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**SPECIFICS OF THE CAPITAL IN SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE:  
CULTURAL ASPECT**

**Kniazeva E.D.**

Theoretical reflection on the problems of the capital has not had enough attention from scientists until recently. Increasing of the number of capitals at the end of the 20th century, the processes of globalization and the awareness of the lack of scientific knowledge about the phenomenon of a capital attracted historians, sociologists and economists to work on the modern megalopolis. In this article is made an effort to unlock the potential of cultural aspect at the study of the capitals. In this context especially important is the presentation of the question on the legality of the transfer of the accumulated knowledge about the city on the capital's territorial formation.

**Keywords:** city, capital, modern metropolis, cultural space, cultural approach.

**СПЕЦИФИКА СТОЛИЦЫ В НАУЧНОМ ЗНАНИИ:  
КУЛЬТУРОЛОГИЧЕСКИЙ АСПЕКТ**

**Князева Е.Д.**

Теоретическая рефлексия по проблематике столицы до недавнего времени не имела должного внимания со стороны ученых. Увеличение количества столиц в конце XX века, процессы глобализации и осознание недостаточности научного знания о феномене столичности привлекло историков, социологов, экономистов к работе по теме современного столичного мегаполиса. В настоящей статье предпринята попытка раскрыть потенциал культурологического взгляда на исследование столиц. В данном контексте особенно важной становится постановка вопроса о правомерности переноса накопленного знания о городе на столичное территориальное образование.

**Ключевые слова:** город, столица, современный мегаполис, культурное пространство, культурологический подход.

The state in the postmodern era is unthinkable by the modern person without its administrative and political centre – the capital. The explanatory dictionary of Russian of V.I. Dahl gives such definition “the capital – capital, the capital city, main, the first in the state where the highest government, the sovereign stays” [7, c. 625]. It is remarkable, that in other dictionaries (S.I. Ojegov, D.N. Ushakov, V.V. Lopatin) as the main characteristic of the capital status of the settlement is the residence of the head of the state and government institutions specified.

The appeal to etymology of the word “capital” showed that today two main approaches to understanding of this lexeme were created. The first version with big degree of clarity confirms the definition which entered dictionaries and claims about etymological communication of the words “capital”, “table” and “throne”. “The noun the capital is noted in dictionaries since the 18th century (if more precisely, since 1704 – *the note of the author*). It is formed from the word a table “a chair, a throne” by means and of a suffix ‘-its’. In the modern Russian the suffix ‘-its’ is not allocated: capital” [10]. The second approach finds communication of “capital” and “face” – a unique image which represents all country on the world scene [9]. So, the word “capital” brings us closer to understanding of this phenomenon and within culturological approach.

In an increment of scientific knowledge of capital megalopolises there is also significant logical conclusion: “capital (A):  $\Leftrightarrow$  the city (B)” that means “A by definition is equivalent B”. Also, in our case the statement of  $A \cap B$  will be lawful, that is there is a set of the elements belonging to A and B. It is important for the real research that “in the course of an stipulating there is a transfer of some structure from a condition to stipulated. On the basis of this transfer are all types of creation, perception, transfer, storage, processing and use of information in technical systems and live organisms carried out” [4, c. 106]. Obviously, on the one hand the capital megalopolis has all characteristics of the city (the area of the territory, quantitative and qualitative structure of the population, level of economic development), at the same time, has certain specifics as object of scientific research.

Urban settlements as centre of material, spiritual, human resources were

always objects of fixed studying of philosophers, historians, sociologists, geographers. Results of these researches, mainly, depended on scientific specialization, world outlook views and methodological installations of specific scientists. It is remarkable that “a problem of the cities as the field of a scientific reflection began to be formed at a boundary between the 18th and 19th centuries as an independent branch of science the urbanistics developed in the middle of the 20th century. Now extensive interdisciplinary area of the researches devoted to the cities and processes of their development call urbanistics though it is more correct to speak about researches of an urbanistic orientation” [6, c. 74].

