

HISTORICAL LANDSCAPES OF THE CITY OF URALSK

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Abstract: the article is devoted to one of the oldest cities in Kazakhstan – Uralsk. The city is located in the most picturesque landscape zone of North-Western Kazakhstan. Its territory has a major deep river Ural, which until the end of the XIII century it was called Yaik. The banks of this famous river have been inhabited by many nomadic tribes since ancient times, as evidenced by the preserved Saki mounds and burial grounds, the remains of medieval settlements and many other archaeological sites.

Keywords: historical landscape, squares, boulevards and squares, the composition of the city's landscaping.

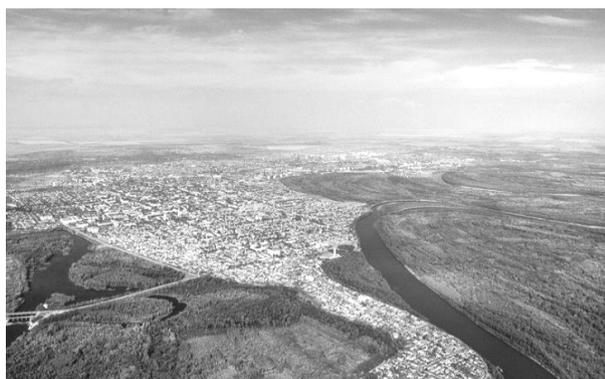


Fig.1. The City Of Uralsk. View from the Yaik

In the XIII-XIV centuries, the southern Ural was part of the Golden Horde and was the place of settlement of various tribal associations of Turkic-speaking nomads. After the collapse of the Golden Horde (XIII - XIV centuries), and later it's heirs – Kok-Orda (XIV - XV centuries) and the Nogai Horde (the XV - XVI centuries) to separate ownership, bank of the Yaik began to occupy a dispersed group of multilingual migrants from the Russian state, Nogai nomads, Crimea and the North Caucasus, who in the XVII century composed of a special local group, settled population, called the Yaik (from 1775 Ural) Cossacks [1].

Originally, Yaik Town (from the Turkic word "Yaik", which means-a convenient memorial place) was founded in the Oreshnoye tract in 1584. After its destruction by the Nogai Tatars, it was moved 50 km down the Yaik River (Ural) in 1613 to its present location on the peninsula between the Yaik and Chagan rivers, 1613 is considered the official date of the city's foundation.

Initially, the settlement consisted of a fortress and a Cossack settlement, development went mainly in the North direction, along the road that approached the fortress from the North side. Simple fortifications in the form of a ditch with a rampart and a wattle fence were built only on the side of the open steppe. As the town grew, the defenses were moved to new locations – moving North.

According to P. I. Rychkov, in 1748 Yaik Town had up to 3 thousand yards, five churches, closely built up with such narrow streets that in some of them it is almost impossible for two carts to separate [2].

P. S. Pallas, describing the state of the fortification of Yaik Town in 1773, wrote: "The town is built very correctly, like a crescent from Yaik and Chagan, and around it is fortified with an irregular parapet with a fascines, there is also a moat, and guns are placed on the rampart, but there is no fortification on the river side, because the high banks of the Staritsa, Yaik and Chagan quite protect" [3].

These data clearly characterize the state of development and defensive structures of the town in the 70s of the XVIII century. The Center was the Mikhailo-Archangel Cathedral, built in 1741-1751 in the southern part of the town. Over time, the settlement begins to acquire trade and economic significance, due to the fact that trade routes from the Volga region to Central Asia passed through it.

Yaik is associated with a famous historical figure-Yemelyan Pugachev, the leader of the popular uprising and the Peasant war of 1773-1775.

After the suppression of the Pugachev uprising, Yaik Town was renamed Uralsk, and the Yaik River was renamed the Urals.



Fig. 2. The Ural region in 1900

Many times the town burned down from fires and each time was restored with the same grid of streets and crowding of buildings. After the fire of 1821, the ataman of the Cossack army, D. M. Borodin, invited the Italian architect Delmedino and entrusted him with the development of a new city plan, which served as the basis for modern planning [4].

In 1868 Uralsk becomes the administrative center of the newly organized region of the same name. The Ural region includes the lands of modern West Kazakhstan, Atyrau, and part of Aktobe regions, as well as part of the lands of modern Orenburg region of the Russian Federation (fig.2). The unification of a huge territory and the development of market relations ensured the economic prosperity of Uralsk. During this period, the city has seen an increase in population. Tens of thousands of runaway serfs from Russia settled in this sparsely populated region with fertile and empty lands and a fairly good climate. Agriculture is developing in the region. Transit trade passes through the Kazakh steppes, and regular fairs appear and operate. In the 70s of the XIX century, the trade movement of ships in the Urals was opened, before that the river was used only for fishing, navigation was prohibited. The first vessels were barges from the upper reaches of the river to Uralsk, in 1880, a tugboat was launched that ran from Uralsk to Orenburg.

