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The Killing Fields of Social Inequality: Experience of Understanding Modern Urban Development

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Abstract

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The article provides an overview of the discussions of foreign and domestic authors about the prospects and models of urban development, ongoing in the context of the new urbanism, cultural sociology of space. The conclusion is that the city as a place of mobility, as a variety of intensive social interaction networks, produces fields of social inequality.

A comparative analysis of the empirical data relating to the study of the spatial, social and economic development of Tomsk city and the identification of citizens' loyalty to its development strategies is conducted. Adequate management strategies of spatial development of the city, including the global and local challenges, are revealed. Global experience shows that the quality of the urban environment is the balance among state control, commercial initiatives and involvement of citizens. Only in this case the "spatial inequality" won't develop exponentially. The article also analyzes the management decisions related to the tasks of smoothing inequality, overcome stereotypes, removing communication barriers, the construction of new types of social interactions, the institutionalization of new urban citizenship codes. In line with the concept of inclusive design is considered production of spatial justice city, convenient for people's lives with a different set of options.

Keywords: Urbanism; sustainable development; fields of social inequality; Culture-led urban regeneration.

1. Introduction

As it is known, the global process of urbanisation takes on the greatest relevance in the second half of 20th century. This is significantly associated with social and cultural potential, which is formed in the process of cities and urban culture development. Intensive urbanisation processes are accompanied by changes in sociocultural reality, and thereupon changes occur to social relations, strategies of sociocultural adaptation and residents' integration into the urban space.

According to Pivovarov (Pivovarov, 2001), the transfer of "shifting from material and spatial base of urban planning, geographic forms ("geometry of space") to informative study of urbanisation, associated primarily with the human behaviour and position in the urban space" is the distinctive feature of modern scientific knowledge of the urbanisation process. Whereas, Western scholars believe that due to the spatial rotation in the social sciences the focus of the spatial researches is the following: "The aim of this paper is to explore how spatialities are 'constructed' in policy and planning discourses and to explore how these construction processes might be conceptualised and analysed" (Richardson, & Jensen, 2003).

But representatives of both scientific communities consider that urban studies and cultural sociology of space must justify society answers to the challenges of globalisation, post-industrialisation and polarisation in the level and quality of urban life.

So what are the current challenges to which society must give an adequate response?

1. The fastest population growth is noticed in the cities, which are in favourable natural climatic conditions. Other conditions being equal, it is impossible to assert that about the cities that are in less favourable conditions, facing the population outflow, investment and production reduction. The latter which must comprehend the strategy of gaining the competitive advantage, relying on the well-known technologies: stability, Smart City, Culture-led urban regeneration'.
2. Mitigating the negative consequences of modern mobility imbalances (technological and structural unemployment, transnational and inter-ethnic conflicts as a result of increasing national and cultural diversity of the urban population) – a new challenge to human potential development for cities.
3. Post-industrial urban economy is focused on the creative person, who lays claims to the widest and diverse range of creative self-realisation opportunities, but it is a powerful classifier of urban space; which, of course, requires a balanced approach to creative clustering of the city.
4. The spatial structure of the urban community is thickening, the community becomes more resolved, and human life – more "decentralized" (rising of households consisting of one person and income differentiation level, social and spatial segregation degree growth). As a consequence, the factors of increasing social cohesion of urban communities and reduction of social tension level become more and more important in the cities competition.
5. Emerging global markets had a positive impact on education and health care: from "classic" urban serving industries they are increasingly becoming into important "export" industries, into the basis of the economy of entire cities and regions; which cannot be taken into account when planning and design the city.

However, international experience shows it, all of these challenges are possible to overcompensate for the competitive advantages of the cities in areas such as environment, safety, organisation of urban

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space and urban infrastructure, residents' quality of life. As a result, this can have a positive impact on the provision of the population growth of these cities.

Defining the strategy of city development, municipal and regional authorities face a number of questions: what is a relationship between different development factors and what kind of development is considered to be balanced? What is a multi-criteria support of decision making? How to assess the sustainability of development? How to determine where to invest the money - what investments will be the basis for green, smart growth, rather than the accumulation of debt and the difficulties?

2. Research Methodology

Methodology of research is composed of a multidisciplinary approach, which allows carrying out the synthesis of Smart City concept and the theory of post-industrial city development, namely, the principles, categories of urban concepts within the new urban social management, research of convenient city, cultural sociology of space projects.

