

SYMBOLIC CAPITAL AS A BRAND TOOL OF SOCIOCULTURAL LIFE (ON THE MATERIAL OF THE NORTHERN CITIES OF THE REPUBLIC OF SAKHA (YAKUTIA))

IRENA KHOKHOLOVA

Institute of Modern Languages and International Studies
M.K. Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University
ul. Belinskogo, 58, Yakutsk, 677000, Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Russia

E-mail address: iskhokholova@mail.ru

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0066-7537>

NATALIA DANILOVA

Institute for Humanities Research and Indigenous Studies
of the North of Siberian branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences
ul. Petrovskogo, 1, Yakutsk, 677000, Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Russia

E-mail address: dan_nataliksen@mail.ru

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3728-5738>

ALINA VASILEVA

Institute of Modern Languages and International Studies
M.K. Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University
ul. Belinskogo, 58, Yakutsk, 677000, Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Russia

E-mail address: alinavasilyeva88@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9779-6823>

MARINA KYSYLBAIKOVA

Institute of Modern Languages and International Studies
M.K. Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University
ul. Belinskogo, 58, Yakutsk, 677000, Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Russia

E-mail address: kysylbaikova@mail.ru

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2082-3883>

KYUNNEY PESTEREVA

Institute of History, M.K. Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University
ul. Belinskogo, 58, Yakutsk, 677000, Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Russia

E-mail address: pestereva17@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6270-1230>

DARYANA MAKSIMOVA

Department of Canada, Institute for the USA and Canada Studies

Russian Academy of Sciences

Khlebny lane, 2/3, Moscow, 123997, Russia

E-mail address: daryana.maximova@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8417-2878>

SEMYON DYACHKOVSKI

Ministry of Culture and Spiritual Development of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)

pr. Lenina, 30, Yakutsk, 677000, Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Russia

E-mail address: simon_dn83@mail.ru

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5861-605X>

ABSTRACT

Aim. The aim of the research is to study the symbolic capital of northern cities (semiotic potential) contained in “urban texts” and the influence of the historical memory of a multiethnic region on the political process of the region and the country as a whole, through a comprehensive and interdisciplinary study of the symbolic space of cities in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia).

Methods. The study used the cognitive approach, the method of space-time analysis, and the method of historicism and questionnaire survey. Symbolic space as a text is a heterogeneous content.

Results. The results of the study show the importance of a symbolic resource as a brand tool, first, depending on the political context and introduction into the collective memory through a constant “reminder” of its importance and significance in the socio-cultural and everyday life of citizens. The resulting databases of monuments served as the basis for compiling a virtual album of monuments and art objects in the cities of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). The research results can practically be applied in the field of education, politics, culture, in the study and promotion of the cultural and historical heritage of the regions of Russia.

Conclusions. The urgent problem is the task of preserving the accumulated experience and values, places of memory, relics of the past, as well as ideas about the past that are stored in the memory of its inhabitants and the transfer of this knowledge to the younger generation.

Key words: symbolic city space, monuments, art objects, cities of Yakutia, north, identity, cognitive perception, politic process

The “national” component in the system of identification landmarks in the era of globalisation loses its former normative significance for positioning an individual with a political society, therefore, “place identity” acts as a psychological compensator from blurring such landmarks, which can support emotional and symbolic supports for a person. Regional identity, adapted to the symbolic supports (images) of the small homeland, in this vein, plays an important role in building stable universal and particularistic reference points of identity.

To characterise the influence of various aspects of spatial identities on regional relations, we have selected the northern cities of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) as an example.

Today the city for many remains the most favorable form for living a comfortable life, so it is not surprising that there is a constant increase in the urban population due to the outflow from rural areas and internal migration from other regions. Thus, the city in its potential provides a dynamic course of economic, political, socio-cultural, communication, microevolutionary and other processes, acting as a matrix for the life arrangement and life support of citizens.

The aim of the research is to study the symbolic capital of northern cities (semiotic potential) contained in "urban texts" and the influence of the historical memory of a multiethnic region on the political process of the region and the country as a whole, through a comprehensive and interdisciplinary study of the symbolic space of cities in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia).

