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PRACTICAL ASPECT OF TACTICAL URBANISM AS AN
ELEMENT OF TERRITORY MARKETING

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Abstract

This article explores the problems of tactical urbanism on the territory of the Russian Federation. The authors trace trends of territory's reconstruction that have developed in the society in recent years to meet the needs of the creative-minded population that forms individual requests for the reconstruction of territories. Since most of the Russian population lives in territories that are the legacy of the Soviet era, which shaped the habitation territories according to the principle of "a factory extension into the residential zone", such territory functioning in cities and settlements dissatisfies the population's new demands. Tactical urbanism is the answer to such demands, perceived as an initiative "from below" for the practical reconstruction of territories. It is precisely because of its peculiarity that tactical urbanism goes far beyond the territory of cities and begins to spread to larger formations. Practical urbanism is a mechanism that is capable of taking the territory to a new level. So far, this area of focus is only emerging in the Russian Federation, and in many respects neither the terminology nor the categorical concepts have yet been perfected. However, from a practical point of view, tactical urbanism is firmly embedded in the daily life of urban areas and territories that go beyond the city limits. It to a great extent determines the appearance of the territories today and makes a "request" for changes towards the authorities. These aspects become the research subject of this study.

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1. Introduction

Tactical urbanism represents a fairly new direction in the development of modern cities and larger territories. Tactical urbanism is mainly used today as an element of transformation of urban areas. In this sense, this concept occurred in Western urbanism not so long ago (Lydon & Garcia, 2019). However, today it has a strong presence in the Russian urban science. This is due to the fact that modern transformation of territories is experiencing several contradictory trends: on the one hand, in society, we can implement a request to change the habitat in the city, on the other hand, specifically in the Russian reality this request begins to go beyond the cities themselves. Therefore, there is a need to understand the practical aspect of tactical urbanism from a scientific point of view, not just on the example of the city, but also on the example of territories that are unified today on completely different grounds. In these unions, as evidenced in practice, the geographical factor no longer plays a major role.

2. Problem Statement

Marketing of modern territories is inconceivable without understanding the problem of territories of cities that they belong to, and without studying how these territories change under the influence of tactical urbanism. We are aware that understanding the problem of promoting, for example, industrial territories is inseparable in many respects from promoting the territories of certain industrial cities. However, in our opinion, there are tendencies to unite the territories of cities in conceptual and cultural terms into some larger territorial units, which in many respects exceed the borders of the cities themselves. That is why our study has the following sequence. We identify the challenges that can be traced today in marketing of modern cities, and then study them with regard to larger territories.

It is obvious that today, marketing of territories is a very controversial phenomenon. On the one hand, some of the trends that will be seen in cities in terms of the use of tactical urbanism can be safely retransmitted to the concept of a larger territory. On the other hand, tactical urbanism, which is well used today in cities, finds its application in the marketing of larger territories in a very specific and selective way. This phenomenon is noticeably transforming on a larger scale, and so far there are only certain hints about what direction this trend may take. That is why this issue needs to be understood within the totality of several social sciences, so this phenomenon can safely be called interdisciplinary.

3. Research Questions

When discussing the subject of our study, namely, marketing of territories at the current stage of development of socio-political relations in Russia, it is important to consider several aspects. First,

"today in Russia, 80 % of the population lives in cities. 70 % of urban development involves a typical industrial house, that is, more than 50 % of the population lives in standard apartments in typical industrial houses. This is our national type of housing, as a cottage is in America, and a townhouse – in England. And everywhere there is a minimum of life" (Revzin, 2019, p. 30).

Other researchers focus on the culture of cities, and say;

That in recent years, against the background of de-industrialization and periodic government financial crises, culture is more and more confidently taking place of the main business in the city, being the base for its attractiveness for tourists and unique competitive advantages. In this regard, urban marketing specialists are increasingly competing for tourist money and financial investment, promoting the image of the city as a center of cultural innovation, including trendy restaurants, avant-garde performances, and attractive architectural design. (Zukin, 2018, p. 63)

Of course, it should be borne in mind that such views are largely inherent in Western researchers (Ellard, 2020; Harvey, 2019; Jacobs, 2019), and not Russian ones. However, there are things that, in our opinion, may well relate to marketing of territories in the Russian Federation.

Thus, researchers tend to consider the city as a certain set of layers. This is convenient both from the point of view of management, and from the point of view of forming ideas about the territory. Moreover, it is the layers that express a certain hierarchy and are enclosed in our political system, which translates certain "codes" from the federal level of government to the local level, that have transformed all territories in a special way, starting from their origin. For example, some researchers, preferring a slightly different way of reasoning, still talk about a certain hierarchy in the management of territories, although they distinguish the "castes" that transformed cities: authorities, priests, workers, and merchants. The author concludes that for each caste, the city is represented in a certain way as a field for transformation. For example, for the authorities, space cuts into avenues; for the priests, the center is the temple; workers build working-class neighborhoods (or, in the west, there is deprived area as an extreme and negative example of tactical urbanism); merchants are interested in squares where money circulates. In general, even the architectural layers of the city can tell which administrative castes transformed the territories and at what time (Revzin, 2019).