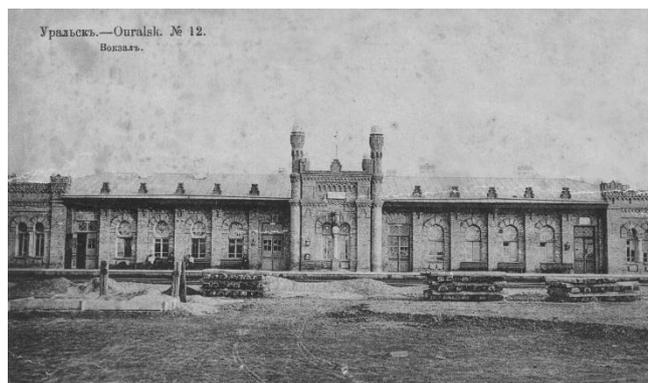


Fig. 3. The railway station building (now lost)

The further growth of the urban population and the change in the economic image of the city was influenced by the construction of a branch of the Ryazan-Ural railway from Uralsk to Pokrovka (now Engels), completed in 1894. The road connected the city with the Central regions of Russia, and several dozen small industrial enterprises appeared, mainly related to the processing of agricultural raw materials. In 1913 the population of the city exceeds 46 thousand people, in 1921 there were more than 100 small industrial enterprises in the city, where 850 workers worked [4].

The structure and size of the urban population has changed. Along with the peasants who moved from the Central regions of Russia, the Volga region and Ukraine, there are such social groups as merchants, nobility, Philistines, new classes – workers and "foreigners". The ethnic composition of the city's population is also becoming multi-ethnic; Kazakhs, Ukrainians, Germans, Tatars, Mordvins, Uzbeks, Poles, Kalmyks, Bashkirs and Jews appeared among the citizens. Thus, the new ethno social structure of the population of Uralsk testified to significant socio-economic changes that occurred in the development of the city by the beginning of the XX century [1].

By 1915 Uralsk is becoming one of the major shopping centers. Gradually expanding from South to North, the residential area of the city at the end of the XIX century is closed by a railway line, forming a wedge-shaped plan, clearly divided by a system of straight meridional and latitudinal streets. The main core of this planning system was Bolshaya Mikhailovskaya Street (now N. Nazarbayev Ave.). On both sides of it were the largest buildings. There were women's and men's classical high schools, a real school, a teacher's Seminary, several primary schools, a library, two hospitals, two dispensaries, and many different religious institutions (14 churches, three mosques, an idol house, and two monasteries outside the city), and several Newspapers were published [5].

But mostly Uralsk of this period, like all the County towns, remained an unsettled city, "during long rains and in the spring during the melting of snow, some of its streets resembled a swampy swamp. The only way to get through them was on horseback – the carriages were sinking in the mud. There was no night lighting" - wrote the scientist geographer N. N. Palgov. [5] The City had no running water, sewage, street lighting, sidewalks, or paved streets.

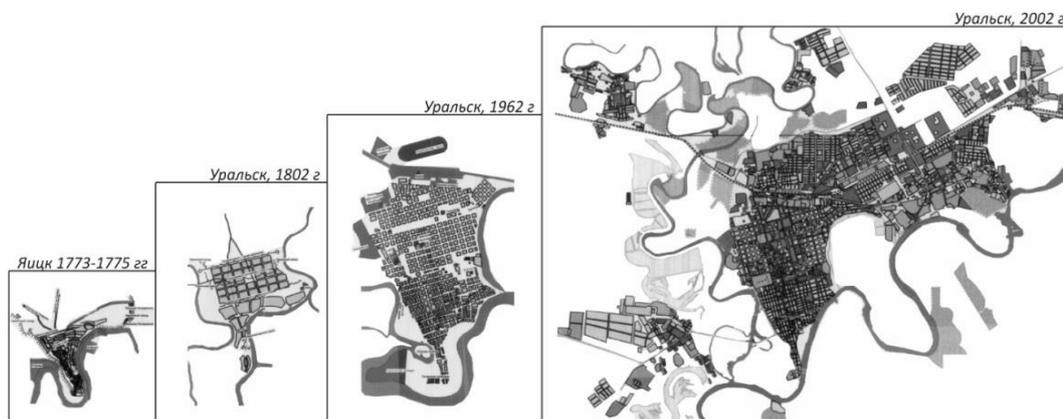


Fig.4. Planning development of Uralsk from the XVIII to the XXI century

After Uralsk became a provincial center in 1920, the city began the process of reconstruction and development of industry.