METHODOLOGY AND TECHNIQUES

In this work, we rely on the concept of "places of memory" by Pierre Nora, which embodies the unity of the spiritual and the material, which over time and by the will of people became a symbolic element of the heritage of the national memory of the community (Nora, 1989). Places in which, according to Nora, national memory is embodied are monuments (of culture and nature), holidays, emblems, celebrations in honor of people or events, etc. In this context, the action of the structures of socio-historical memory is defined through the term "commemoration," which unites all the numerous ways by which the memory of the past is consolidated, preserved and transmitted in society (Hallbwachs, 2004).

The mention of memory, commemoration, coupled with the cultural landscape for the formation of social identity, we find even earlier in Lester Rowntree, Margaret Conkey. The authors point out that four components play in the formation of social identity, expressed and reflected in the symbolic landscape: 1. heritage and memory – historical documentation and observation of changes in the landscape and cultural heritage sites under the influence of time. 2. commemoration – the choice of those values and meanings that must be preserved 3. representation and modeling – the means chosen to represent memory and its meaning. 4. goals and functions – the purpose of the cultural landscape (Rowntree & Conkey, 1980).

An important factor can be considered the potential contained in the cultural and symbolic sphere of urban space, which is demonstrated through various "city texts." In our work we proceed from the definitions of the city of Yuri Lotman, Vladimir Toporov and others as a "semiotic code" and a heterogeneous text filled with meaning (Lotman, 2000; Toporov, 1995).

Proceeding from this, this article makes an attempt to identify the "cultural code" contained in various symbolic images and metaphors of the urban

space, which constitute the “urban text of culture.” It should be noted that it is the text, myth and symbol, as key concepts for the semiotics of space that create the main markers of cognitive perception of objects of commemoration.

In turn, the reading of the urban text is built on the relationship of society, its memory and experience associated with the cultural landscape. “Societies, developing a culture of memory of the past, produce their own imaginary images and carry their identity through the change of generations” (Assman, 2004, p. 31). We agree with Dmitriy Zamyatin, who notes that “geocultural regional policy and geocultural branding of territories are not aimed at material objects, but at people and events associated with these people, which transform the urban environment and urban landscapes” (Zamyatin, 2015, p. 39).

Cultural-landscape approach and the concept of a cultural landscape (Yuri Vedenin, Rostislav Turovsky, Boris Rodoman, Vladimir Kagansky, etc.), developments in the field of ethnocultural landscape studies (Vladimir Kalutskov, Tatiana Ivanova, Olga Lavrenova and others), various aspects of the study of cultural (Anna Babaeva, Valeriy Tishkov, Andrey Golovnev and others) and geocultural space (Tatiana Gerasimenko, Dmitriy Zamyatin, Nadezhda Zamyatina, Ivan Mitin and others) are the main scientific guidelines and theoretical and methodological directions of this work. In general, the studied region is viewed as a cultural landscape in a semiotic approach, as an image in a psychological and cognitive sense.

In recent decades, the phenomenon of territoriality, the connection between culture and symbolic landscape, has become the central theme of interdisciplinary research by Russian scientists. Important aspects of these areas were touched upon by researchers whose works consider spatial narrative as the main component in the formation of a regional ethnocultural landscape (Ekaterina Romanova, Tatiana Skrynnikova, Irina Oktyabrskaya, Nadezhda Ermolova, Marina Sodnompilova, Vladimir Dyachenko, Vadim Turaev and others).

The factor of symbols and political ideas in the context of the formation of identities is described in detail in the works of Olga Malinova (2005, 2009).

The issues of the influence of spatial identities on socio-political processes and interethnic relations are studied by Igor Okunev in the framework of critical geopolitics. According to the author, the urgency of the problem of the influence of spatial identities on the ethno-political situation and socio-political processes is associated with the need for a more complete and in-depth consideration of the mechanism of formation of ethnic, regional and civic identities (Okunev, 2019, 2020).

Today, on the one hand, geographic information systems (GIS) play a huge role in the study of the cultural landscape and the promotion of territories. On the other hand, “using GIS as a tool for problem based learning may be beneficial for students with multiple backgrounds and professional goals because the GIS interface allows students to experience solving real world issues, a practice typical in many careers” (Cloughlin, 2015, p. 2).

We consider the semiotic representation of urban spaces in diachrony and synchronicity. This approach allows us to systematically structure, the overall

picture of the symbolic space of northern cities, also to differentiate the cities under consideration with common signs of symbolic urban space, which will allow us to approach a more detailed study of the specifics of each group of cities.