Methods: directive interviews "Usage of the architectural heritage of the city in order to optimize the cultural infrastructure" (4 focus groups were held in July 2015), a survey in the form of questionnaire "Tomsk - a city of equal opportunities" (sociological survey of Tomsk citizens held in November 2015 was the empirical basis for solving research problems (The total representative sample came up to 400 people, the research object – people over 18 years old), expert survey (Head of the transport, road management and communications Department of Tomsk region, Chairman of the Committee for urban development and architecture of the Tomsk region were questioned).

Additionally secondary information from Urbanica Institute (Saint Petersburg.), which is developing a global ranking of cities: "The integral rating of the largest Russian cities" and submitted it on the 19th of October in 2015 at the XIV All-Russian Forum "Strategic planning in the regions and cities of Russia" was used. The results of study of Russian regional centres "Fight for the citizen: human potential and the urban environment", which was held by Graduate School of Urbanism of Higher School of Economics, were used ad well.

3. Problem Discussion

In the European urban planning, according to Massey (Massey, 1999), Pile (Pile, 2005), Smith (Smith, 2001), city is understood as a set of spatial relationships and networking before the spatial turn. Urban epistemology has already made a reflection of the essence of four main areas of so-called new urbanism with a strong socio-critical dominant: understanding of the city as a set of flows, networks, communications; searching of a specific compounds of human, natural and technical "actors"; redefining the dialectic of global and local, primarily from the variety of transnational connections' standpoint, virtual networks, enterprise networks and supply chains of goods; global city (Sassen, 2005).

Whereas distrust to social and critical focus is still brewing in domestic urban studies, which supposedly enables only Marxist interpretation of the social history of space, domestic urbanists have a greater confidence in the idea of "urban managerialism» (Souche et al., 2016). In any case, the trends of modern urban development - de-industrialization, gentrification, Smart City problems, ethnic

conflicts, spatial segregation are interpreted primarily in the context of whether the expert urban knowledge form the basis for managerial decisions, though European societies are over the questions of a European urban policy, the struggle of discourses in the bosom of this policy foundation formation (Richardson, & Jensen, 2003). Western urbanists (Silveira Neto et al., 2015, p. 298) are also quite sensitive to gender issues, which is understood in the context of specific patterns of spatial behaviour, spatial practices, well-being in modernized urban environment: «Gender differentials are observed also for single and formerly married working females, which suggests other cultural or environmental factors not fully captured by the household responsibility hypothesis. Most studies, however, are set in North America. This research contributes towards the development of a broader, international knowledge foundation regarding gender and commuting patterns".

According to Moore-Cherry, Crossa & O'Donnell (Moore-Cherry et al., 2015), Luque-Ayala and Marvin (Luque-Ayala, & Marvin 2015), Principles of urban political economy and social geography allow building research strategies related to an accumulation mode of cities' funds. In this case, the city is understood as a place of production of material goods and reproduction of labour power and, also, as a place of consumption of manufactured goods. Almost everything in the city organisation and functioning can be explained by the dynamics of the funds (Moore-Cherry et al., 2015).

As noted by Saunders (Saunders, 2001), Modern discussions in post-non-classical urbanism are characterised with rejection of excessive expansion of the sociological approach in favour of interdisciplinary one , attempts to present the urban organisation as a result of a complex interplay of natural, physical, political, social and cultural factors. This research strategy is linked to social researches, with the strengthening of interdisciplinary urban studies, understanding the dangers of socio-constructivist reductionism (Saunders, 2001). In spite of the fact, that Basic principles of non-classical theories of the city, which have been formed by Chicago urbanists around a central idea of mono-centric city, are developed in post-non-classical urban planning, the latter is already focused on polycentric development model (Urry, 2000).

The philosophical issue of Lefebvre (Lefebvre, 1991) called "Production of space", of course, has found the absolute development in humanitarian geographers who "come out of the space» (Soja, 1989) in their studies of the city and its modern problems. Soja (Soja, 1989, p.6-7), in fact, taught urban sociologists "in another way to understand the meaning and significance of space and those related concepts that form and constitute spatiality inherent in human life: the place, the location, terrain, landscape, environment, house, city, region, territory and geography». He sees Los Angeles as Postmetropolis city (Los Angeles is a place where it all comes together, an ordered world in which micro and the macro, the concrete and the abstract, ideographic and nomothetic can be interactive combination (Soja, 1989). "He defined 6 kinds of restructuring which together define the region's contemporary urban process:

1. Flexcity (rise of information technology, deindustrialization);
2. Cosmopolis (globalization and multicultural diversification);
3. Exopolis (growth of edge cities and postsuburbia, metropolis is turned inside-out and outside-in);
4. Metropolarities (social mosaic of LA, extreme forms of social, economic and political polarization);

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5. Carceral City (mix of violence and police surveillance);

6. Simcity (the term Soja uses to describe the new ways of seeing the city that are emerging from the study of Los Angeles –increasing hiper reality of everyday life" (Snoj, 2016).

