

OPEN CITY AND ITS CREATORS

In the framework of the International scientific and methodical seminar titled as “DEVELOPMENT OF HUMANITARIAN TECHNOLOGIES IN EDUCATIONAL SPACE OF UNIVERSITY: FACTORS, PROBLEMS AND PERSPECTIVES” scheduled for 18th March 2015 at Ural Federal University (Ekaterinburg, Russia) the panel “*Open City: from traditional approach of investigation towards innovation projecting*”: *learning technologies in Urban Studies, Urban Design and Development* had been organized. The participants of the research group discussed the opportunities of urban reconfigurations by means of design and cultural projects based on the theoretical approaches of the scholars in sphere of humanitarian and economic studies. The presentations covered the main topics regarding those issues that are related to the concept “Open City”. The presentations appeared in an organized sequence: from more general ones to more specific case-studies.

The moderator of the panel and the heard of the research group, Professor, Doctor of Philosophy, **Tatiana Bystrova**, opened the overall panel and presented the report “The idea of Open City in terms of R. Florida as a matter for the development of the scientific approach.” She outlined briefly the perspectives of the research group and discussed the practical questions related to the factors and the forms of urbanization as well as evolution of a sociocultural space of the city. According to her, by working through the ideas and concepts deployed in a number of influential essays of R. Florida, R. Ventury, C. Jencks, S. Anholt, V. Rybchinskiy, C. Landry, K. Danny, the goal is to help develop new insights into the context of post-Soviet cities and towns that are facing with tremendous changes and challenges. T. Bystrova argued that the concept “Open City”, being in demand in the research papers and titles of the projects on the perspectives of urban development, had not been conceptualized yet. The meaning of the concept “Open City” is thought to be vague and multifaceted. The participants of the research group will focus on conceptual understanding of the terms that are related with the concept “Open City”. This method might provoke the erasing of the metaphorical content of the concept Open City, but, nevertheless, would allow us to facilitate this term into Urban Studies on a scientific basis. The issues on implementation of cultural innovations at the local level, the investigation of the urban daily life as well as an analysis of activity on rehabilitation of the urban territories can be involved into urban planning and can influence on the urban milieu development, where each person might be participant of ongoing urban space transformation processes. Based on the ideas of R. Florida, who had

used the concept “Open City” in his research, T. Bystrova proposed to admit that the idea of open city encompasses some notions that might be revised from the different research perspectives. The idea of city openness puts urban space to the forefront as a way of thinking that can activate the efforts of different urban communities and makes them visible and meaningful in Ekaterinburg’s sociocultural space. The idea of Open City aims to provide a strong impulse for the urban walking and visual accessibility, facilities to easy access to the different parts of the city, openness for internal and external urban communications in tourist practices, cultural branding, the museum and the cultural projects. The concept of Open City also aims to provide structural solution that are related with “opening” of polluted and alienated territories, transparency of urban policy as well as engaging the local residents and migrants into contemporary urban processes. Process of conceptualization of the idea Open City also includes the ecological and educational aspects. The achievement of these goals sets impulses to work closely with developers, architects and designers, whose participating as full partners in the project is an intrinsic condition for its success.

Doctor of History, **Olga Porshneva**, presented the report “On the way to capital city: the transformation of the status and identity of Ekaterinburg in the 18 - beginning 20 century” and spoke about the capital status of Ekaterinburg and evolution of its urban identity from the historical perspective. She noticed that it is Ekaterinburg that would be defined as an “open city” in comparison with other Ural cities. The renewed interest for the capital status of Ekaterinburg started before the 20th century and there were some reasons that brought Ekaterinburg to the forefront of Ural region: the innovation character of mechanized production, the enthusiast activity of the Founding Fathers of Ekaterinburg, V. Tatishev and D. Gennin, and a diverse cultural background of the urban population. Olga Porshneva defined Ekaterinburg as an innovative platform for modernization processes and as a place for the long-term transition from formerly closed factory-city towards constantly changing city space and capital center. According to her, the challenging topic that might be reconsidered is related to issues of representation the so-called “closeness-openness”: the resident’s experience of urban daily and public life in a “closed city” and its influence on the development of urban openness at the present time.

This report is considered to be relevant for the presentations done by the foreign scholars who follow approach this “openness” in their own cities – Seoul and Beijing. Thus, Professor **Ji Tong** (Beijing University of Technology School of Marxism, China) proposed the idea of “appropriate scattered” human settlements as one of the ways for modernization of

the cities with high density of population. She considered such settlements as a general conceptual model and discourse that is potentially able to dialectically synthesize the inner contradictions between the "natural person" and the "economic person". The ideas of her based on Marxism approach but, taking into consideration the contemporary statement of the cities as well as peculiarities of lifestyles in a specific region, these ideas can be viewed as an alternative approach to the development of the territories in comparison with marketing analysis.