The article is based on the fundamental principles of historical science – historicism, objectivity. The study of the historical component of the formation of the symbolic aspect in the cultural landscape of the city, along with the methods traditional for historical research, should also be considered through the prism of the semiotic approach. This approach will reveal the features of the formation and functioning of the collective and historical memory of the heterogeneous population of the cities of Yakutia.

It is no less interesting to use the method of cognitive mapping of urban space to identify the image of a place (Jameson, 1988). The cognitive (mental) map is widely used by interdisciplinary sciences (geography, history, cultural anthropology, psychology) in the study of the figurative representation of the geographical environment and a person's attitude to spatial orientation.

Also, in order to study the perception of symbolic urban space and determine the role of historical memory as symbols of the city in the formation of the identity of the population (ethnic, civil, political), questionnaires were conducted in two different groups (authors are project executors).

RESEARCH RESULTS

During the study, the relationship of monuments in the cities of Yakutia with political decisions was revealed, and the main emphasis was placed on understanding the processes of forming the political identity of the population. Political identity is initially formed by state policy, both at the national and regional levels. During the study, it became clear that the formation of the symbolic space in Yakutia is interconnected with the eras in the state policy of the country. Thus, there are three stages in the formation of policy regarding the installation of monuments in the cities of the region: 1) the Soviet period; 2) the period after the collapse of the USSR – the period of the formation of political identity in the era of transformation of state priorities, including the formation of the modern statehood of Yakutia during the period of sovereignty; 3) the modern period – the emergence of new art objects related to current topics of concern to society.

Monuments of the Soviet period. The symbolic space of large and small cities of the Soviet era is represented by the erection of “typical” monuments dedicated to outstanding personalities – the leaders of the USSR Lenin, Stalin and other party and public figures, revolutionaries, writers. It should be noted that the “typical” national monuments are memorial military complexes dedicated to the heroes and events of the Great Patriotic War and the Civil War.

The Soviet period, as a century of ideological monopoly, had an absolute impact on the minds of people, on their worldview and attitude, which was

expressed in the symbolic space of cities and excluded any other symbols. "For Soviet ideology, the 'national question' and cultural symbols in general were secondary, and class priorities and, above all, the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat, were of decisive importance" (Shabaev, 2014).

In the *post-Soviet period* to the present day, after the collapse of Soviet power, monuments appear in the symbolic space of the country's cities and regions, embodying the historical silence of the past, representing the broadcast or historical continuity of social experience, with the transition to a new form of state structure – a federal state and new democratic transformations.

The *new period* in the symbolism of urban space is expressed by its multi-dimensionality in terms of the system of urban monuments and the historical and urban planning education of northern cities.

Dynamic spatial modeling simulates the propagation of various phenomena and processes occurring in time over a given territory. The development of the symbolic space of cities in Yakutia is associated with temporary changes in the politics of the region and the country. As a result of the studied trends, it can be concluded that this study will be useful in spatial dynamic models of urban development in the region in the future. In this regard, a historical method and a systematic approach were used, where they were studied in a comprehensive manner using a sociological questionnaire survey and expert interviews, including the dynamics and interconnection with political processes in the establishment of monuments in the cities of Yakutia. The political identity of the population of Yakutia is formed thanks to historical memory, since most of the already installed monuments belong either to historical epochs dictated by state policy or are dedicated to historically significant personalities who contributed to the formation of the republic, its history and culture.

Within the framework of the tasks of determining the features of the structure of the political consciousness of a polyethnic region and identifying the unity of the polyethnic population of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), the images of northern cities that influenced the formation of various aspects of identity were identified. It was revealed that regional identity, adapted to the symbolic images and symbols of a small homeland, plays an important role in building stable universal and particularistic identity guidelines. It was found that the symbols of the area directly affect the formation of spatial identity, which is one of the important conditions for maintaining internal political harmony and unity of a multinational republic.

