

Torg as a Genetic Part of the Urban Structure of the Town of Toropets

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ABSTRACT

In the article, the historical construction of the ancient Toropets's *Torg* (marketplace) is analyzed, the fact of preservation of the pre-regular basis of the configuration of the square and its morphology that added to the duration of the town's lifespan, is revealed. Compositional meaning of the *Torg* and its contemporary role in the city life are analyzed. Recommendations on reconstruction and improvement are given according to the aim of preservation of architectural and cultural image and role of the city which preserves its historical identity. In contemporary settings, while reconstructing and improving the city, it is crucial to perpetuate the historic-architectural relevance of the Voskresenskaya (Bazarnaya) square's *Torg*. In the article, the values of significant characteristics of planning, species connections with different ensembles and parts of the city, historical surroundings as a basis for restoring the recoverable losses are revealed.

Keywords: *Urban structure evolution, genesis, Genetic parts of historical structure, Historical-genetic model, Historical boundaries.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Development of a city is going through centuries by its internal rules and in urban structure of an ancient city there is always place for the genetic parts such as: grad (city) – *posad* (part of the town, where merchants, crafts, townspeople lived) – *Torg* (marketplace) [1]. A.S. Shchenkov writes about the zonal structure in a Russian city of the seventeenth century [2]. Zones, creating in different times, have their own form, morphology, urban character and image. [3]. The objective approach to preservation prevails in contemporary world. It does not oblige one to preserve morphology, to be attentive to the configuration of the border of the region to which the monument is attached. However, morphology is what allows to preserve the authenticity of the ancient structure. It is very important to know relative position of the parts, whereas at the same time analyzing dislocation of the ensembles. Preserved ancient parts or their leftovers are interesting because of their authenticity and they increase value of the city. This is why the analysis of an ancient Toropets'

Torg as a holistic preserved genetic part, which has been shaped under the evolutionary processes, feels relevant.

Methodology of the research consists of fundamental works. In the aspect of historic-genetic and theoretical basis the works of L.M. Tverskoy, I.V. Makovetsky, V.A. Lavrov, T.F. Savarenskaya, I.A. Bondarenko, D.O. Shvidkovsky, G.Y. Mokeev, V.P. Orphinsky, U.S. Ushakov are used. The researches by A.S. Shchenkov, M.P. Kudryavtsev, L.D. Mazur, I.S. Krasovsky, E.A. Shevchenko are involved from the methodical and criterial aspect. In addition, the scholarly and practical experience of V.N. Viborny, A.B. Trenin, E.E. Solovyova, N.A. Potapova, the architectural schools of Tatarstan, the regions of Nizhny Novgorod, Samara, and the Sverdlovskaya Region are engaged. Author's analytical methods of the creation of historic-genetic models are presented, the necessity of preservation and consideration of importance of the initial parts in connection with compositional fundamentals during the reconstruction processes are proved.

2. ROLE OF A *TORG* IN THE URBAN STRUCTURE OF A TOWN

Research reveals that urban structure consists of historic-genetic model, in which Kremlin, *slobody* (big villages), *posady*, *predmestya* (village at the city's borders) are distinctly represented. At the same time, the character of traditions' evolution and other factors add authentic features to each one. Usually, up to the fourteenth – sixteenth centuries, at the period of pre-regular planning, *Torg* is described as a distinctive genetic part of the city/town. In an ancient city, *Torg* was always a place of intense local life and economic activity. It was a place where all the public and administrative establishments were concentrated. It served not uniquely economic purpose containing multiple trade areas of various designation, warehouses, barns, but also servicing: *gostiny dvor* (hotel courtyard), *syezgaya izba* (ordering huts), custom offices. Originally, *voevodskaya* house was located nearby. Foreign traders also were attracted to *Torg* (e.g. English courtyard in Kholmogory). The role of *Torg* as an organizing structural center of the city has been known since the ancient times. In Mtseht, the ancient capital of Kartli State, *Torg* became a place of attraction for local commercialists and allowed the whole new Jewish colony to appear in the area around the trade square, it was called *rabat* [4].

