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STAVROPOL SOCIOCULTURAL FEATURES AS AN OBJECT OF STUDY OF THE HISTORY

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Abstract

The article is an analysis of the organisation of environmental space in the provincial town of Stavropol (Kavkazsky) in the XX century. A brief review of the literature on historical urbanism and historical sources describing the city of Stavropol in the early 19th – early 20th centuries is made. The life continuum of an individual is considered from the internal and external spheres. Hence, domestic, family life is contrasted with the broad field of socialisation. On the basis of the thesis that the urban environment has a high level of symbolism, functional zones are distinguished, each of which is considered separately. The existing specificity of the urban environment, obviously, leaves imprints on the personality type of a city dweller. Interpersonal interaction in cities differs from traditional family and clan, community, comradeship and other known forms of interpersonal interaction. As the post-reform period saw the erosion of class barriers, Russian society developed an increasingly distinct differentiation not by class, but by occupation, income and earnings. Within the provincial towns of Stavropol province, noble, merchant and bourgeois cultures intersected quite often, depending on the enrichment or ruin of its representatives.

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1. Introduction

The polyfunctionality of urban everyday life, its constant combination of economic, administrative and cultural functions, contributes to the inexhaustible interest in this topic. The relevance of the topic is also connected with the reliance on the regional approach in the study of the history of everyday life. The everyday life of the population of provincial cities with its specific economic way of life, diversity of economic and cultural contacts, ethnic diversity, has found little reflection in scientific works (Migda, 2021).

Everyday life is considered as a phenomenon of reality by researchers of all socially oriented sciences. It is undeniable that the humanistic orientation of modern scientific thought has manifested itself in many applied studies and has become part of the methodological toolkit (Yablonskaya & Yablonskaya, 2019). In the modern scientific world, the question of the need to find a new approach capable of providing a synthesis of many knowledge in order to obtain a holistic picture, taking into account the inclusion in the real relations and connections of the social subject is increasingly raised (Yablonskaya & Yablonskaya, 2019).

The literature devoted to the analysis of the socio-cultural space of the urban environment is of interest for this study. For the first time, the question of the role of the city as a generating centre of cultural values, where the synthesis of innovations and traditions in culture takes place, was raised in the 1920s in the scientific research of I. M. Gravs and N. P. Antsiferov (Mele, 2022; Nikulin, 2023; Rawel, 2022). They consider urban culture as a socio-historical phenomenon, where "everything accumulated over the centuries is merged in a single integral image" (Antsiferov, 1926, p. 74).

Soviet historiography insists that folk culture was the basis and nourishing environment of the city; however, this did not prevent the townspeople from actively participating in the processing of old and creation of new cultural values, in the development of material and spiritual culture of the people as a whole. M. G. Rabinovich's ethnographic approach to the study of Russian city life in the IX–XIX centuries is interesting, where the urban life is presented in all its diversity: the occupations of townspeople, ethnic processes, customs and rituals (Grevs, 1921). B. N. Mironov, having studied the development of Russian cities in the period from 1740 to 1860, comes to the conclusion about the reduction of urban land resources by the middle of the XIX century due to the growth in the number of townspeople, the development of horizontal social mobility and increasing property differentiation of the urban population (Grevs, 1925).

In the works of modern urbanists-researchers, a new approach to the study of the city has been developed, which takes into account its polyfunctionality. A significant place in modern sociology and urbanism is occupied by S. V. Pirogov's lecture course "Sociology of the City" (Rabinovich, 1978). Although the object of comprehensive study here is the city of the XX – XXI centuries, the methodological approaches and structural principles developed by the author are universal. In the framework of the concept of city structure, S. V. Pirogov defines the concept of urban environment, analyses the structure of urban territory and urban space, reveals the dynamic processes of urban life and the specifics of urban lifestyle (Collet-Sabé, 2023; Manakbayeva, 2023; Sheveleva, 2024). For the study of everyday human practices, his experience of considering the unity of object and subject structures of

life activity, proclaiming the phenomenon of the city as a place of intersection of territorial and settlement, socio-social and mental structures, analytical development of lifestyle in terms of quantitative and qualitative characteristics is particularly interesting (Mironov, 1990).

2. Problem Statement

Therefore, in the early twentieth century, the territory under study included the provincial city of Stavropol in the Caucasus and the county town of Holy Cross. The cultural and historical landscape of Stavropol province had a number of significant differences compared to its neighbouring administrative districts of the Terek and Kuban provinces. "The gateway of the Caucasus", Stavropol, was a territory of mixing many nationalities, however, the influence of mountain culture and traditions of Islam was felt here to a lesser extent, as it was in the cities of the Terek region. On the other hand, the Kuban was a place of concentration of traditional Cossack culture (Rabinovich, 1988).