Identity as an instrument of political mobilisation is aimed at the formation of a state community, as well as for the implementation of the image policy of the region. As a multiethnic region, the republic is a space for all religious confessions; therefore, it makes no sense to talk about a single ethnic identity. Local symbols directly affect the formation of spatial identity, which is one of the important conditions for maintaining internal political harmony and unity of a multinational republic. The historical memory of the Soviet past is one of the main levers for strengthening the all-Russian identity. It should also be noted that the harsh natural and climatic conditions are a natural factor of internal

mutual understanding and reciprocity. The symbolic space of Yakutia was not specifically associated with northern culture, and only recently has there been a tendency to position the region as northern or arctic. Again, this trend depends on government policy in the Arctic. It was revealed that despite the active promotion of the image of the North and its transmission through various socio-cultural institutions, the northern identity is not evenly traced among the entire population of the republic, except for the Arctic regions, in which it is clearly represented. This indicates the presence of a dichotomy between the generally accepted designation of the North as a distant periphery and the perception of the North by residents as a strategic zone in the development of the Arctic. Based on this, further prospects for the study of the problem are assumed.

Cross-cultural research aimed at studying commemoration objects as markers of symbolic urban space has shown that today there is a contradictory representation of objects of the Soviet era and modern art objects. According to Leokadiya Drobizheva, such a concept as the duality of self-identification of Russians is a property of people living in conditions of constant catch-up development (Drobizheva, 2002). So, depending on the mentality, certain categories do not find their reflection in the political consciousness, being at a deeper level of ideas. We tentatively tried to explain this phenomenon by the paradoxes of double identity, when certain values in different political conditions can complement each other or mutually deny, as well as the presence of such a phenomenon as the "silence of symbols" dictated to a greater extent by the mental attitude (ideological ideas). We are talking about cases when, in the absence of explanatory work among the population, objects with an explicit political semantic load do not find themselves in the minds of certain categories of citizens. In the 1990s the situation specifics in the Russian Federation were characterised by both the crisis of the dominant culture and the processes of the revival of the national identity of national minorities (the "parade of sovereignty" in the RSFSR). The collision of these trends became the main reason for the birth of a special moral and ethical phenomenon among national intelligentsia, which manifests itself today as a phenomenon of double self-identification among ethnic groups. In Russia, the traditional imperial policy has created an intricate system of national-political relations. During expansion, foreign cultures were part of a single system under the auspices of universal civilisational ideas. Under socialism, these relations were even more complicated; an attempt was made to form a nation of civil origin (the Soviet people). Such features of political history have left a deep imprint on the worldview of modern generations. As a result of the incorporation of various communities into the empire, a two-level system of spiritual, moral, cultural, political, and other values was formed. The contradiction between political centralism and the factor of geographical remoteness and relative isolation of ethnic territories only intensified the effect of this phenomenon. A striking example is religious syncretism, a harmonious combination of Orthodoxy with local beliefs. Also, an important role in the formation of local identity is played by the concept of "small homeland," which takes place in the regions of Russia.

The symbolic space of the “urban text” in the context of historical memory. Geocultural images, symbols and metaphors

In the construction of the symbolic space of the city and the transformation of the geographical environment into a symbolic one, geocultural codes enclosed in images, metaphors and symbols are of great importance. They always correlate with the existing picture of the world, social and individual socio-cultural experience, therefore, taking into account the historical era and its ideological content, it can change and transform. A significant characteristic of the geocultural code and its reflection in urban texts (the cognitive space of the city) is the combination of static and dynamic (changeable) components in its structure. The images of events and personalities, one way or another connected with the political sphere, have the greatest variability (examples are the images of Lenin, Stalin, revolution, etc.). On the contrary, the images of spiritual, moral, patriotic and religious content have the least degree of variability (for example: the memory of the South, the image of the mother, etc.).

Studying the symbolic urban space provides an opportunity to see how the historical and cultural memory influences the mental image of the city itself.

As Zamyatin, Zamyatina and Mitin mention any city offers, as a rule, many symbolic images of different genesis, content and structure. These images can be presented as sign symbolic markers and become authors when constructing a cognitive bridgehead for a city (Zamyatin, Zamyatina, & Mitin, 2008).

The historical cities of the North – Yakutsk, Olekminsk, Verkhoyansk, Srednekolymsk and Vilyuisk were “peculiar trading posts” in vast undeveloped territories. These cities were at one time created with a single geostrategic goal and were loaded with the same stereotypical ideas, laid down since the time of the “conquest of Siberia.” The same houses were built, similar cliché monuments were erected in honor of various anniversary events, and in terms of the development of the general infrastructure, and they lagged behind new cities, because their appearance was associated with the industrial development of the region. The only thing that favorably distinguished the urban spaces of historical cities is local mythologies, places of memory and “geniuses of the area” that broadcast historical memory.