Torg as the most essential genetic part is a unique phenomenon which was preserved in the traditional structure of a Russian city. In medieval towns *Torg* was established near the castle, in front of the burg. In Russia, it was located in front of the entrance to the fortress (Kremlin). *Torg* was the main city planning part, which was determining the development of urban structure. All the routes led to it and all the public establishments were concentrated around it. Thus, in Veliky Ustyug, while being located in the geometrical center, it was the core of the planning of the main town streets by radial system of Verhnyi *Posad* [5]. *Torg* became a focus, which polarized the planning scheme.

The urban structure and composition in Toropets create a visual image of the town in its historic perspective; it represents how it grew from Small Gorodishe to Big Gorodishe to Kremlin to *posad* with *Torg* among them. These genetic parts of Toropets with their relative positioning, which correlates with the corresponding time sequence of structural appearances (*gorodishe*, *detinets* (ancient central part of the city), *posad*, *slobody*) are,

metaphorically speaking, 'stringed' on the single time axis and it allows to feel the historical memory.

The ancient *Torg* – Bazarnaya Square of Toropets – preserves the significance of the main square, where one after arriving starts to acquaintance with the town. It is the entrance to the town, in front of its *posad*. The square was historically multifunctional as a place of communication and celebration [6]. Spiritual value of the square is obvious as its western part is close to the spiritual center – the Saviour Cathedral. Trade activity led to territorial broadening and we see how Sennaya Street appeared nearby. The square represented not only a pause among dense urban building but also a planning focus, one of the main elements, part of the structure.

The *Torg*'s area was equally open to the water open space of Solomeno Lake and to the territory of *Detinets* and farther southward. In short term, Bazarnaya Square became the most popular place of the town, multiplied its social and architectural role, became a common choice for holding parades, celebrations, social events.

Spiritual traditions launched the cathedral building on Bazarnaya Square, turning it into an ensemble of four churches.

3. HISTORICAL FORMATION OF THE TOROPETS'S *TORG*

Toropets of the Tver Region, which was officially mentioned in the chronicles under 1074, is located on the Valday Elevation 263 km westward from Tver, on the Toropa River, which flows into Svetlitskoye Lake [7]. Gradual development of the town was started from the High Small Gorodishe, which was founded by the tribe of Krivichy and shaped by the eleventh century and was located to the south from the entrance to the town. In the thirteenth – fourteenth centuries, at the period of disunity, Toropets, being the main town of the northern part of Smolensk Principality, becomes the capital of an independent Toropets Principality. The widespread settlement of “Big Gorodishe” was undergoing. It is known, that, in 1245, *Detinets* was relocated from Small Gorodishe to Big Gorodishe, which was located in the southwestern part of the contemporary town and a little bit to the north from Small Gorodishe. That time, the town occupied the territory of 17 hectares [8]. From the west side, it was defended with high and rocky hill slopes.

On the place of contemporary Bazarnaya Square, *Torg* appeared presumably in the fourteenth century, when *Detinets* and a new *posad* were founded. I.I. Poboynin wrote that as a result of fire and flood the 'city' (at the Big Gorodishe) was deserted and the settlers were displaced to the area of the contemporary *posad*, which was fortified with wooden walls by the mid-fourteenth century [9]. They were reestablished multiple times and, as early as in the fifteenth century, were still built according to old traditions and were guarded by citizens. It was those time, when *Detinets* was permanently relocated to the Krasny Island, on the other bank of the Toropa River, where the territory of a new *posad* was developed. The 'city' itself was very small; it situated on the island surrounded with Solomeno Lake and the Toropa River. From the 'city', through the Nickolsky Gates of the Moscow Tower, by the Bolshoy Bridge, the route to the Toropets *posad* laid. The largest part of the *posad* of 'Stary Ostrog' had a circle about one and a half *verst*. It was surrounded by the less populated *slobody*: Streletskaya, Pushkarskaya, and Posadskaya. The whole territory of *posad* with *slobody* had no less than three *verst* in circle. In 1651-1653, a new barricade out of minced sharp wooden spikes was built, one end is placed in the *taras* (wooden fortification construction), and others to the ditch behind the *taras*. It had 6 hollow towers and 2 towers with gates: the Moscow and Nikolskaya ones. There were old churches on the *posad*: the Resurrection Church and the church of St Elias the Prophet.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the town of Toropets, being the administrative center of the dense forest region, was, first of all, a fortress, a military settlement at the border. But its built-up commercial space and numerous marketplaces indicated that it was also an important commercial settlement.

