black Sea coast - Gorgippia (Anapa), the Meotskoe settlement on the territory of the future Yekaterinodar (Krasnodar), the settlement of the Tmutarakan Russian principality (modern - Taman), exhibits of the Sarmatian culture of the Yeisk peninsula (Yeisk),

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the heyday of the early Sochi culture period, a settlement of the Circassians near the river Urup (Armavir).

**Purpose, objectives, research methods**
The study is aimed at an objective assessment of the conditions for the formation of settlements in the Kuban, in the context of the socio-cultural environment of life, in order to determine the regional resource potentials, including historical and cultural, based on their specific characteristics and the addition of the settlement system heritage for the strategic territorial and spatial development of populated areas.

Accordingly, the goal sets the following research objectives are:
- to analyze the history of the Kuban settlement from the point of view of the historical and urban regional development;
- to identify the patterns of the economic development processes in the territories, their structural and functional elements;
- to determine the influence of climatic conditions and geographical location on the formation of settlements, including the entire settlement;
- to analyze the urban planning situations of the Kuban settlements on the basis of cartographic plans characterizing the silhouette of the building in a certain period of the studied region development.

The object of the research is the historical planning structure of the settlements’ development in the Kuban, its volumetric spatial solutions, in the context of the living environment formation.

The subject of the research is the main regularities of the historical and urban planning development and formation of the Kuban territory.

The methodological basis of the study is the historical-compositional, town-planning and architectural-artistic analysis of the planning structure of settlements, the determination of the living environment value characteristics from the point of view of temporal evolution.

**Analysis of the settlements’ historical development in the context of the living environment spatial evolution process**
From the very beginning of the development and settlement of the Kuban territory, the Cossacks, united by the common goal of protecting the southern borders of the Russian state and at the same time acting in the vanguard of the settlements’ formation for a long period, are included in all spheres of human life. The military class, based on the principles of ethnic and historical community, as well as the way of life, has always been the backbone of the state. The Cossacks were significantly different from other peoples of the Russian Empire; therefore, they had their own specific features of the living environment, namely the patriarchal approach aimed at improving life in the settlements, this was especially clearly manifested in the initial period of the region’s development. The main role in the settlements was played by the historical buildings, namely the center, which at different times of the settlement’s development has always been an attractive place and had its own unique architectural appearance.

The historical buildings’ value is seen, on the one hand, in its diversity, in compositional merits, on the other, in addressing the culture of the past, in the opportunity to feel the living presence of this culture, to associate modern culture with it [2].

It is especially important to note that in the central part of the settlements, the historical environment is compositionally interconnected with the surrounding areas of the natural landscape, forms a regular system of building blocks, which are an integral urban ensemble, reflecting the architectural and stylistic unity of objects for various purposes, while organizing visual-spatial connections.

Analyzing the initial organization of the territories in a number of settlements of the Kuban, it should be especially noted that the leading role of the historical center, regulating the development of the areas adjacent to the center, was directly reflected in the living environment formation.

For the most part, the historical center, which includes a significant number of architectural and urban planning heritage monuments, as well as historical buildings and structures, is geographically included in the city center. Therefore, it serves as a planning basis for the city development. The architectural and
artistic interconnections of the historical center are a vivid example of an integral system that forms the environment with active urban planning components [3].

A striking example of the Kuban settlements’ initial development can be the formation of the appearance in the central part of Armavir at the intersection of the main arteries of the settlement - Nikolaevsky avenue and Pochtovaya str. (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Armavir. Nikolaevsky avenue, 1911.

Here in 1903 in memory of the last Russian emperor coronation, local artisans erected a chapel in the name of Saint Nicholas, which became a visible accent of the village [4]. Not being a city, Armavir nevertheless followed such a broad path of social economy and improvement development, which is difficult to achieve for many ancient cities [5].

Thus, an example of the use of urban planning techniques to create a favorable living environment is the compositional solutions of the Kuban historical settlements’ centers. In most cases, the well-thought-out development of ensembles, as well as the individual architectural structures in the central part, harmoniously combined with the natural environment. The architectural and planning organization of the historical environment carefully preserves the traditions due to which this or that settlement was born. The qualitative level of the historical environment, its aesthetic and artistic components, largely predetermined the corresponding level of the living environment.

The specifics of the historically established settlement and continuity in the Kuban architecture

Urban and large-village forms of settlement are noted, a kind of agglomeration, which significantly affect the settlement of nearby territories. They become attractive for living, have social and engineering infrastructure, investment and cultural potential. As a result of these actions, the ratio of urban and rural population is gradually changing. At the same time, the specific structure and peculiar silhouette of the Kuban rural settlements also have valuable architectural and artistic buildings and an organic planning structure and monuments of architectural heritage characteristic in this territory. Great importance in the formation of an appropriate environment for the life of rural settlements belongs to the specifics of the architecture development in these settlements. For example, for the coastal settlements, such a specificity is made up of dachas, villas, sanatorium-resort facilities, for steppe settlements - manor houses, traditional dwellings with the peculiarities of the Kuban way of life, for the mountain settlements - a variety of architectural objects, successfully inscribed in the complex mountainous terrain.

