

### **The city as a social phenomenon: sociological and historical approaches.**

The modern city is a complex and holistic social system, concentrating most of the educational, financial, human and other resources, in which by means of social control and its main aktiviziruyutsya elements[1], so important is the vision of him in the aspect of development and peculiarities of the functioning of the internal urban structures (local communities), and with regard to external relations. This determines the need for special research focused on studying the features of the processes taking place in modern cities, their characteristic problems and prospects for their resolution, involving the implementation of a joint search for a strategy by the authorities, economic and public organizations, whose actions can be consolidated within the framework of strategic development planning.

The interest in the problems of the development of large cities is due to a number of reasons, namely:

- the priority of these problems due to the concentration and integration of new types of economic activity in large cities, increasing their importance, both in the regional aspect and in the development of the country as a whole;
- awareness of the strategic role of a large city as an economic, socio-cultural and political phenomenon;
- complication of socio-economic processes of urban development, their formation as independent economic mechanisms;
- complex deep transformations of cities in conditions of intensive globalization, increased competition and trends of strengthening their socio-economic independence;
- the need to search for and develop socio-economic mechanisms for the formation of an effective structure of urban society, ensuring the solution of a number of social, economic, environmental and other tasks.

The increased attention of the scientific audience and practitioners to the development of large cities, which has been observed recently, inevitably leads to a more complicated understanding of the definition of "large city" and related problems.

There is a widespread opinion among researchers about the aimlessness and groundlessness of attempts to interpret this concept[2]. So, according to M. Castellsa[3], instead of the non-existent concept of "city"

, the concept of "urban unit" should be used, with respect to which only approximately qualities that distinguish it from other

urban units can be named. D. Martindal[4] pointed to the disappearance of the city as a relatively autonomous unit of settlement in an urbanized society.

B. Hammar also spoke about the impossibility of a single definition of a city, which is from a scientific point of view a universal form of life in the period of an urbanized society[5]. Many other researchers have also spoken about the inexpediency of a single interpretation of the concept of a city[6].

Analyzing the history of the city, K. Marx and F. Engels noted that the aggregate city arose at first in the form of spatially absolutely isolated urban communities. The functioning of these communities was based on a syncretic non-agricultural type of labor, and their spatial localization was largely due to the equal “concern for the protection of property and for the multiplication of the means of production and the means of protecting individual members” for all constituent individuals[7]. During this period, there were practically no connections between individual cities. And only later, as a result of a further deepening of the division of labor associated with the allocation of trade as a specifically urban type of labor, such ties began to appear, as a result of which aggregate cities arose as social communities.

When studying the concept of "city" in the economic aspect, the attention of researchers is focused on the production and economic factors of its emergence and the production and economic patterns of its development. Thus, the city is considered as a settlement of people using an intensive division of labor[8]. The economic features of the city can include: the division of labor into industry and agriculture, into appropriating and producing labor; the degree of professional differentiation of labor; the nature of the dominant capital (production, trade, credit); type of production (production of material resources, provision of services, information), etc. One of the key parameters of the life of the city is the nature of the economic situation in it.

As part of the economic approach, A. Weber[9] studied the city as a geometric point of economic space with minimal costs of production and economic life.

Another aspect of the study of the concept of "city" is semiotic. Within the framework of semiotics as a science of signs, it is necessary to understand that the formation of semantic situations occurs in the process of communication, which is a dialogical exchange of various kinds of meanings and meanings. The space of any city is a communicative space. In the semiotic aspect, the city is a combination of socio-cultural dialogue and historical events, objectified in material media. In this perspective, the social behavior of citizens is of particular importance for this sociological study, which can be more understandable when studying the semantic perception of the urban environment, the psychosemantics of urban space, the symbolic dynamics of places, etc. That is, the semiotic approach considers the city as an objective representative of the mental and relational structures of interaction[10].

The sociological approach to the study of the city is based on its multidimensionality and variability and is focused on the search for an integral basis for its scientific definition, taking into account all aspects and circumstances of urban life. It should be noted that it was the classics of sociology that contributed to the emergence of the themes of urban space. In sociology, numerous attempts to explain the emergence of cities in the context of highlighting the social functions they perform have led to the emergence of a number of theories[11].