“Yakolsk lands,” “Yakut lands,” “shaman lands” are the first geographical characteristics given by the first conquerors of the northern territories and included in the historical chronicle of the development of the Lena Territory. The following images-metaphors were identified, which became the basis of the symbolic space of ancient cities:

“The Edge of Soft Junk.” For tsarist Russia, Siberia was an important geopolitical territory and literally presented a “fur storeroom.” This brought not only economic benefits to the state, but also an important political significance, in addition, emphasised the importance of Russia in the foreign policy arena.

Yakutsk – ancient (Lensky ostrog), founded in 1632, served as the main gate through which industrial people in search of “soft gold” moved towards the Arctic Ocean, the Bering Strait, the Pacific coast and Dauria, and the industrial development of a huge territory began.

The first ostrozhki that appeared on the "Yakolsk land" were erected as strong points for collecting yasak, later, became the basis of the first northern cities of the "Yakutsk land," outposts for the development of a huge territory stretching from the Lena Territory to the Arctic Ocean. These are Olekminsk (Olekminsk winter quarry, 1633), Vilyuisk (Verkhnevilyuisk winter quarters Olensk, 1634), Verkhoyansk (Verkhoyansk winter quarters, 1638), Srednekolymysk (Yasachny Ostrozhek Sredne-Kolymysk, 1643), the disappeared ghost town of Zashiversk (Indigirsk yasak fort, 1639-1803).

Thus, in the implementation of the imperial tasks of tsarist Russia, the northern edge was perceived as a place for collecting valuable furs for the state treasury. "Tales" and "unsubscriptions" of service people about "Yakolsk land for collecting yasak" became the basis for the formation of the cognitive image of "the edge of soft junk."

Sable fur was especially appreciated from the "soft junk", in this connection, sable becomes a symbol of the development of Siberia and a heraldic image of many Siberian cities, including the first cities of the Lena Territory – Yakutsk, Verkhoyansk and Srednekolymysk. Despite the fact that the coats of arms of these cities have changed several times over the course of four centuries, the sable remains the same heraldic image of Yakutia as a whole. Together with the image of the sable, the fortress – the translator of historical memory – acts as the main symbol of the city.

Thus, the metaphor "the edge of soft junk" is perceived through the prism of the development of geographic space and is implicitly associated with historical figures – the discoverers and pioneers of "Yakol lands": Golovin, Beketov, Dezhnev and others.

"The Land of Suffering." The formation of stereotypes about Yakutia as a "land of suffering" begins from the times when the tsarist system began to send there people and criminals unwanted by the tsarist government to serve their sentences and turned the northern provinces into a "prison without bars."

The first mention of Yakutsk and Yakutia as a whole appeared in Kondraty Ryleev's poem Voinarovsky in 1825, which described the hardships of the Yakut exile in the style of gloomy romanticism and began with a description of the city of Yakutsk. From this moment, the emergence of the image-metaphor of the "edge of suffering" and referring to the entire space of the Yakutsk Territory begins. If the entire territory of Yakutia was perceived as a "land of suffering," then cities Verkhoyansk and Srednekolymysk, located in the Arctic zone, were considered "the end of the earth," where the most unreliable and dangerous political exiles were sent. So, for example, Waclaw Sieroszewski, for an attempt to escape from Verkhoyansk, was sent even further, to the Arctic Circle, to the Srednekolymysk city, where he decided to become, as he later wrote: "the everyday writer of Siberia" (Sieroszewski, 1997).

The pre-revolutionary exiles, among whom there were many outstanding people of their time, made a huge contribution to the socio-cultural development of the Yakutsk Territory. They became true "geniuses of the place," iconic

personalities whose names influenced the image of the territory and territorial identity in general.

In the 30s of the 20th century, the northern territories become a springboard for the development of the mining industry in the North-East of Yakutia under the leadership of the famous State Trust "Dalstroy," the labour force of which consisted of political prisoners of the "Sevvostlag."

In this regard, stereotypical ideas about the "edge of suffering" are aggravated by the cognitive image of "North/Arctic - behind barbed wire," which began to promote its version of "prison without bars" and generate new metaphorical images: "edge of death," "road on the bones," associations of Kolyma with a "prison without bars," etc. In the local history museums, as a rule, there are halls and exhibitions devoted to this topic, but are not reflected through the monuments. In the opinion of the majority of respondents - residents of Verkhoyansk and Srednekolymsk cities, where the GULAG camps were located, the tragic pages of history, like a heavy burden, have sunk deeply in the hearts and memory of people. Material evidence from that period creates negative semantics of the surrounding space.