The scientific study of the cities of Stavropol province, along with other cities of the North Caucasus region, began in the middle of the 19th century. The works of local historians I. V. Betkovsky, K. Bakhutov, A. I. Tvalcheridze, G. N. Prozritelev are of particular value for the study (Giza, 2024; Mambetova et al., 2024; Mascareno & Chavez, 2024).

I. V. Bentkovsky's observations are very important for the study of the everyday life of the population, relating to its smallest details: from climatic conditions to the socio-economic and cultural development of Stavropol. Of particular importance for our study is the information on the topography of Stavropol with the mapping of the city districts, culturally important buildings, as well as, modern terms, "places of social activity" of the population. The accompanying sketches of everyday life are very interesting (Pirogov, 2023).

The thesis "Medico-topography and sanitary condition of the provincial city of Stavropol" of doctor K. Bakhutov, dating back to 1881, provided invaluable assistance in writing our work. It is an in-depth study of hygienic living conditions of different strata of the city population, with detailed descriptions of living quarters, activities of citizens, medical assessment of their health (Barmina, 2009, p. 32).

A. I. Tvalcheridze's work "Stavropol Province in Statistical, Geographical, Historical and Agricultural Relations" can be called a guide to Stavropol Province. The author described the settlements according to a certain scheme, finding out the most accurate geographical, historical and statistical information. Tvalcheridze captured the life of the population only partially, when describing the main occupations of the population (Bentkovsky, 2005).

A great contribution to the study of the history of the region was made by G. N. Prozritelev, a prominent public figure of Stavropol, who collected and published extensive material on the history of settlements, social and economic history of the region (Bakhutov, 2005).

3. Research Questions

Object-territorial complexes of the city have their own semantic content, but most importantly, they construct a communicative space. Distinguish two main limits of the "flow" of everyday life: the boundaries of personal households and the territory of the city common to the entire urban society.

4. Purpose of the Study

We consider the city space as a "text of history" and as a "text of socio-cultural dialogue". A text is a meaningfully interconnected sequence of any signs. In this understanding, from the position of cultural studies and semiotics, a text is all those artefacts that are coded in a certain way; they are functional and the result of the subject's intentional action.

5. Research Methods

The time and places of everyday life are inseparable from each other and, together, form the so-called locus of environment. In territorial terms, it is divided into a broad field of social interaction and a narrow personal space of life.

In traditional societies, the rhythm of human life was very close to the natural cycle, i.e. it is regulated by the solstice. The scanty candlelight did not favour a long period of wakefulness. Since the end of the 19th century, the streets of Stavropol were illuminated by artificial light of lanterns (Stavropol began to use "spirit gas" since 1850), and even these "benefits of civilisation" were spread, according to contemporaries, only on the central streets, the outskirts and suburbs of the city were plunged into darkness (Barmina, 2009, p. 33). Hence, the "morning" and "evening" of the population began and ended quite early. "Day" was the most productive time of day; it was the period of household chores, studies, professional activities. Such broad semiotic approach extends in general to the understanding of culture as a textual system (Tvalcheridze, 2021).

The urban environment has a high level of symbolism: behavioural programmes are encoded in it; material space turns into objectified attributes of communities. S.V. Pirogov calls the urban environment "socio-cultural ecology of a city dweller" (Rabinovich, 1978, p.36).

Let us distinguish two main limits of the "flow" of everyday life: the boundaries of personal households and the territory of the city common to the entire urban society. The boundary between them divided the individual's life continuum into internal and external spheres. Thus, the domestic, family life is opposed to the broad field of socialisation.

The city of Stavropol, as K. Bakhutov put it, had in the early 19th – early 20th centuries a "sharply highland" position. Historically it happened that the entire territory of the city was divided into four districts or four "parts" (Barmina, 2009, p. 45). The main public and government buildings were located in the "second part", sometimes called the "old town". It was the best and most beautiful part of the city, which is typical of all power-administrative centres (Prozritelev, 2021, p. 15). Here was also the main street, transport artery Nikolaevsky Prospekt (otherwise, Bolshaya Cherkasskaya). It was wide enough, "at the edges paved with slabs of siliceous limestone, and in some places in the middle it was paved with

rubble" (Barmina, 2009, p. 55). Houses and shops of beautiful architecture at every step were decorated with amusing signs of craftsmen (Barmina, 2009). The club, theatre, Olga women's gymnasium and Roman Catholic church were located there. "As the best part, understandably, it is inhabited by the best and richest citizens of the city and represents the centre of its commercial and administrative life" (Bentkovsky, 2005, p. 62).