A large city is a relatively independent, legally formalized complex dynamic territorial, economic and social system in which reproduction is realized, economic, social, political, ideological, managerial, demographic, ethnic, environmental, legal, town-planning, town-serving and other life-support relations[12].

The use of a systematic approach to the study of the city allows, firstly, to consider it as a structural and functional structure. At the same time, subsystems are singled out to describe it, their functions are studied (internal, aimed at maintaining integrity, and external, aimed at interacting with the external environment). The object-structural paradigm represents the city as a constructed object with invariant structural parameters. One of the key features of the system is its hierarchical structure - connections and relationships. The hierarchy of cities represents the subordination of each elements of a lower level (in terms of socio-economic influence, administrative management) to elements of a higher level, which in turn, they are subordinate to the elements of the next level. However, the artificiality,

constructability, hierarchy and manageability of cities do not exclude the naturalness of their formation in historical perspective. Indeed, there is also spontaneity in the existence of cities, for example, their uncontrolled growth. Therefore, secondly, a systematic approach allows us to consider the city as a self-developing entity. To study the city, which is a socio-cultural phenomenon and the unity of socio-cultural diversity, the mechanisms of integrity and change, the integrative basis and patterns of development are distinguished[13].

The first empirical studies of the problems of the city within the framework of a sociological approach were carried out by representatives of the Chicago School. In particular, R. Park considered the social problems of cities, and especially megacities, presented and developed in the urban environment. The city itself represented a convenient "locus of research" for the scientist with the concentration of human behavior features on the foreseeable and relatively small space. Through the "laboratory" of the city, both the individual behavior of the inhabitants that make up its population and the social institutions themselves and the urban community as a whole[14]. Such an understanding demonstrates such a systemic property of the city as the ability to self-development, self-reproduction.

In general, the analysis of theoretical sources makes it possible to single out two main approaches to the study of the city in sociology. The first approach considers the city as a social (more specifically, socio-territorial as one of the social groups) community of people.

The very concept of a social community embraces associations of people with a certain social connection created and maintained over a certain time period. That is, in a broad sense, a social community is a sustainable form of life. The category of socio-territorial community is historical, the emergence of which was due to the transition from the primitive communal system, which was based on personal blood ties, to a class society that divides the people not by kindred groups, but by living in the same territory. Since that time, settlements have become a link in social determination and, at the same time, a factor and environment for social development.

If a social community is a set of individuals with the same living conditions, norms, values, interests, social connections and understanding of their own social identity, which is the subject of social life, then a socio-territorial community is a community that is a specific social group with social relations in their territorial manifestation.

The objective basis for the formation of a socio-territorial community is the division of labor, the types of which are always territorially localized. Any settlement of people is the immediate environment of their life, within which their daily needs are met and a number of group-forming social characteristics are acquired.

In the context of such reasoning, the city is a territorially concentrated form of settlement of people employed mainly in non-agricultural labor, characterized only by its inherent properties, reflecting a certain level of social division of labor.

Considering the city as a socio-territorial community, it is necessary to understand that such a community is an association of residents to realize common interests and jointly solve common problems. That is, it can be assumed that the local community and the bodies formed by it can more effectively than state bodies, when organizations of centralized management of local development to solve the problems of increasing the level and quality of their lives. Thus, when studying the city as a social community, attention should be focus on issues of self-government, which is the guarantor of the normal functioning of the city as a social community[15].

Among the studies of socio-territorial communities, we note the works of T.I. Zaslavskaya, S.G. Kirdina (Krapchan), A.M. Sergienko, A.Ya. Trotskovsky, V.I. Fedoseeva, M.A. Shabanova and others.

Another approach considers the city as a social system. The huge variety and complexity of factors, infrastructure elements, links between them that affect the efficiency of city management, and consequently, the quality of life of the urban population, determine the feasibility of using a systematic approach in solving the problems of large cities.

