

**Self-representation of multinational cities in the industrial  
and post-industrial period**

**Academic and practical value of the project.**

Cities are centers of cultural and ethnic interaction, as well as complex superstructures, from which the stable development of society as a whole began to depend on industrial, and even more in post-industrial days. The city, as a dynamic system, is constantly changing, while in search of its own actual person. The space of the city is constantly changing: in addition to the visible and completely material changes, there is a renewal and symbolic space of the city. The symbolic structure of the city is represented, first of all, by monuments; memorial plaques; signs; defining buildings; names of streets, squares, etc. Changes in symbolic architectural dominant, the destruction or construction of new monuments and memorial plaques, renaming of the names of streets and squares become manifestations of symbolic coding and transcoding of urban space. In part, these processes are associated with the so-called "decolonization of historical memory." They, according to P. Noor, are characteristic of the countries freed from totalitarian or authoritarian regimes, and whose elites turn to traditional memory, destroyed or distorted in their favor by the previous regime.

**The relationship of the project with existing researches.**

The rapid growth of the number and importance of cities for the development of society in the 20<sup>th</sup> century caused an interest in urban studies of representatives of various scientific disciplines. Until the 1970's, urban research was largely a field of sociology, and later on, the problems associated with the material, functional and symbolic space of the city also fell into the research focus of historians and culturologists. In spite of the discussions that are still taking place around the conceptual concepts and theoretical developments of urban studies, more and more researchers are considering the city as a specific "social institution" with its own dynamics of socio-cultural, socio-economic and socio-political relations. Cities are

increasingly seen as "places" filled with certain entities, as epicenters that generate new phenomena of culture. Accordingly, cities appear not only as physical space, but also "places" of the formation of senses and identities.

The study of the symbolic space of Ukrainian cities corresponds to one of the trends in the development of modern urban anthropology. In particular, the study of the transformations taking place in the country, which forms new benchmarks and overcomes the old ideological and socio-cultural obstacles, looks actual. Despite the considerable number of works devoted to the material and functional space of Ukrainian cities, their symbolic space is considered rather fragmentary. It should be noted that the fixation of "places of memory" of a certain city of Ukraine without proper interpretation and comparison with other markers that capture "landslides" of identity does not make it possible to understand the historical and cultural landscape of the city as a whole, and, most importantly, to determine the trends of change. In addition, the authors of modern studies of the urban space of Ukraine often do not analyze the reaction of urban residents - their actions, behavior patterns, emotions that are initiated by the symbolic space of the city, marking them new and outdated, what is defined as "pride" or as "shame" in the subject environment. Meanwhile, as you know, shaping the image of the city is a two-way process that connects the observer and what is observed (Kevin Lynch, "Image of the City"). Beyond the attention of researchers, in this regard, there are comorbidities and ritual practices of cities, as well as entertaining culture and leisure practices. However, these cultural phenomena, which are connected with the symbolic space of the city, are intended to establish the specifics of the city and to fill the life of its inhabitants with special content and value orientations aimed at the implementation of life plans and strategies.

### **The purpose and objectives of the project.**

The goal of the project is to carry out a comprehensive interdisciplinary study of the symbolic space of Ukrainian cities. In particular, it is about finding the "face" of a city and characterizing the processes of transforming the identity of its inhabitants.

Complexity provides the involvement of different types of sources: visual and cartographic materials, memoirs and verbal testimonies (interviews), local periodicals, document sources, promotional materials and museum exhibits, etc. The analysis of these sources will focus on places of collective memory and commemorative practices as well as leisure practices.

The following cities of Ukraine are selected for the research: Dnipro, Zaporizhzhya, Odessa, Kharkiv, Donetsk. They all meet the following criteria. Firstly, the selected cities are major industrial, educational and cultural centers of the Eastern and Southern Ukraine. Secondly, these cities are heterogeneous in nature, they have fully felt the effects of socio-cultural and socio-political transformations of the 20th and early 21st centuries. Third, it is in these cities that a "new" Ukrainian culture originated, that is, new cultural models, behavioral variants and goal-setting were offered. In addition, Kharkiv and Odessa still have a long university tradition that includes both ritualization and a high level of self-reflection and a wide range of cultural innovations. Accordingly, we need to find out how powerful the process of cultural imitation is, and whether these new urban phenomena continue to emerge in those cities.

The study is designed for three years and involves the implementation of "expeditions" to these cities for field studies, as well as generalization and conduct of comparative analysis. In connection with the impossibility to visit Donetsk, in this case only existing information resources will be studied.

### **Questions to be explored (project objectives):**

- 1) The emergence and evolution of the practices of self-representation of the city (the "invention" of urban traditions and their transformation; comparative analysis of the practices of self-representation of the city in the industrial and post-industrial era; urban celebrations and their interpretations; the struggle for the preservation of cultural heritage, the understanding of "traditional" for the city, historical reconstructions as markers of the "specificity" of the city).

2) Identification of the city's "face" (zoning into the center and periphery, mobility of "prestige zones", architectural domains and their change, memorable places and their ranking, the influence of certain structures (universities, factories, stations, ports, etc.) on the city's landscape, cultural specificity of centers of entertaining culture, spatial marks of the future, etc.).

3) Significance of the multinational and multi-confessional city: secular and religious components.

4) Variants of local identities, change factors ("catching-up" strategy, mass culture, etc.), conflict zones and channels of dialogue, cultural contrasts and composite cultural connections.

### **Stages of work on the project:**

#### ***The first stage (the 1st year and partly the 2nd year)***

1. The formation of research groups: in Kharkiv, the main group (consisting of historians, sociologists, culturologists) and research subgroups in other cities, as well as the involvement of volunteers from the students in the respective specialties. Harmonization of methodology and research methods (for example, rules for collecting and fixing information, developing questionnaires for interviews, etc.). Distribution of duties and tasks.

2. Implementation of field research in the cities for the purpose of collecting and analyzing the material (photo fixation of symbolic space and memory places, interviewing witnesses and initiators of urban space transformation, the analysis of the content of urban internet forums and relevant groups in social networks, the sites like Trip-advisor, preliminary analysis of museum exposition, mapping of symbolic objects, etc.).

#### ***The second stage (the 2nd year)***

1. The creation of databases in the MS Access database (monuments and memorable places; urban areas; entertainment centers and places of leisure; city holidays and memorable events). The databases will contain the described

information (for example, the style of the coffee shop, the main characters and things used for decoration, etc.). These databases will eventually be used by other researchers as well. Processing of existing material. Publication of articles.

### ***The third stage (the 3rd year)***

1. Summarize the results of the study. Conducting a scientific conference to discuss the main findings. Publication of research results (in particular, individual publications on each of the selected cities, as well as general publications of research results).

### **The potential impact of the project on current knowledge and presentation.**

The realization of the project "Practice of self-representation of the multinational city in the industrial and post-industrial days" will have important academic and practical consequences. The academic significance of the project will be the development of urban studies in Ukraine. Practical significance is in understanding the evolution of the urban cultural landscape and the socio-cultural aspects of post-communist transformation in Ukraine, and hence the definition of a topical regional humanitarian policy.