According to the theoretical understanding of the everyday space of a settlement, it is invariably territorially united and in terms of socio-cultural meaning opposes the power-administrative, sacral-religious and festive-recreational space. Therefore, squares are spaces adjacent to religious and administrative buildings that played an important role in the organisation of urban space in Stavropol Kavkazsky. In the pre-revolutionary period, there were eight of them: Aleksandrovsкая, Varvarinskaya, Kazanskaya, Cathedral, Petropavlovskaya, Sobornaya, Sofievskaya, Yarmarochnaya (Bentkovsky, 2005). They served as shopping centres and were high-traffic areas, especially on fair days.

The most important and very popular places were those of sacral significance, i.e. places of location of churches and temples, of which there were twenty-six in Stavropol by the beginning of the twentieth century, including 2 monasteries, 1 Roman Catholic church, 1 Protestant church, 1 synagogue and 1 Armenian church (Bentkovsky, 2005).

Since the Industrial Revolution, a new functional zone, which can be called the working sector, has been formed in cities. In Stavropol, it was located in the I part of the city, where most of the factories processing livestock products were concentrated. According to K. Bakhutov, they "spread the stench" and created in this part of the city.

Extremely unhealthy in hygienic terms air ... as a heavy, rarely moving mass [air] constantly hangs in the form of fog, producing terrible dampness and significant malaria, which is why the contingent of fevers among those living here is the largest. (Barmina, 2009, p. 23)

The population of this part of the city consisted of lower officials, burghers and retired soldiers.

The third part occupied the southern tip of the city and included the following areas: Mamayskaya, Mutnyanskaya, Aulnaya, Kamenolomnaya, Karabinskaya and Novo-Forshtadtskaya. Rich vegetation allowed local residents to have a garden or vegetable garden, "especially for commercial purposes at their extensive (sometimes several dessiatinas) estates" (Barmina, 2009, p. 11). There burghers resided who moved from different provinces of Russia and villages of Stavropol province, as well as a small number of retired soldiers, who were also assigned to the burghers.

In the fourth part of the city, there were mostly families of retired soldiers, whose main occupation was gardening and horticulture. Bakhutov considers this part of the population to be relatively wealthy, "although even here, sometimes, the population was poor, did not differ from the rural inhabitants of the provinces" (Barmina, 2009, p. 36).

According to "Lists of populated places of Stavropol province" of 1909, the city of Stavropol Kavkazsky had the following public institutions: 3 banks, city pawnshop, fire society, people's house, 5 libraries and reading rooms, lodging house, Museum of the North Caucasus, City Museum, 3 outpatient clinics and 2 clubs (Yablonskaya & Yablonskaya, 2019, p. 28).

The water supply of Stavropol was provided by 2 water pipelines, city wells and pools, wells on private estates and springs (Yablonskaya & Yablonskaya, 2019).

It is obvious that despite the prevalence of the traditional, similar to rural, way of life, the city by the early twentieth century is transformed, acquiring the essential characteristics of the space of communication.

R. Park, an adherent of the socio-ecological concept, perceived the city as a natural phenomenon; in his opinion, the situation of the city is a situation of endless change, struggle of the new with the old, rivalry of views and ways of life. Conflict and consensus were seen in this concept as interrelated and complementary sides of a single evolutionary process, the process of communication. A greater information saturation of the urban environment, compared to the rural environment, determines its wide choice of behavioural patterns and a high level of social differentiation.

6. Findings

So, the architectonics of the city of Stavropol in the early 19th – early 20th centuries was characterised by special richness and symbolism. And although the mentality of the population was still oriented to the traditional, rural way of life, intensification of industrial production, trade, social life, urban development, all these factors provided the necessary conditions for modernisation of everyday life of the urban population.

7. Conclusion

The existing specificity of the urban environment, obviously, leaves imprints on the personality type of a city dweller. Interpersonal interaction in cities differs from traditional family and clan, community, comradeship and other known forms of interpersonal interaction. As the post-reform period saw the erosion of class barriers, Russian society developed an increasingly distinct differentiation not by class, but by occupation, income and earnings. Within the provincial towns of Stavropol province, noble, merchant and bourgeois cultures intersected quite often, depending on the enrichment or ruin of its representatives.

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