This process gets a new direction especially during the Great Patriotic War, when several industrial enterprises were evacuated to Uralsk from the center of Russia. The territorial growth of the city associated with the development of industry leads to an increase in residential development, the appearance of 2-3-storey residential and public buildings, landscaping of streets, bus traffic, engineering networks and landscaping. The post-war development of the city increased the importance of Uralsk as an administrative, economic and cultural center of the Ural region, this was also facilitated by the development of virgin and fallow lands.

Rapid growth of the city required perspective calculations and planning of territorial development. Design and planning work on the city of Uralsk was first started by "Lengiprogor" in 1954 [6]. According to the 1959 census, the city's population was 105 thousand people. The planning state of the city at that time was characterized by the dispersion of its development along the Railways and the banks of the Ural and Chagan rivers. In total, three main districts were defined for that period – Central, Eastern and Western.

The Central district has retained the rectangular plan system of the XVIII century, with a frequent grid of streets and small sections of blocks. The main street of the district was Lenin Ave. (former B. Mikhailovskaya, now Nazarbaev Ave). Here are the main public buildings of the city, the administrative Department, as well as a hotel, a pedagogical Institute, etc.

The southern part of the Central district was the most populated and well-maintained part of the city with paved streets, mostly built up with capital residential buildings and service institutions [6].

The population of the city at the time of the creation of the next master plan in 1968 was 133 thousand people.

In the plan developed by the Institute "Kazgostroyproekt", a complex organization of residential and industrial-warehouse territories, a hierarchical three-stage system of cultural and consumer services and recreation was proposed. The development of the city was planned on free territories in the North-Eastern part on the site of the old airport and in the Western part across the Chagan River. The General plan retains the role of the main street of the city – Lenin Ave.

The compositional core was still the ensemble of the Central Square of the city, built up with administrative buildings. A group of public and administrative buildings was reinforced along Furmanov Street (now Kurmangazy) and the Western side of Lenin Ave., near the Cathedral of Christ the Savior. In addition to large areas of public greenery-Central Park, Khan's grove and four squares adjacent to the Avenue. For example, the role of green corridors is performed by the floodplains of the Ural and Chagan rivers.

By the time the next master plan was developed in 1985, the population was 213.5 thousand people and Uralsk is a major industrial, administrative and cultural center of the West Kazakhstan region. There are new urban highways (Syryma Datova Street), along which a complex micro-district development is growing. The city has a theater, cinemas, museum, libraries, clubs and cultural centers.

The decline in the economy, migration and decline in natural growth caused by the collapse of the Union, leads to a reduction in the city's population, which in 2001 was 210.2 thousand people (including Zachagansk and Derkul) [9].

At the moment, the modern planning structure of the city consists of five non-uniform planning areas – Central, North-Eastern, Eastern, Western and North-Western, divided due to special natural landscape conditions by floodplain territories of the Ural and Chagan rivers and the Orenburg-Moscow railway.



Fig.5. View of Bolshaya Mikhailovskaya Street from the Nevsky Cathedral

The Central district is the historical center of the city, from where the city began to form since the XVII century. The borders of this district of the city run from the confluence of the Shagan River with the Ural on the street Shagano-promenade to Eurasia Avenue, on Eurasia Avenue to Aytiev Street, on Aytiev Street to promenade of the Ural River. [9] The existing small-scale system of block planning with mainly manor buildings in the Northern part of Narimanov Street is enlarged and built up in large part with multi-storey residential buildings. The system of historically formed squares and boulevards (Furmanovsky, Nekrasovsky, Pushkin, Moldagaliev, Seifullin, etc.) creates the main elements of the district's landscaping system. The role of the main street of the city and district is still retained by Bolshaya Mikhailovskaya (now N. Nazarbayev Ave.) [14].

The preserved buildings of the initial periods of the city's development determine the historical landscape, the main components of which are various types of buildings, elements of landscaping and the structure of the street layout. Identification of characteristic components of the historical landscape of the city is accompanied by the analysis of old plans, maps, comparison of the same objects and street perspectives in archival and modern photographs, etc. The development of the city was accompanied, as a rule, by the formation of planning nodes – squares, the initial role of which was primarily associated with commercial functions. The development of the market role leads to the construction of important buildings for the city, such as churches, banks, schools, as well as libraries and archives. The architectural dominants in the landscape of urban development were primarily churches. The silhouette of domes towering over single-story, mostly buildings, marked the space of the city's squares.

The building components of once-existing squares still retain the role of architectural and planning nodes, defining the structure of the historical landscape of the city [13].

An important role in the development of the city was played at the time by Nikolaev Square, planned by military architects at the end of the XIX century to accommodate the first station and access roads on it. As a result, the station was built much further North, on the current site. A huge wasteland began to take on the appearance of a city square only a couple of decades later, with the relocation of the bread market there are shops, shopping malls. Nikolaev Square was the largest in Uralsk, with 12 hectares of boulevards and squares, a kilometer and a half long and a quarter wide, right in the middle of a densely built-up city center [10].