Turning back to our message that the reaction to the change of territories, which comes from existing levels of the authorities and which is transformed from the federal to local level of the authorities, we can say with confidence that at the present stage of relations development, each of the levels of the authorities "requires" a certain place in the space of the city (or a larger territory that goes beyond the city boundaries). Such places may include, for example, palaces of justice, Houses of Friendship of Peoples, etc. Today these buildings occupy a fairly large place in urban areas.

However, an interesting trend has emerged in recent years. If all such buildings were "the signs" of the authorities and, for example, in industrial cities that were built mainly in the twentieth century, they were certain "centers", then today not only they have lost the status of the center, but also the buildings of municipal administrations have.

Of course, the "squares of folk festivals" are still the "meaning centers", codes, which, as a rule, are located near municipal administrations (for example, ice towns are built there during the New Year holidays). However, this phenomenon is no longer permanent, but rather seasonal. The city centers that residents prefer for their pastime have moved to retail outlets, widespread large indoor shopping centers, and to the spaces near them. This is just a sign of tactical urbanism: where there is a mass gathering of

people, a certain infrastructure of the city begins to develop: cafés, bakeries, entertainment centers are opened, territories are improved and landscaped, parking lots and small parks are created, etc.

It is specifically this phenomenon that can safely become the subject of tactical urbanism for larger territories. So, in marketing of modern territories, we feel a demand for individuality, for spaces that can embody this individuality, emphasize it, or even simply provide it. A modern industrial city and the space around it in its original form are incapable of doing it. As already mentioned, in the USSR, over 70 % of such territories were created with an entirely utilitarian purpose – to ensure the development of the country's industry. And cities in this case were built as spaces for people who provide production, that is, as a kind of "extension of the factory, attachment to it".

Larger territories, in fact, were formed for the same purpose: highways were built connecting production facilities and logistics. There could be no question of any urbanism with a "human face" in the conditions of that reality.

In modern conditions, there is a transformation of requests for the territory improvement. In society the demand for individuality has increased. Cities as they are can no longer meet these demands. An initiative is being born "from below" to transform not just a city, but the entire territory, far beyond the boundaries of one particular settlement. Therefore there is an increasingly urgent need for a certain rebranding of territories. Moreover, there is a request for construction of new facilities, which, in fact, are symbols of new urban mood of the population.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of our study can be defined as to research tactical urbanism within individual cities and larger territories. This purpose formulation is innovative not only from the point of view of theory, but also from the point of view of practical application. This arises from our historical development peculiarities. Goals of build-up for cities, regions and the whole country have always been determined by the authorities. The authorities as the main subject of policy established all strategies for developing territories of any scale in our country.

That is why the society's "request" for elements of tactical urbanism within certain territories can be safely regarded as a sign of the civil society formation that begins to transform the territories to suit its needs (Balynskaya & Vasilyeva, 2017). The society expresses such goal for the first time, perhaps it is still non-systemic in nature, but, to our mind, its manifestation is quite clear and definitely can be traced in the society. Therefore, it needs a comprehensive study.

5. Research Methods

The methodological basis of the study involves the principles of system-structural and structural-functional analysis generally accepted in the social sciences. It helps the authors to structure data about the modern city as an object of tactical urbanism and about modern territories. Also, these methods enable us to correlate the concepts of "city – a larger territory", which helps to understand how the cities themselves are able or unable to be independent objects of tactical urbanism in terms of promoting their own image to higher levels.

The authors use the methods of concrete historical analysis. It allows us to identify the pool of transformation directions of cities and territories that determine marketing of territorial units in the public consciousness at the present stage of the development of social relations.

The paper also uses the categories of classical logic, the cognitive capabilities of comparative and dialectical methods, the combination of which resulted in identifying common and particular features in different territories and the peculiarities of their promotion. The tools of sociological science are actively used, without which, according to the authors, an objective and convincing study of the stated processes is impossible: document analysis, content analysis, and the method of participatory observation.

6. Findings

It is safe to say that all the trends discussed above are transmitted into larger-scale trends. And in this regard, we can already talk about marketing of a large territory. There are various practical examples. So, the city of Magnitogorsk starts an ambitious project on the construction of the center "Prityazhenie" (meaning in English: "Attraction"), comprising an area of several tens of hectares. This is an initiative to redevelop the existing territory, a "request" for a new type of urban environment.

We can say that the Prityazhenie center, which will include medical centers, museums, parks, sports grounds, is perceived today as the opposite of the very dedication of the city, originally conceived as an "urban area attached to the factory", where people were perceived as maintenance personnel.