Rebranding of the image of "cold lands": "In the land of blizzards and snows"

Today, the North/Arctic image is becoming the main image resource in the formation of various brand codes, and climatic conditions play a significant role in the positive rebranding of the Arctic space. Thus, the landscape as a panorama forms a "permanent space" and serves as an ideal position for outlook (Svirida, 2007).

At the beginning of the 21st century, when Russian regions made a qualitative leap in the implementation and development of socio-cultural projects, and the projects themselves became an effective tool for the development of territories, new cultural codes are being constructed. As a result of the actively pursued image policy to promote the positive image of the Pole of Cold, the geocultural concepts "cold," "north," "winter" are becoming a brand tool and, as metaphorical images, are undergoing a "rebirth." The cold climate began to be perceived as a source of additional benefits and opportunities for humanity and a healthy lifestyle. So, if earlier the concepts "winter," "cold," "north" were associated with negative ideas, now in the mass consciousness they give a reflective idea of the landscape of the Yakut region, and Yakutsk - as the centre of the Arctic space.

At the level of poetics, the integrity of the artistic space of the North is manifested in the abundance of cross-cutting motifs and images with a pronounced mythological character. The mythological images of the Mammoth as the spirit of the earth and the Bull of Winter are no longer represented as symbols of the chthonic world, but as symbols of Permafrost, winter and the Pole of Cold. New mythological images appear (*Chyskhaan*, *Ehee Djyl* 'Santa Claus', *Cholbon kyys* 'girl star Cholbon', etc.), festivals and various cultural events related to the theme of Cold/North and Winter.

In the socio-cultural space of Yakutsk city, a metaphorical image of the center of the Arctic space is gradually being introduced. Thus, the Arctic State Institute of Culture and Art and the Arctic Research Center appeared in Yakutsk, the Yakutsk State Agricultural Academy was renamed the Arctic State Agrotechnological University, the construction of the Arctic Center for Epic and Culture is planned, etc.

In the wake of the promotion of brand codes related to the Arctic space, the cities Verkhoyansk and Srednekolymsk began to try on other images, and the negative image associated with the GULAG theme is leaving. Nevertheless, the memory of those times remains and is reflected in the museum, literary, artistic and visual heritage. Thus, in general, now the cognitive perception of Verkhoyansk city is associated with the Pole of Cold, and Srednekolymsk is represented as a topos, from which the Arctic Circle begins.

The ancient cities Yakutsk, Olekminsk, Vilyuisk, Verkhoyansk, Srednekolymsk, which at one time became an outpost for the development of Northeast Asia and the Arctic, have become a "place of memory," a focus of significant events, a repository and reproduction of historical memory. As Nora rightly noted, "a place of memory" embodies the unity of the spiritual and the material, which, over time, preserved and passed from generation to generation, becomes a symbolic element of the cultural and historical heritage (Nora, 1999).

Industrial cities

The specificity of the symbolic space of relatively young industrial cities of Yakutia is the functional semiotics of monuments, expressing: 1) the historical events of the city associated with the development of South Yakutia, the conquest of taiga wilds, the construction of roads, the establishment of settlements, the discovery of natural resources, and 2) heroes who dedicated themselves conquering the taiga, building roads, opening the bowels. For example, these are the monuments dedicated: in Mirny and Udachny – to the diamond industry and diamond miners of the Mirny quarry; in Aldan and Tommot – gold mining, phlogotype mining, builders of the federal highway and railroad; in Neryungri – the coal industry and workers of the coal industry, heroes who carried out geological exploration of deposits of ore and nonmetallic minerals, their geological and industrial assessment, preparation for the industrial development of the South Yakut coking coal basin; in Lensk – monuments dedicated to the development of the North, courageous and strong people of the North, from the pioneers of coachmen to modern drivers of heavy vehicles, who in difficult conditions, across impassable places, delivered goods for the construction of cities in the Diamond region.