On the market square closer to Solomeno Lake, there was a *korchemny dvor* (an inn) and a cellar. In the seventeenth century, there was a *gostiny dvor* (a trade center) near the Resurrection Church. Later, it was called the *Gosudar's* (Sovereign). It indicated that it was sponsored directly by the tsar. There were also houses for visitors and for janitor, and barns.

In 1540, in Toropets, there were trading rows on the market square in front of the Bolshoy Bridge, near the Resurrection Church and the church of St Elias the Prophet. In the Great Row, there were 43 shops and 2 shop places on the both sides. Near the

church of St Elias the Prophet, there were the Meat and the Fish Rows. There were 22 shops on both sides and 2 racks. The Bread Row was closer to the Saviour Cathedral. Besides, there were 12 other shops near the St George Church. By the seventeenth century, the Silver and the Drysalter Rows were added, followed by the Gingerbread Row. In total, in 1540, there were 84 stores, 2 racks, and 8 commercial barns. By the eighteenth century, Bazarnaya Square became a powerful compositional core, including four churches, joining into a whole ecclesiastic ensemble (churches of Resurrection, Entrance to Jerusalem, St Paraskevi, and St Eleas the Prophet). All those churches were located on the *Torg* itself. But the main one remained the Resurrection Church that strengthened its role as a central part of the urban structure of Bazarnaya Square and created a high saturation of ensembles and the center of the spatial composition. The architectural ecclesiastic ensemble increased saturation and closeness of the dominants on a relatively small territory. The centricity in the construction of the extended compositional system was fixed as a whole. ("Figure 1")



Figure 1 Ensemble of the churches of Resurrection, Entrance to Jerusalem, St Paraskevi, and St Eleas the Prophet. View from the Krasny Island.

The functional zones of Voskresenskaya/Resurrection (Bazarnaya) Square of Toropets evolved. An important central part of the city's planning structure was the ancient genetic part, including *Torg* located in front of *Detinets*, close to the crossing of the Toropa River. The *posad* emerged to the north; *Torg* was located

between it and *Detinets*. As we can see in the eighteenth century plan of the town, there has been already a clearly defined configuration. Its role in the urban planning structure was very big: it is both the entrance to *posad* and *Torg*, the spiritual center of the town; as it was depicted on the plan. ("Figure 2") [10]