An important role was played by the Ican Square with the Cathedral of Christ the Savior in the center and buildings of administrative city and military institutions, an archive, and a Museum.

Historically, the architectural and urban planning role of Turkestan square has been preserved. [8] The Square appeared on the site of the last fortified line of the city, which existed from 1809 to 1870 (according to the plans of 1822, 1848). Under ataman Pokatillov, two churches were built next to the fortifications – the Kazan mother of God (1832) and the Church of John the Baptist (1837). The area was very long and wide, it connected the floodplains of the Chagan River and the old riverbed Ural. In the second half of the XIX century, the square houses the Fairgrounds and the new city market – Sennaya. At the end of the XIX century the square is being built up with commercial and residential buildings, and the commercial and craft center of the city is gradually moving to the square. With the construction of buildings of the city police, commercial Bank, Makarov Theater, tea houses, hotels, and other public buildings on the square, the administrative center of the city is also moving here. Currently, the Western part of the former Turkestan Square is built up. The Eastern part to Kurmangazy Street (former Orenburg, then Furmanov), where in the XIX century the "gluttonous rows" were located, is now occupied by a square. Only

the Central part of the square (the intersection of the former B. Mikhailovsk Street with Turkestan Square) did not change its purpose – the main square of the city (now Abay Square).



Fig.6. Turkestan Square, now Abay Square

The role of Peterpavlovsk Square, which appeared in the XVIII century on the site of the rampart moved in 1751, can also be traced on the city's plans. It was named after the stone church with a chapel built in 1733, replacing the original wooden Peterpavlovsk Church. In the XIX century, the square was finally formed. In addition to the Peterpavlovsk Church and the small Bazaar located on the square, there were buildings of a spiritual school (former military) and a women's gymnasium. With the growth of the city in the North direction, the shopping center also moved to a new shopping area. Peterpavlovsk Square was not a shopping center for a long time, but it remained the educational and cultural center of the city for a long time. It is not for nothing that the first museum and public library in Uralsk were opened next to the women's gymnasium in the middle of the XIX century.

In 1937, the Peterpavlovsk Church was destroyed, and over time the square was built up, leaving only the roadway of Pugachev Street. The buildings of the theological school and the women's gymnasium are now occupied by the pedagogical Institute.

Kazan Square and Stolypin Boulevard were built on the site of a former rampart that existed until 1784. Since the beginning of the XIX century until early XX century Kazan Square and the Stolypin Boulevard played a leading role in the composition of the city, being commercial, retail and cultural center of Uralsk.

In 1723, at the intersection of the main street of Uralsk – Bolshaya Mikhailovskaya and the rampart, a wooden Church of the Kazan Mother of God was built, which gave the name to the later formed Kazan Square, with the stone Kazan Cathedral built in 1836 in the center. Part of the square to the West of Bolshaya Mikhailovskaya, where the Morning market was located since 1801, is built up with merchant houses, artisans' houses with shops and small shops on the first floors.

In the middle of the XIX century, Stolypin Boulevard was laid to the East of Kazan Square. It is built up with residential mansions belonging mainly to the intelligentsia: doctors, writers and clergy. The Central part of the boulevard is planted with trees, and a wooden theater was built at the end of it in 1859. Since then, Stolypin Boulevard - a favorite place for walking citizens becomes a cultural and recreational center of the city. At the end of the XIX century, the recreation area expanded, as in 1893 a new square appeared behind the theater, to the North of which a new boulevard was laid. In 1899, the boulevard was named Pushkin, as well as the square in honor of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Alexander Pushkin.

Stolypin Boulevard, later renamed Nekrasov, with the demolition of the Kazan Cathedral and the construction of the building of the pedagogical Institute (1937-1939), blocks the exit from Nekrasov Boulevard to Bolshaya Mikhailovskaya. This architectural and planning node, divided into two parts, has completely lost its significance. The Eastern part of Nekrasov Boulevard, which became the backyard of the pedagogical Institute, fell into decline.



N.F. Savichev Square



Zh. Moldagaliev Square

Fig. 7. The parks of the city.

Green boulevards and squares are one of the main components of the historical landscape of the city. The first attempts at landscaping Uralsk were made under the command of ataman Pokatilov in the 30s of the XIX century. In

the middle of the century, ataman Kozhevnikov laid out a Military garden. In the late 60s, the first city Boulevard was laid out under ataman Stolypin, and landscaping of Bolshaya Mikhailovskaya Street began. At the end of the XIX and XX centuries, Pushkin, Ikansky and Georgievsky Boulevards were broken up. At the beginning of the XX century, the development of the Khan's grove began, and projects were discussed to turn Bolshaya Mikhailovskaya Street into a boulevard, to green up Zheleznov Square, and to create a Park on the site of the old Ilyinsky cemetery.

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