At the same time, “water spaces: seas, rivers, lakes are an important factor that has a positive effect not only on the emotional state and energy of a person, but also on the architectural and artistic
expressiveness of the urban and rural settlements territories, in the context of creating the architectural and artistic ensembles subordinated to a single spatial solution and placed taking into account certain points of viewer's perception [6].

At the same time, the main and most important supporting town-planning nodes and dominants in the planning structure of urban and rural settlements were the religious buildings (Figure 2).

**Figure 2.** Ekaterinodar. Alexander Nevsky Army Cathedral, 1853-1872
I.D. and E.D. Chernik brothers-architects.

So, the Alexander Nevsky Army Cathedral in Yekaterinodar compositionally had very advantageous viewpoints, as well as a dominant location over the nearby architectural environment.

The domes of the cathedral, covered with solid Demidov’s iron, made by the famous Demidov’s factories, were painted with green paint, and the crosses were gilded. In the western domes there were bells, the largest of them weighed 506 pounds, the ringing of which in a fine summer hour could be heard from tens of miles away, and the cathedral itself, sparkling with crosses, was visible both from the northern steppe expanse and from the distant southern Trans-Kuban plain [7].

Simultaneously with the resettlement process, the measures to improve the territories and transform the already established territories were taken. The proper condition of the streets started to be monitored.

In particular, the improvement of Yekaterinodar started with paving streets and digging ditches to drain the central part of the city. The streets were paved with bricks - iron ore, which turned out to be a more practical material than stone [8].

In the future, in order to optimize the settlement system of the Kuban, the centralization of nearby settlements was carried out, between which there are socio-economic, cultural, economic and ethnic ties in the largest settlement. An example would be Krasnodar, Armavir, Kropotkin, Labinsk and other cities. If initially neighboring settlements were at an insignificant distance from each other, then for the purpose of sustainable development, they were combined into a single urban-planning formation, which forms the living environment, while creating a historically formed image of an urban settlement. At the same time, it should be noted that this integration is observed not only at the level of urban settlement systems, but also at the level of rural settlements and contributes to the organization of a single supporting frame of the settlements.

At the same time, the natural landscape, the spatial organization of territories, architectural objects, the historical core and monuments of historical and cultural heritage were the most important elements
of the urban environment. Each of these elements performed its own function, which together with others formed the planning structure of the city [9].

It has been proven that the continuity in the architecture of the Kuban traditional dwelling was clearly reflected in the formation of an appropriate environment for life, based on the material and spiritual needs of a person and, above all, on the Orthodox faith. Household and cultural traditions and customs of the Cossacks were sacredly observed. Along with this, the existing methods and methods of building housing buildings were directly related to the level of economic well-being, as well as the proper quality of the living environment. Most of the Kuban dwellings were mainly covered with thatch or reed, later with iron or tiles, special importance was attached to local building materials.

In conditions when the construction of stone buildings was beyond the means of most developers, with the help of "exemplary" projects, the possibility of using the local building materials to replace scarce bricks was clearly shown [10]. Particularly indicative in this respect are the rural settlements of the Kuban, which have now retained their original, distinctive appearance. An accent role in the development of which belongs to the objects of unique folk architecture, made by outstanding folk masters of that time.

Summary
In the course of the study, it was proved that an example of the urban planning techniques’ use to create a favorable living environment is the compositional solutions of the Kuban historical settlements centers. In most cases, the well-thought-out development of ensembles, as well as the individual architectural structures in the central part, harmoniously combined with the natural environment. The architectural and planning organization of the historical environment carefully preserves the traditions due to which this or that settlement was born. The qualitative level of the historical environment, its aesthetic and artistic components, largely predetermined the corresponding living environment level.

At the same time, among the many problems of regional urban planning, the leading place is taken by the problem of preserving the historical appearance of settlements, namely, to prevent its distortion due to ill-considered new development. Monuments of architectural heritage, unique folk architecture, as well as their complexes, are harmoniously combined with building blocks, following the principle of building settlements according to the regular system of the 18th – 19th centuries. At the same time, they create a wonderful composition and a unique original image of the Kuban populated areas, which has been formed over two centuries. The indicated development forms a clear, historical spatial organization of the settlement.

This is clearly confirmed by a retrospective analysis, a comparison of the planning structure in different historical periods, since in each subsequent era the plan was transformed, but the historical center, its expressive silhouette, remained unchanged. Therefore, an important strategic task in the field of urban planning policy in the region is not only creating the conditions for sustainable settlements’ development, but also maintaining the continuity of the planning structure, adopting the experience of the previous generation in order to create a favorable living environment. The historical environment of the Kuban settlements should be carefully preserved, and at the same time be viable and comfortable.

Therefore, when developing the projects for the urban and rural settlements quarters’ regeneration, it is necessary to strictly know and take into account that the architectural and urban planning heritage, which carries valuable information about the historical formation of the Kuban living environment, the historical planning structure of settlements, traditions, artistic tastes of previous generations, is a unique material basis preserving the culture of the multinational people inhabiting this region, and the memory of generations as well as the symbolic “spirit of the place” is the guarantor of the settlements’ historical and cultural identity preservation.

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