Theoretical aspects of the city from the standpoint of cultural approach in domestic and foreign historiography evolved unevenly. Western scholars during the 20th and early 21st centuries notably excelled in studies on the so-called urban cultural studies. Among them are classics – J. Baudrillard, M. Weber, A. Toynbee, O. Spengler; among American experts are highlighted L. Mumford and K. Lynch, German scientists – K. Bucher and G. Simmel; among Russian researchers should be noted I.M. Grevs and his followers N.P. Antsiferov and L.B. Kogan, M.S. Kagan, A.A. Svanidze and later works of N.S. Galushina, V.S. Glazychev, L.B. Boriskova.

Among them, especial scientific interest, in our view, are works of Russian culturologists, as the common historical memory and a set of values, ideals, beliefs, defining life of the two nations, Russian and Belarusian, naturally formed a single “socio-cultural world” and laid similar types of cities therein.

It is important to note that in the late twenties and at the beginning of the 30th of the last century at a stage of genesis of the Soviet scientific knowledge of a city perspective has been admitted the considerable gap in urbanistic researches when complete studying of city cultural space has been curtailed due to the opposition of the “socialist” city “capitalist”. At the same time, “from the 1930s between the USSR and the West was manifested delimitation on an ideological basis, even in the interpretation of the term urbanism: in the USSR the theory and practice of building cities was divided into two: bourgeois and socialist, that is, urbanism and urban planning accordingly” [3, c. 23]. Only several decades later, between the 50th and

60th of the 20th century, the attention of the Soviet researchers was paid to a city perspective again that led to emergence of new considerable opening in this field.

Retrospective of urban studies in the Republic Belarus has shown that even after 1960 begins fruitful work of national scientists Z.Y. Kopysskoi, A.P. Gritskevich, A.P. Ignatenko, Y.V. Chanturia. Undoubted scientific importance in the context of the problematic of the Belarusian city is the work Doctor of historical sciences, professor Z.V. Shibeko “Cities of Belarus (60 years between 19th and 20th centuries)”, “Minsk hundred years ago” and others. V.A. Bobkov, M.P. Kostyuk, S.V. Boris, A.M. Litvin, I.I. Satsukevich, V.I. Golubovich, A.F. Samusik, I.N. Braim were engaged in directly capital problematic. Generally the works are of descriptive character considering the Belarusian capital in a historical foreshortening, at the same time, of course, they represent obvious theoretical value for modern culturological researches. Now Minsk is of scientific interest to O.M. Sokolova who studies capital cultural space by means of semiotics approach.

Increasing of interest of scientists from different fields of science to urban themes over the last century can be easily explained. Significant scale of urbanization today: an increase of the number of settlements that received city status, the intensive growth of cities themselves, as well as widespread of urban lifestyle and urban cultural patterns has led to the need to study and analyse these processes. “To understand what is urbanization, then answer the following, for example, questions: why in the process of its development, society creates a special form, as a city; why the importance of the city and related forms of life, culture grow constantly; why society has a tendency to turn into a city, urban society, etc.” [2, c. 43].

Indeed, there are many questions, and in the context of the study of the specificity of the cultural space of the capital cities, there are a number of questions, requiring solutions by scientists more. A significant contribution to the scientific knowledge on the problematic of the capital metropolis makes literature on general cultural studies (E.N. Skvortsova, M.S. Kagan, A.S. Karmin, A.Y. Flier). These basic sources form the basis of understanding of the capital as a whole and unique phenomenon, offer methodological keys to the solution of the original problem. For

example, based on the fundamental cultural knowledge, we can describe the mechanisms of cultural dynamics in the capital, to follow the rhythm of the cultural processes, determine the degree of diffusion of the capital culture or the type of socio-cultural changes for a certain period of time.

In the context of this article it is notable for the fact that if on the urban Culture issues to the modern scientist has to rely, in the study of the cultural space of the capital there are less actual scientific developments from the standpoint of cultural analysis. For example, in the dissertation of E.A. Trofimova “The Cultural Space of the modern megalopolis: horizons of optimization (on materials of Moscow)” made an attempt to resolve this contradiction.

E.A. Trofimova considers the prospects for socio-cultural development of the capital, starting from the identified features changes in the socio-cultural processes in post-Soviet Russia. The findings of the research and the proposed E.A. Trofimova recommendations are practical importance in the design of a regional model of cultural policy. The author sees the problem of the transition from the management policies of the Soviet era to the regulatory culture cultural policy as an important aspect of the democratic state formation [13]. The theoretical significance of this finding points to the need to define the proportion of the capital management culture, as this factor is one of the most important among the specific characteristics of the territorial capital.