While western urban studies (Amin, & Thrift, 2002) have fierce debates about the neoliberal model of the city, social inequalities (Souche et al., 2016) and even measurement of this social inequality in the urban space, meanwhile the domestic (Trubina, 2008) - draws more attention to the non-classical theory of the city, to the multisensory experiences of the city (Berdnikova, & Zaporozhets, 2014), to nonlinear city's past.

According to Trapenberg, Weinzimmer & Waddel (Trapenberg et al., 2015), the discourse of sustainable city is developing, due to the conceptualisation of phenomena such as sustainable development, smart growth, the green revolution. Urban epistemology captures that sustainable development policies (protection of the "green zone" of the city, the promotion of "green" areas as attractive for wealthy people, and so on) have clearly anti-social orientation. The impact on the ecosystem by the city is measured by calculation of so-called ecological footprint, i.e. measure of "load" on nature, which occurs as a result of meeting the diverse needs of urban dwellers. Today socio-ecological footprint of the city has become global. The Killing fields of social inequality are recorded here as well (Trapenberg et al., 2015).

Supporters for the New Urbanism (Harvey, 2000; Richardson, & Jensen, 2003) are convinced that the key problem of the city in the era of modernism and postmodernism, as well, is in organisation and mobility. The main problem is to achieve a certain balance in the discourse: the socio-economic, cultural and technocratic (Harvey, 2000).

4. Findings

The results of studies that demonstrate the validity of the very simple thesis: the cities for everyone (Lefebvre, 1991) do not exist; production of space for all groups with special needs is an utopian dream (the complexities of this process have already been described in urban studies): the constant reference to the works of the classical Chicago school in urban studies (city centre, its' museumification or aestheticisation, partly gentrification) continues, the interpretation of the views of this school also takes place in the national urban studies, but without comprehension of social problems; actualisation of cultural heritage within the discourse of equality (without recourse to C2C technology).

The experience of home cities as the experience of transforming and changing under the influence of social and economic processes, of course, exists, but, as noted by Herman Gref, mostly in the orbit of research fall big cities, million-cities.

Only in recent years Tomsk is being noticed by researchers of large research centres, one way or another involved in the study of the spatial, social and economic development of the cities, the study of the quality of life in the cities and identification of citizens' loyalty to urban development strategies. Moreover, if the Graduate School of Urbanism of National Research University Higher School of Economics (HSE) has included the city in the number of 6 out of the most representative model of development with a population of 500-750 thousand people, then Urbanica (Saint Petersburg) while

defining a place in the global ranking of cities “Integral rating of the largest cities of Russia” and presenting it on the 19th of October in 2015 at the XIV All-Russian forum "Strategic planning in the regions and cities of Russia", examined the quality of the urban environment and the living costs (by the indicators can be judged on costs of the priority essential services for life) and has recorded that by these indicators Tomsk performance takes place 43 out of 100 (Urbanica: Spatial Planning, 2015). The city is one of the leading cities with a high index of human potential (see. results Urbanica: Spatial Planning, 2015). In studies of Russian regional centres "Fight for the citizen: human potential and the urban environment" made by Graduate School of Urbanism of HSE Tomsk showed the lowest values of almost all indicators: the level of attractiveness of 40% did not pass any indicator other than assessment of the architectural appearance of the city (Moscow urban forum, 2014). Among the responses to the question of why the respondents do not like their city, the most popular were: transport issues (traffic jams on the roads - 74%, problems with parking - 65%, ease of movement around the city - 35%) and issues related to the housing (cost of property - 44% and rent - 31%, the costs of housing and communal services - 40%, and their quality - 40%), dirt and garbage on the streets of the city - 42%, as well as ecological assessment - 35%, the poor quality of health care - 33% and low wages - 35%.

Almost 60% of respondents are confident that in their cities it is "difficult" or "somewhat difficult" to do business. Worst of all is the case in Tomsk, where 15% are convinced that in their city it is virtually impossible to run a business (Moscow urban forum, 2014).