We can give more examples: the decision to form the Sirius center on the basis of the children's camp "Abzakovo" on the territory of the Republic of Bashkortostan in order to form an Olympic reserve among the younger generation.

These examples suggest that the transformation of territories is no longer associated with any particular city or subject of the federation. This unit is much larger and, most importantly, is conceived as a place, a growth point, an image-building module of the new content of "industrial territory in the Urals" (Balynskaya, 2014). The name that we gave this territory is very conditional, but it reflects the essence of changes that are taking place.

Another trend, which is noted by several researchers, is related to the fact that in the modern world, the subject that begins to rebuild territories is not the authorities, but the working class (or, as researchers call them, "caste") (Revzin, 2019). It is here that the creative component is released, which is able to promote and create new cultural codes and meanings. The authorities begin to "follow" these ideas.

As an example, it is possible to mention the action that took place in many regions of the federation, where the authorities invited discussion on possible points of territory's transformation, and the population chose a project for reconstruction and approved the plan for this reconstruction at open community meetings. As a rule, voting on these issues was combined with regional elections, which attracted a large number of respondents for the opinion poll. Of course, such scheme has caused a lot of criticism, because due to their connection with the elections, one way or another, there is a correlation in the public consciousness with the government structures, which are still perceived as the subject of territory changes. However, the very practical solution, which depended on the population, can be considered as a step towards the implementation of practical urbanism at least at the city level.

Another phenomenon overlaps with this one. Researchers mention that in practice, there is a general trend that small project ideas take root in the public consciousness much better than global ones (Revzin, 2019). From our point of view, this selective point-by-point reconstruction of the territories for their own clearly formulated needs is now becoming the main trend of practical urbanism. Perhaps this is a trend that also relocates into the marketing of territories larger than just city ones.

Another aspect is important to note in terms of this problem. If a huge number of cities in Russia (over 70 %) are the legacy of the Soviet era, then it is logical that these territories are experiencing a crisis today. On the one hand, they need to move away from the state of "being mono"; on the other hand, it is important for these territories to quickly differentiate and join the global trends in the transition to "smart" technologies (Limarev et al., 2020). Smart technologies are just the answer to a request for creative ideas. Creative ideas can be generated by different subjects, but in today's situation mainly the middle class is the initiators of creativity. These are the workers, the intellectuals, not the authorities.

Such formulation of the problem in the practical field and in terms of theory, results in some contradictions, because creative ideas require a large number of free-thinking people, including the youth. While industrial areas are experiencing an outflow of the younger generation to the capital cities today. This increases the role of provincial educational institutions, public organizations, etc., not just in retaining the young generation, but also in implementing this young generation's ideas in relation to their city or larger territories.

7. Conclusion

We conclude by formulating the challenges that marketing of territories faces today. First, the territories that today fall under the idea of promotion in the public consciousness of the whole country go beyond the cities boundaries and cease to relate to a certain city or subject of the federation. This is a type of community, an association of several urban (and not only urban) territories, which may include municipalities or other settlements (such as Agapovka near Magnitogorsk), which have similar trends in their development, as well as similar problems.

Secondly, it seems to us that marketing of such territories can be very similar in its methods of promoting a new image and cultural meanings.

Speaking about tactical urbanism, we simultaneously raise the problem of marketing such territories, because today ideological and cultural struggle is increasing, as already mentioned, not just for the younger generation, for their attention and creative thinking in relation to certain territories. There is a struggle for self-identification of such territories within the country. In particular, marketing is also aimed at forming the views of government structures at the federal level about certain territories, about their success / failure, the prospects for investing resources, etc. The authorities at the highest level continue (in accordance with the established scheme) to allocate resources to different territories. These resources are not always evenly distributed and meet the needs of residents. That is why marketing of territories in its new understanding – using the techniques of tactical urbanism – is a phenomenon that, from our point of view, will develop quite actively in our country in the next few years. We even assume that the frequency of tactical urbanism in practice can be mainly a criterion for the civil society development and then form the basis for evaluating the territories effectiveness in terms of government structures.

Third, the engines and initiators of new meanings formation are not the authorities, but the ordinary population that today begins to feel the demand for individuality and originality. In this regard, those "remnants" of industrial development, in which the majority of the population lives today, are just factors that contribute to a certain protest thinking and the formation of creative thought and creative ideas. The examples involve numerous changes that are taking place today under the public influence: rebranding of the symbols of numerous territories, unification of several centers of authorities to promote tourist sites (the project "Prityazhenie", "Arkaim" in the Chelyabinsk region, etc.).

That is why the marketing of territories with the use of elements of tactical urbanism is both a scientific problem, first raised in this context for researchers and requiring a comprehensive approach to its solution; at the same time, it is also a practical plane where the creative class finds the implementation of its ideas. In this respect, the issue is highly interesting, well-timed, and multifaceted.

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