It should be noted that the majority of the population in the industrial cities of South Yakutia is formed by the Russian population. Therefore, the symbolism of the urban spaces of the industrial cities of South Yakutia – Mirny, Udachny, Lensk, Neryungri, Aldan and Tommot is characterised by a southern accent, and a symbiosis of southern and northern colors. The monuments of

Mirny, Neryungri, Aldan and Lensk as centers of industrial urban formations are especially distinguished by their scale and diversity.

It should be singled out in a separate subgroup of industrial cities of regional significance, where industry is also developing, cities Pokrovsk and Nyurba, which are represented mainly by the Yakut population. Unlike the industrial cities of Southern and Western Yakutia, these cities were created as settlements a relatively long time ago, Pokrovsk was founded in 1680, Nyurba as a settlement existed, according to some sources, from the 17th century.

The peculiarities of the development of these cities, to some extent, are dictated by the fact that they are located in Central Yakutia, where the population traditionally engaged in agriculture, and industry was not a key city-forming branch of the economy. In Pokrovsk and Nyurba, the bulk of the monuments are monuments of the Soviet period, dedicated to the Civil War and the Victory in the Second World War, due to the fact that industrial enterprises were created in them after they were founded in the 1990s and did not matter for the local population as factors in the emergence of settlements. The development of industry in the symbolic space of these cities is not sustainable.

Sociological survey results

The results of the questionnaire survey among the urban population (n 919) show that the population has a stable historical memory of the Soviet heritage and is reflected in the modeling of the symbolic urban space. So, for example, despite the political reality, 8 monuments dedicated to Stalin, while the victims of political Stalinist repressions were erected only one monument throughout the republic (Aldan city). There is a strong attachment to the Soviet past. And this is since the local population's attitude to the political regime, to political phenomena, leaders, and events plays an evaluative role. Stable personal guidelines for behaviour, orientation towards certain actions in certain conditions form the attitudinal component of political culture.

A greater percentage of the respondents' answers to the questionnaire survey as a symbolic center of the urban space, as well as monuments of the Soviet era that are significant for the region in political terms (Monument to Lenin – 49.0%, monuments to the Yakut political representatives of the Soviet period – 23.0%, Monuments to Russian pioneers – 15.0%, Victory Monuments – 7.6%). This can be explained by the fact that the monuments in the cities of Yakutia were erected mainly in Soviet times and are associated with the events of the revolution, the Civil War, the establishment of Soviet power and the Victory in the Great Patriotic War. In this case, the monuments of the Soviet era are a place of memory, a moment of national history, for young people associated with authorities – dominant, for the older generation “living heart of memory” – dominated by Nora (Nora, 1999). 81.7% of young respondents are in favour of preserving monuments of the Soviet period, among the adult population – 92.6%. 77.5% of respondents indicate that they know what historical events, dates, or personalities they are dedicated to. It is noteworthy that

at the same time, 59.5% of young respondents believe that they do not know the history of their republic.

Most of the respondents support the idea of the presence of ethnic elements in monuments, art objects and murals, since they are few in many cities.

The specific relation to natural space has a certain value. Here this spiritualisation takes place, and some of the outstanding objects to this day have a cult-religious significance, occupying an honorable place in the system of values that determine self-consciousness and the worldview. Being in such "places of power", people feel their unity with nature and connection with their ancestors, find peace and receive inspiration for new achievements.

It is important to note, however, that natural religious objects can be of much greater importance than any artificial works. The first symbols are more often perceived as "real," and urban objects created by human hands may remain unclaimed as imposed from the outside. With this we associate a certain spread in the opinions of our respondents, who have not been able to determine for themselves the meaning of certain urban monuments.

Location binding is one of the main factors in the formation of identity. Certain natural geographic boundaries can help consolidate communities, and natural sites can become symbols of distinctive norms and values. In Yakutia, the harsh climatic conditions led to the formation of the traditions of northern mutual assistance and hospitality. And the low population density played a double role. On the one hand, these are features of the magnitude of personal and social distance, and in some places a certain isolation, on the other, a relatively tolerant attitude towards other groups, a respectful attitude towards alien characteristics and presence.