If keep in mind the main trends of development of the spatial structure of cities: multi-core socio-spatial structure, compactness, environmental concept of "new urbanism", design technologies of the downtown of historical city, technologies for sustainable development of transport services, Smart City, a management model, then in solving the problem of minimizing fields of social inequality in the city the maximum attention is paid to building the capacity of construction density and increasing the diversity of the urban environments, reduction of the distance of commuting (labour) migration, diversity of types of apartment blocks, but the creation of public spaces, based on pedestrian paths, and not on highways, are completely out of range of administrative decisions. Besides, there is a plenty of projects on the development of public spaces, but they do not even relate to pedestrian accessibility problems. Recreation of the identity of the city - the restoration and maintenance of monuments and sites as well, it would seem, is in the focus of the city authorities. But, as shown by the study of "Laboratories of Urban Studies and Applied Urbanism of TPU" in 2015, and residents of the city (400 people were interviewed) and tourists (69 foreign students were interviewed, who came to the Summer School "Intelligent and sustainable tourism") are convinced that the restored monuments of wooden architecture are used in a completely non-functional way. They still can only be the object to passive contemplation, and not functioning at least in the context of economy of sensations. In addition, point regeneration without thought-out strategy of modernisation of the city and historical centre - is doomed to failure. The majority of respondents (60%) of citizens do not see the prospects of system reconstruction and further use of the restored areas with dense wooden buildings. Our colleagues from the Milano Polytechnic University, while exploring attitudes of Tomsk’ residents to wooden architecture, even recorded a necessity to overcome the stigmatization of inhabitants of wooden

houses, because the respondents (especially pupils) are convinced that only poor people can live in wooden houses. Researches show that there is a need of conscious thinking through by all the actors in the modernisation of mixed use of territory (mixed-use), redefining the role of the city centre as a symbol of the city's mission, the reconstruction of the city's identity, expansion of a range of cultural activity areas and the creation of new types of environments, radical aestheticisation or museumification of the environment.

With regard to the managerial model of the city, it is necessary to record that the spatial development planning documents (e.g. InoTomsk 2020) work on the economy of the city and allow, first of all, to significantly improve the business climate through transparency and stability of long-term solutions, the development of managerial technologies in the logic of "smart cities". But the most important tool for ensuring the effectiveness of the solution should be a complex research works which allow to assess and predict the real resources for development, the ability to attract investments from various sources, the housing market, the office market, education and the creative industries, research infrastructures. Another kind of surprise is caused by how the Smart City concept is perceived.

Joachim H. Spangenberg (Spangenberg, 2005) from Cologne was one of the first who focused on the linguistic features of the term "sustainable development" and emphasized that in the Germanic languages, this phrase has been associated with the regulatory characteristics of Kantian ethics and with discussions about what defines a "good life": sustainable development has become a program of cultural renovation. In Francophone countries, after a heated debates, it was translated as «durable», which meant the continuing development of the economy (in these countries, the current discussion about the «decroissance» compensates it in a culturally sensitive manner). In the Anglo-Saxon world attitude towards this term is defined by utilitarianism and pragmatism, which is reflected in the promotion of the ideas of the analysis of cost-effectiveness and in an attempts to integrate the economic costs into the criteria for project evaluation. In Russia, as suggested by Dr. Shpangenberg, cited by Shmeleva (Shmeleva, 2014), turbulence of transition process predetermined the process of binding ideas of sustainable development with the national cultural heritage, but at the same time, he said that he does not have complete clarity on the question of where is now Russia, in the context of sustainable development concept. Stefan Specka, the head of the "green" program of the European Environment Agency (EEA) in Copenhagen, being in Russia, formulated the main points on the issue of "green" economy: "green" economy is now seen as a strategic way to build a more equitable society living in a cleaner environment; acceleration of the transition to "green" economy has a different meaning for different interested instances and social groups (Shmeleva, 2014). It seems that the majority of Russians perceive the imperative of transition to the "green" economy and sustainable model of development of the city in a different way.

Public space, being a public good, by definition, should create equality of citizens. However, in the developed algorithms for designing urban areas in existing urban technologies the individual interests with its characteristics and individual differences are very limitedly taken into account. The more relevant such problem becomes for disabled people.

Russian policy on creation of accessible environment leaves out of focus of its attention the inclusive approach to its design. Namely the inclusive design concept allows the fullest realisation of

the civil rights of all social groups. As it is known, the idea of environmental and social justice became the basis of inclusive design (King, 2009). At the same time there is a criticism of the concept of urban development of the past years, when the cities were designed not only without consideration of the needs of people with disabilities, and for certain physically perfect man.