At other variables status of the capital carries certain specificity; it imposes on local authorities more responsible for the formation of the capital's image and transforms such a city in the strategically important object state. Appeal to the scientific methods and cultural analysis to determine the scale of the capital of the cultural heritage, development of cultural infrastructure, the degree of artistic activity, the level of library science, etc. The important is to build a system of various forms of organized leisure of metropolitan residents and numerous visitors of the capital through the scientific understanding of the scope of current entertainment trends. Another study by the vector from the position of cultural analysis may be to determine the specific role of capital in the international cultural cooperation.

Considering the current globalization process, this direction research becomes particularly relevance in the specific context of the capital cities.

The undoubted theoretical importance for the disclosure aspect of the cultural specificity of the capital territorial formation is the dissertational work by N.S. Galushina “City as an object of cultural studies”. In this work are offered the bases of a culturological typology of the cities; are allocated and considered as the most significant ancient, medieval and Soviet types of the city. N.S. Galushina's remark on a city perspective “exclusive versatility of this phenomenon was the reason that it became an object of geographical, demographic, social, architectural and historical researches. The complexity of the object caused objectivity, fragmentary of its consideration: none of these sciences could not "accommodate" a city in its entirety, to explore its full enough” can be fully attributed to the capital [5, c. 12].

Really, realization of the principle of integrity plays an important role in the system analysis of such developing objects what the city is. This principle demands to conduct a research so that to understand an object as an interconnection of its major elements. Thus, the cultural space of the capital as difficult system depending on the put forward criteria will be subdivided into system levels. For solution of the problem of integrity of an object of N.S. Galushina offers the scheme establishing connection of a cultural, social and mental projection of the city at what the priority is given defining – a cultural component [5]. We'll go further and suppose that cultural space of the capital can be represented as a unity of its dynamic and static components. From this perspective, the cultural space of the capital looks like a creative harmony and everyday focus of human activity. Thus, it is found effective the most productive approach to understanding the culture in which culture can be subdivided on the material and spiritual [12]. Cultural activity as system is built on the basis of unity of two ways of its implementation (reproductive and creative) and three spheres of application: subject and practical, spiritual and practical and spiritual and theoretical. Accordingly, each of these components can be described as a relatively independent system.

A study of the various existing models of metropolitan territorial entities is difficult to place in one of the scientific approach within a certain discipline. “The theme of the capital, the capital and the change of capitals in general, seems to be too large, multifaceted and ideographic for general theorizing, broad generalizations and universal recommendations. Here the subject of the analyse does not lend itself well and seemed to resist such a large and broad generalizations” [11, с. 17].

In a comprehensive study of the capital metropolis there are many different variables that are often in diametrically opposite spheres and therefore with great difficulty give in to no one general account. Cultural studies, as we see it, more than other Sciences, can make progress on this difficult path of development of scientific knowledge about capitals of the world. Reserve culturological approach allows, for example, to identify the “imageability” and clarity “legibility” of the Metropolitan environment [14], to detect the specific cultural realities, to reveal the “soul” of the city [1], to understand the causal relationships in the Metropolitan cultural processes.

The cultural space of the modern capital metropolis requires speedy scientific understanding. Currently available reserve of cultural knowledge about the capital seems inadequate. Among other things, this is due to the accelerating pace of everyday life, which is reflected in the culture of the city, and interrelated processes of globalization and informatization. Cultural Studies has yet to contribute to the study of the specificity of capital territorial entities and new knowledge will be an important discovery, since the capital “is used as a symbol of something good, cultural, spiritualizing” [8, с. 421].

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**Data about the author:**

Kniazeva Ekaterina Dmitrievna – graduate student of Historical and Cultural Heritage of Belarus Department, National Institute for Higher Education (Minsk, Belarus).

**Сведения об авторе:**

Князева Екатерина Дмитриевна – аспирант кафедры историко-культурного наследия Беларуси Республиканского института высшей школы (Минск, Беларусь).

**E-mail:** [kate.kniazeva@gmail.com](mailto:kate.kniazeva@gmail.com).