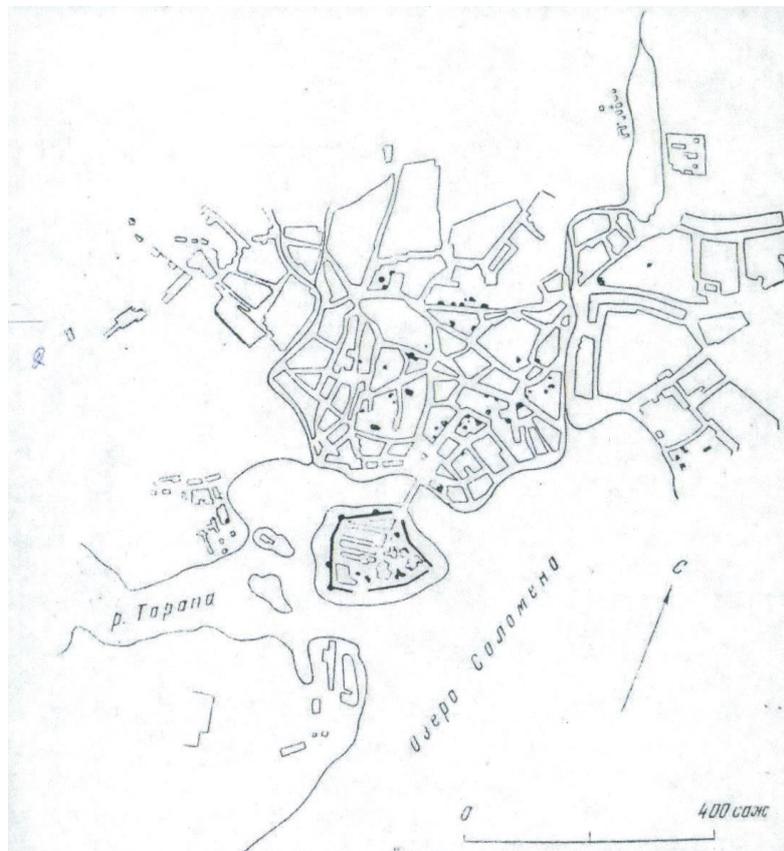


Figure 2 Toropets. Pre-regular plan of the first part of the eighteenth century [10].

The *Torg* is highlighted, orientation of streets to *Torg* is noticeable.

4. ANALYSIS OF THE LOCATION OF THE ECCLESIASTIC ENSEMBLES IN TOROPETS AND ITS POSAD

According to the plan, if one explores the connections between the ensembles, the beginning of the compositional axis is obvious: in the south, the St George Church is located, then, the Epiphany Church in the Kremlin on the Krasny Island, and the Resurrection Church, by which a central ensemble was shown earlier, in the pre-regular plan. All the ensembles of the churches were masterfully included into the regular plan. The squares were designed near the Annunciation and Christmas Churches. From the Epiphany Church an ecclesiastic system of *posad* is visible as a whole. Also from *posad* one can observe the exposure of ecclesiastic dominants.

The arrangement of the churches organizes the urban structure as a single composition. Their

locations define the contours of the space and composition within which ecclesiastic dominants are perceived and where the visual connections between them are established.

Naturally, the newly emerged and spontaneously formed axial construction of the composition system is secured by the Korsun, Epiphany, Resurrection, and, further, Assumption and Christmas Churches. All the valuable fundamentals of the central ensemble around *Torg*, which were formed in the pre-regular plan, were supported with a system of spaces in the regular plan. By graphically highlighting the positions of ecclesiastic ensembles in a regular plan and by carrying out in-situ surveys of connections exposure and relationships between ecclesiastic ensembles, the historical parameters of the central visual space have been revealed. Despite the loss of some churches, the main core of the concentrated visual relationships has retained its parameters, and the central zone's *Torg* remains the site of concentrated the connections exposure. ("Figure 3")

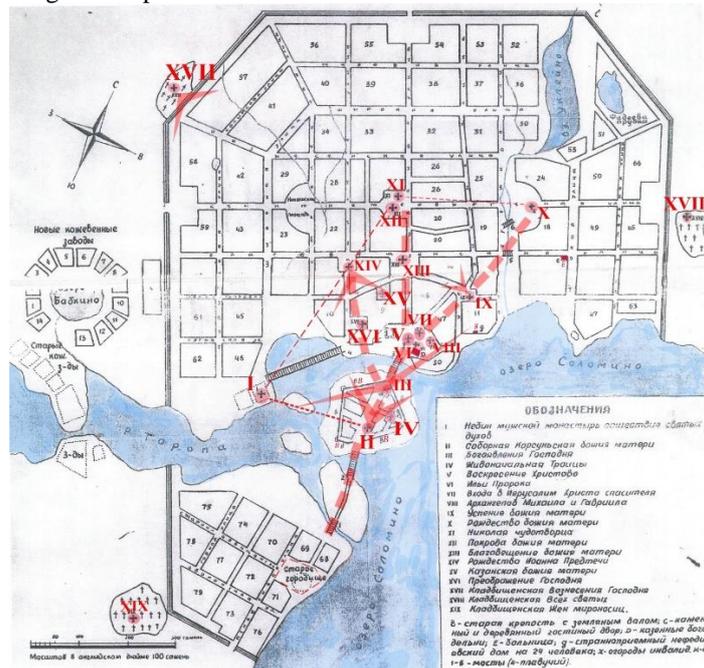


Figure 3 Toropets. The geometric basis of the construction of a composition-space system and a visual space of active interconnections of ensembles. Executed in the plan of the Pskov Governorate of the town of Toropets on December 5th, 1778). Author's analytical constructions (source of the plan – the High Toropets District Library).