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The use of a systematic approach to the study of the city allows, firstly, to consider it as a structural and functional structure. At the same time, subsystems are distinguished for its description, their functions (internal, aimed at maintaining integrity, and external, aimed at interacting with the external environment). The object-structural paradigm represents the city as a constructed object with invariant structural parameters. One of the key features of the system is its hierarchical structure - connections and relationships. The hierarchy of cities represents the subordination of each elements of a lower level (in terms of socio-economic influence, administrative management) to elements of a higher level, which in turn, they are subordinate to the elements of the next level, etc. However, the artificiality, constructability, hierarchy and manageability of cities do not exclude the naturalness of their formation in historical perspective. Indeed, there is also spontaneity in the existence of cities, for example, their uncontrolled growth. Therefore, secondly, a systematic approach allows us to consider the city as a self-developing entity. To study the city, which is a sociocultural phenomenon and the unity of the sociocultural diversity, the mechanisms of integrity and change, the integrative basis and patterns of development are distinguished[17].

The second thought is based on the principles of historicism, which studies urban processes in the historical, and, therefore, sociocultural aspect, and synergetics, which focuses on the search for invariant mechanisms self-development of the city as a socio-cultural system.

The city as a socio-spatial integrity was also considered by domestic researchers. So, M.N. Mezhevich notes that "the correlation and interconnection of the social and spatial environment is the essence of the processes that characterize the city as an integrity." Consequently, the city, as an integral systemic organism, is assigned the obligatory property of its spatial organization.

Based on the foregoing, we propose to use the following definition within this framework: a city is a social community that has historically developed on a territory with established boundaries and is organized through social interactions, has a certain legal form and a certain cultural environment, whose members are engaged in various non-agricultural activities.

In the modern world, large cities play a key role in the socio-economic development of any country. The definition of "large city" also does not have an unambiguous interpretation, despite its active use in both scientific and regulatory literature.

A modern large city is a particularly complex social organism, constituting a certain geographical, economic, architectural, engineering, construction and cultural complex.

We believe that one of the successful definitions of a large city is its consideration as a settlement unit with relatively a large population, the scale of which may vary in different historical periods, in different cultures or geographical regions, covering a significant area with urban development, a diverse urban economy, a wealth of urban institutions and social interactions, constituting a multifunctional urban system (especially significant cultural center), as well as being such in the minds of its inhabitants and in the minds of the public environment of the city.

It should be noted the relative nature of the concept of a large city. Its specificity lies in the scale, and this applies to a greater extent degree of population than the size of the territory it occupies. The

relativism of a large city lies in its comparison with other cities - neighboring cities, cities in the same region, cities in the same country, major cities in the world, cities in a given historical era or in other historical periods.

Representatives of science often consider a city with a population of more than 1 million people as a large city, since this group of cities has certain specific features, requiring qualitatively different approaches to their research and management[18].

One should agree with this position and consider a large city with a population of more than 1 million people within the framework of this dissertation research.

Large cities have a central place in the economic, political, sociocultural life, it is with them that the prospects for the development of human civilization as a whole are associated.

In this regard, it is extremely important to comprehensively study a large city as a social phenomenon, identify patterns and trends in its functioning and development, in particular study of the features of strategic planning for the social development of a large city as a form of territorially organized socio-economic space.

## Literature:

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**Город как социальный феномен: социологический и исторический подходы.**

### **Резюме**

Центр организации жизни и развития в современных условиях, а также лидер в области коммуникации, научно-технического развития, инициатор изменений во всех сферах жизни (социальной, экономической, культурной, научной, политической и др.), связующим звеном между близлежащими сельскими поселениями является город.

Как форма регионально организованного социально-экономического пространства город является предметом исследования ученых. Среди них стратегическое планирование социально-экономического развития города и управление городом. Изучение особенностей стратегического планирования социального развития города в области социологии, изучающей статику и динамику социальных процессов формирования общества, становится сегодня как никогда актуальным.

Учитывая растущую сегодня конкуренцию между городами, стратегическое планирование позволяет объединить разных участников взаимодействия городов в борьбе за ресурсы, в определении приоритетов развития, в процессе достижения целей. Актуальность темы исследования характеризуется еще и тем, что оценка проблем и эффективности общественного развития привела к усилению взаимодействий между участниками управленческих практик, которые в результате адекватного изучения считаются необходимым элементом общественной жизни. Феномен городского стратегического планирования.