

Urban and capital in national exhibition spaces (case of Moscow)

Participants in political processes perceive certain political programs not directly, but indirectly, through various images, metaphors, discourses. In recent years, there has been growing interest in research into the spatial aspects of identities, including urban ones. In this case, the mechanism for the formation of identity is objects in space, and those symbols, repertoires of interpretation that are formed around them. National and transnational exhibition spaces are one of the methods aimed at transmitting the achievements of certain countries in the form of understandable symbols.

Interpersonal contacts are being replaced by collective images. The transmission can be both direct, through visits to exhibitions, and through the media, in the form of certain visual images. As a result, the same spaces are in the zone of interest of both city residents and the population of the country. In this regard, exhibition spaces reproduce the conflict typical of capital cities: the conflict between the city space for residents, and the city space for the population of the country. City residents are interested in the ability of the city to meet their social needs, and city administrations must respond to this requirement. The capital function implies the creation of iconic objects representing power. In the first case, we can talk about the administrative function of the city, in the second - about the capital function.

The report will examine the problematic of exhibition spaces using the example of the Moscow Exhibition of Achievements of the National Economy. Created in the USSR in the 1930s, it was reorganized several times throughout its history and also received a number of branches - 9 union and 14 regional exhibitions. VDNKh was created by analogy with transnational world exhibitions, so we can talk about exhibition spaces as a technology of symbolic politics aimed at transmitting symbols of power.

The methodological complexity of such studies consists in the necessity of working not only with textual, but also with visual information. In the case of the administrative function of the city, this is the study of the ways of using the object, their "affordances". For city residents, this space is devoid of a political component - this is a social space that responds to their everyday (in the case of exhibitions - leisure) requests. In the case of the capital function, this is the coding of visual images. In the case of the capital function, these visual images form an idea of the political space that represents the image of the nation or the images of state power. Thus, the recorded conflict is not simply a conflict around the use of this or that space, as happens, for example, in the case of urban development conflicts. The conflict consists in the contradiction between the understanding of what the purpose of the space is: is it a social space for the life of city residents, or is it a political space of the capital for representing the images of the country.

Using Moscow as an example, we will consider 4 models of national exhibitions from the point of view of the iconic objects used in them. The key variables are the possibility of mediatization (transmission) and replication (copying) of the object outside the exhibition space.

¹ **Aisin Anton Timurovich** — graduate student, Department of Politics and Governance, HSE University.

Mediatized objects, such as the Druzhba Narodov fountain, create a recognizable visual image of the capital for people who have never been there physically. Replicated objects are the exhibition spaces themselves. Exhibitions outside have become commonplace both in Moscow (for example, in Sokolniki Park) and in other cities — within the framework of regional VDNKh. As we show in the study, different ratios of replicability and mediatization of objects lead to different organization of the exhibition space in each of the models. As a result, each of the models offers its own version of dealing with the conflict between the administrative and capital functions of the city.