It is noteworthy that the lion's share of respondents spatially identifies themselves with the North, also in the category of those interested in the sphere of politics, moreover, both federal and republican agendas. Here it seems appropriate to note the discrepancy between our results and the results of official polls, where a certain gap is recorded between those who follow regional and federal news. At the same time, according to our data, respondents find it difficult to determine which particular object reflects the North more clearly through the prism of politics. According to the team of authors, this is explained, on the one hand, by the abundance of monuments from the Soviet period, which reflect universal values. On the other hand, a relatively small number of objects with a direct political message of the modern period make themselves felt. The factor of interpretation of different monuments by people plays an important role here. For example, if you take objects of historical subjects or dedicated to a specific figure, then not all citizens can associate them with the sphere of politics, defining their role and significance for the younger generation from a completely different perspective. For example, only one of our respondents associated monuments to Russian pioneers with the image of the North.

It should also be borne in mind that the formation of identity is a long process, while many objects have appeared in our cities relatively recently.

Here it is interesting to see the view that in the modern world powerful information flows can distort the spatial identity of a person. We are talking about those facts when, in the absence or conditional “silence” of local art objects under the influence of stronger global symbols, a person subconsciously begins to identify himself or herself with places and cultural objects that are often found in other countries and continents.

The foregoing can partly explain the nature of migration sentiments, in particular, among young people. In other words, art objects of northern cities should “talk” about the values they carry.

To preserve the history and transfer the accumulated experience to the younger generation, databases of monuments and art objects of the northern cities of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) were developed and on the basis of them a virtual album was implemented (<https://virtualyakutia.ru/node/18>). The virtual album includes photographs, spherical full-dome panoramas and aerial panoramas of monuments, art objects, murals of the cities of Yakutia. The virtual album can be used in the field of education, politics, culture, in the study and promotion of the cultural and historical heritage of Russia. The scientific results of the study are relevant in that the understanding of the humanities in the development of territories will be deepened.

CONCLUSIONS

The features of the monuments of the Soviet, post-Soviet and modern periods are revealed. In the symbolic space of northern cities, the history of the memory of the cultural landscape in the early period is not recorded – before the annexation of Yakutia to the Russian state. The zoning of the cities of Yakutia according to their functional, geographical and historical features, taking into account the specifics of the symbolic space of cities, allows to reveal a systematic approach to the study of the development of territories. The specifics of the monuments of ancient cities and industrial cities have been revealed. In the symbolic space of a single city, a special role is played by the functional structure of objects – monuments, art objects, interconnected with the historical and political periods of the region and the country as a whole. The functional structure of objects is not always formed due to the needs of the subjects, i.e. social structure, but from the planning of the executive bodies of the region in accordance with its interests. When planning urban space, it is necessary to take into account not only the historical, cultural and functional factors of the locus in question, but also the natural landscape. It is interesting to further study the phenomenon of the attitude and identification of a city dweller with natural landscapes, for example, with the space of the ancestral lands (alases), where he or she spent a limited time.

The perception and interpretation of monuments as a certain form of worldview is mediated by the era and the historical context, behind the sensory, visual component is a layer of meanings – signs and symbols. Thus, the percep-

tion of historical monuments appears as a cultural construct, equally subject to this "reading" and interpretation.

The study of symbolic markers of urban space contributes to the identification of the stability of historical memory, the level of the current cultural policy and contributes to the systematic study of the value attitudes of residents of modern Russian cities. The image policy to promote the brand of the territory has a positive effect on the general perception of the territory, replacing negative images with positive ones.

The cognitive component that makes up political knowledge, ways of political thinking, skills, and abilities can be "read" in the identity of cities. The evaluative role is played by the attitude to the political regime, to political phenomena, leaders, events. Stable personal guidelines for behaviour, orientation towards certain actions in certain conditions form the attitudinal component of political culture.

Knowledge of the peculiarities of local political culture makes it possible to develop recommendations for ensuring the harmony of interethnic relations and increasing the effectiveness of state policy to secure the population in the northern cities of the republic.

A promising avenue for further research could be a case study of focus groups and expert interviews with local opinion leaders. Preliminary results indicate a certain dichotomy between the generally accepted designation of the North as a whole as the edge of the ecumene and the remote periphery, and the self-perception of the inhabitants themselves. In particular, we can note a sense of belonging to the fate of the country, ensuring a presence in strategically important territories, positioning ourselves as part of the vanguard in the development of the Arctic.

In modern foreign policy and economic realities, it is especially important to preserve the culture of the country and the region, uniting various peoples and ethnic groups into a single society, to form new centers of social and economic life that can renew and give impetus to the development of regions, small towns and rural areas.

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