Striking contrasts of the city arise in cases where the public space is insufficient or poorly designed, sometimes, and privatised. It contributes to the emergence of barriers on different basis: economic status, religion, ethnicity, etc.

Urban space accessibility for people with disabilities - an important manifestation of social justice, one of the dimensions of which is spatial justice (Lefebvre, 1991; Soja, 1989; Harvey, 2000). In the Russian context, one of the city planning priorities is becoming, for example, compliance with the interests of citizens with limited mobility, but in practice is accompanied with the distortion of the principles of inclusive design which strengthens social exclusion in society, the absence of the right to the city of people with disabilities reduces their quality of life and hinders satisfaction of basic needs. Modern urban space contains representations of social stereotypes and distances, legitimising inequality on the grounds of limited mobility, gender, age, disability.

The strategy of formation of accessible environment for people with disabilities, fixed by corresponding legislative acts, and in the theoretical and practical aspects, is not enough comprehended in connection with the principles of inclusive design. In matters of the creation of an inclusive urban environment, is being noticed an insufficient competence and awareness of professionals such as architects, urban planners and social scientists as well as scientists engaged in researches of social processes and communications, and as a result, gross violations of the law, the absence of institutional mechanisms of civil control over the production of urban space.

In Tomsk Polytechnic University there is just scheduled an opening of the master's program "Sustainable urban development" with a focus of the program on the integration of people with special needs into society and supporting urban environment technologies.

The uniqueness of the opening program:

1. Emphasis on interdisciplinary and over-disciplinary researches: Information and communication technologies and urban studies + urbanism + socio-cultural designing + social (cultural) anthropology + cultural landscape study + mobile traffic (traffic studies) + crowdsourcing in solving urban problems + global city + Participatory design.
2. Design of a complex approach to the assessment of balanced development, multidimensional dynamic assessment of stability. Unbalanced economic growth has brought environmental pollution, depletion of natural resources, destruction of biodiversity, wars, deteriorating health and climate change to mankind.
3. Development of social technologies in order to attract atypical investors of significant urban projects. Approbation of technologies of attracting investments: the cities should invest in information and communication technologies, developing this infrastructure and various services, have to build intelligent digital "nervous system" which will support the development of the city. Graduates of the program will ensure stability and reproducibility of the processes.

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5. Conclusion

1. The study of social inequality, which is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon, has to be associated with the search for causal mechanisms that condition its appearance, including in the context of urban space development. The city is able to solve the problem of inequality through the planning and design of public spaces, possessing such features as inclusion, security and availability.

2. Policy and strategies on the municipal level have to provide planning, design and management of urban development. Provision of citywide distribution of public spaces is a way of reduction of inequality and redistribution of benefits from the side of authorities. The advantage of preparation of citywide strategy / policy is the preservation and creation of a network of high-quality public spaces. Without a clear strategy / policy it is difficult for local authorities to prioritise, plan and spend resources, to reveal and demonstrate the value of public spaces, as well as mitigate the negative consequences of certain processes (for example, gentrification). A strong strategic framework, on the basis of which the city plan is developed, plays a key role. Surprisingly, not all city plans contain enough guidance for creating, planning and designing public spaces.

3. It is possible to try to "cover" all the contradictions inherent in the modern city by using comparative Urbanism strategies, concepts of streams (tangible and intangible) and researches of local features of urban space.

4. Urban space is well adapted to the participatory approach. People's access to public space and participation in its creation is the first step towards improving the civil vital activity. The creation, protection, management and use of public space represent an ideal opportunity for involvement of all citizens with transformation of personal and differentiated interests into cooperation practices. Search for joint activities tools with the ensuring of the safety and maintenance of public space has stimulated the concept of places formation (place-making), which encourages people to collective decisions on rethinking and transforming public spaces and improving their environment. Public space allows the population to stay involved and take responsibility for their city.

5. Today in Russia a unified model of the desired urban development strategy has not formed yet, the concept of new urbanists has not grasped yet, and the dominant of capital and economic resource manifests spontaneously and also designs urban space with no visible patterns. It also appears that there are necessary legal and economic conditions for a socially responsible approach to urban development by constructing an inclusive space. The idea of an accessible, barrier-free, for all ages space, which is already being implemented in Russian cities is an essential and absolutely valid element of urban development concept in the philosophy of New Urbanism.

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