The article presented by the Korean scholar, **Kwon Jong Yoo** (Chung-Ang University, Seoul, Korea) showed the different sources of the emerging of Seoul as an "open city". In his presentation Kwon Jong Yoo considered the long-term history of Seoul, focusing on historical data and ancient maps of the city. He argued that the transport waterways, the intercultural contacts and a diversity of religious communities prompted the spatial, cultural and mental openness of Seoul. Fusing the mega-events (1990th- beginning 2000th) with the daily life of the city as well as creating the urban contemporary public spaces in the framework of design and architect projects (for example, rebuilding of the city wall and uncovering of covered *Cheong-gye* river that flows to River Han) allowed us to rethink the city's image of Seoul as an industrial center and a city for large-scale cultural projects, a potent discussion platform for projecting the area development. These projects had demanded the capital investment but they led to the emergence of human-oriented urban area with high image potential.

Developing a research group is inextricably linked with the engaging of economists who studies the methods of modern development. They conceptualized development in terms of projecting activity that oriented to urban openness and image potential realization.

In their report "The implementation of infrastructure projects on recovering of hazardous production as a matter of natural disasters and catastrophes" Dr. **Anatoly Platonov** and PhD **Viola Larionova** argued that growth of the cities and tremendous increasing of living standards are facing with industrial disasters, which can be defined as an active factor of economic urban life. Considering the preventive measures in the sphere of industrial disasters, they proposed not only to develop expert economic management but rather focus on the training of the actor's practical mind that could support the sustainable development of the cities. In the process of discussion the idea of using animation in order to illustrate the scientific data and stimulate the interest had been offered. Such animation episodes, modelling the scenarios of behavior of the objects and actors faced with natural and industrial disasters, are supposed to help owners to foresee the so-called "extreme" version that not

operationally ready. In their turn, the presenters indicated to the applied function of modelling for creating and studying of the urban sociocultural objects.

In her presentation “The performativity of urban identity in the context of Open City” **Elena Golovneva** (PhD in Philosophy, UrFU), based on the ideas of D. Butler, K. Zimmerbauer, A. Paasi, D. Massey, discussed the contemporary approaches towards understanding of urban identity. She stated that urban identity can be considered in terms of the discourse analysis and can be defined as a tool for city-building. She analyzed also the different contemporary discourses in the urban space of Ekaterinburg and mentioned the specific difficulties when conflicting discourses emerge in the debates on the city. In her point of view, the idea of Open City might be considered as “hybridity of different discourses”.

Svetlana Melnikova (PhD in Philosophy, UrFU) in her report “The analysis of categories “identity”, “image”, “brand” in relation to the city” focused on detailed theoretical analysis of the terms “urban identity”, “image”, “brand” in the process of commodification. These terms are the core of the debates in different sciences. As for Cultural Studies they give rise to the tendency to see the city in a multifaceted way: from a set for a self-definition of the urban residents towards “symbolic capital”.

The notion “Open City” is a reference point for attracting professionals with excellent analytical and creative skills. For this very reason, **Anastasia Bulatova** (PhD in Philosophy, UrFU) in her report “Curriculum on contemporary urban milieu study” proposed the draft for student workshops related with the investigation of the world cities data. This draft is designed to develop the research activity of the students, to involve them in the contemporary urban processes as well as stimulate their creative projecting skills.

The presentation of the post-graduate student **Svetlana Obednina** (UrFU) “The activation of relations between mother and child in terms of Design” gave opportunity to draw special attention to spatial aspect of urban openness for the representatives of different urban communities. The post-graduate student **Olga Salmina** and MA student **Daria Yelanova** (UrFU) discussed the peculiarities of design projecting of contemporary urban spaces and processes. MA student **Alyona Shutova** (UrFU) addressed the question of the participation activity forms of the urban residents deployed in the prominent works of F. Vals (“imagination”, “questionnaire survey”, “dialog”, “alternative”), which stimulate the interest to urban history and urban milieu. These topics are extremely relevant both for students and teachers who are engaged in creative and projecting activity.

The final part of the panel “*Open City: from traditional approach of investigation towards innovation projecting*”: *learning technologies in Urban Studies, Urban Design and Development* focused on the discussion regarding the perspectives of participation in coming scientific events and sociocultural projects. In particular, the development of the design project for the exhibition “Uralmash. The factory of ideas” (moderator – **Sergei Kamenskiy**) might be significant for the research group in the near future. This project aims to provide new platform for strengthening the prestige of Uralmash as well as develop new creative initiatives and communities on basis of the Center of Culture “Ordzhonikidzovskiy” in Ekaterinburg. This project can be conceived in a broader way as well – as a committed sociocultural activity seeking to form a stable mental environment which will lend itself to many further experiments in imagining concrete places in Ekaterinburg.