The Saviour, Epiphany, and St John the Predecessor Churches created a close circle. From Voskresenskaya Square, as well as from the central climax rays of spatial visual connections are going: eastward to the churches of Christmas and

Assumption, northward to the Annunciation Church along Millionnaya Street, and westward to the Kazan Church. Since there are active spatial and visual relationships between the ensembles, they have been extended to the parts of *posad*, *Torg*, and

Detinets, shaping a unified ensemble of the town. It's a distinctive feature of Toropets. In 1892, historian V. Shchukin remarkably correctly defined the true idea of the unified city ensemble as a compositional harmony of churches. "Near Solomeno Lake, on the Toropa River, a little

county town is located with its nineteen churches, which, while being established close to one another, add to the town's authentic view – the view of a sort of a Kremlin". We can see it on the engraving ("Figure 4").



Figure 4 The general view of Toropets in the mid-nineteenth century. Engraving by K. Veyerman from Adamov's drawing.

It is doubtless, there is a system in the arrangement of churches. That is why they are perceived actively in their interrelations. Comparing the engraving with the modern condition, we see the preservation of the architectural construction system and the basis of the construction of the composite system, tightly connected with the genetic parts. They give rise to the unforgettable 'aesthetic emotions' about which José Luis Borges mentioned, and spiritually demanded by everyone and at all times as a need for identity and true values [11, 12]. Despite the loss of some churches, the historical parameters of the visual space of *Torg* and connections exposure of the surviving churches still retain. The town of Toropets possesses powerful historical potential and cultural heritage, as well as distinctive building traditions and building mastery and gives us real satisfaction from meeting the beautiful.

5. CONCLUSION

The article justifies two fundamentally important approaches to the study of urban structure. The first one stands for the reproduction of an authentic urban structure as a historical-genetic model that was created alongside the organic development of a city with no losses or violent invasions.

The second approach stands for the analysis of the relationship between the arrangement of architectural ecclesiastic ensembles and the planning part itself (*posad, Torg*). The second approach is to analyze the interrelationships between architectural church ensembles, inextricably linked with the planning parts where

they are located (*posad, Torg*). This includes recoverable lost dominants and historical boundaries, their mutual disposition and their connections. In this complementary analysis of the mutual arrangement of parts and arrangement of ensembles, the representation of structure and composition at the level of 'a city/town as a whole' is ensured. The results of such analysis justify the need to move from single object preservation by Objects of Cultural Heritage (OCH) facilities to genetic parts and their historical settings. The mutual dislocation of planning and genetic parts reflects the specificity of urban planning conditions and the characteristics of the historical settlement system. That is why it is important to compare historical boundaries with the territorial extensions and urban form [13]. The genetic parts that have been identified have their value characteristics that form the basis of genetic zoning [14]. It is also legitimate to introduce this principle into practice: to consider genetic parts, or their remnants, morphological fragments as objects of cultural heritage, to establish protection zones and regulations for new constructions.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Lyubov Kubetskaia conducted the leading role of this research. The selected theme of preservation of urban traditions during the restoration processes is one of the most significant in the author's field of research. In the presented article, she formulated and developed the key idea, collected all data, composed the general outline of the work, highlighted the most essential clauses and set out the results and conclusions of the work.

Natalia Kudryavtseva having theoretical the knowledge of Western European scientists, made a scientific theoretical and methodological contribution to the analytic procedures of the method that significantly helped specifying the constructive details and adding to the article from the Russian and world history.

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