

# SUBURBS AS AN URBAN PLANNING PHENOMENON

Samoilov K.I.<sup>1</sup>, Chekmarev A.A.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Samoilov Konstantin Ivanovich – Doctor of Technical Sciences, Candidate of Architecture, Associate Professor,*

<sup>2</sup>*Chekmarev Andrey Aleksandrovich – undergraduate,*

ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT,

KAZAKH NATIONAL RESEARCH TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY NAMED AFTER K.I. SATPAYEV,

ALMATY, REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

**Abstract:** *The article analyzes the role and significance of suburban territories in the context of urban development. The study is based on examining the historical, sociocultural, and spatial aspects of the formation of cities and suburbs. The presented analysis covers the process of development in different historical periods - from ancient times to the present day. The aim of the work is to identify the peculiarities of the formation and development of suburbs under the influence of sociocultural changes, economic needs, and technological innovations. The research is based on architectural and urban planning data, as well as the analysis of the dynamics of spatial organization of urban and suburban areas. The obtained results will help understand the genesis of suburban spaces within the city in different time periods and identify features in the lifestyle, worldview, and social status of suburban residents.*

**Keywords:** *cities, suburbs, historical aspects, socio-cultural aspects, spatial aspects, genesis of urban spaces.*

## ПРИГОРОД КАК ФЕНОМЕН ГОРОДСКОГО ПЛАНИРОВКИ

Самойлов К.И.<sup>1</sup>, Чекмарев А.А.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Самойлов Константин Иванович – доктор технических наук, кандидат архитектуры, доцент,*

<sup>2</sup>*Чекмарев Андрей Александрович – магистрант,*

кафедра бухгалтерия,

Казахский национальный исследовательский технический университет имени К.И. Сатпаева,

г. Алматы, Республика Казахстан

**Аннотация:** *в статье анализируется роль и значение пригородных территорий в контексте городского развития. Исследование основано на рассмотрении исторических, социокультурных и пространственных аспектов формирования городов и пригородов. Представленный анализ охватывает процесс развития в разные исторические периоды – от древнейших времен до наших дней. Цель работы – выявить особенности формирования и развития пригородов под влиянием социокультурных изменений, экономических потребностей и технологических инноваций. В основе исследования лежат архитектурные и градостроительные данные, а также анализ динамики пространственной организации городских и пригородных территорий. Полученные результаты помогут понять генезис пригородных пространств внутри города в разные временные периоды и выявить особенности образа жизни, мировоззрения и социального статуса жителей пригорода.*

**Ключевые слова:** *города, пригороды, исторические аспекты, социокультурные аспекты, пространственные аспекты, генезис городских пространств.*

A city, emerging at a particular stage of historical development, becomes an element of spatial structure. Suburbs, in this context, have been part of the city throughout all historical periods, from ancient times to the present day. Throughout history, suburbs have emerged in various forms and contexts in every corner of the world. They have arisen due to economic needs, demographic changes, political shifts, and sociocultural transformations. Therefore, for a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the role of suburbs in the structure of the city and their characteristics, it is necessary to examine the position and role of suburbs from ancient times to the present day.

The city, as an entity, represents a multifaceted phenomenon that reflects the sociocultural, economic, and spatial characteristics of society. In the context of the conducted research, historical, sociocultural, and spatial aspects are of interest.

The historical aspect, concerning the examination of cities and suburbs, implies that they are the result of historically developed processes that reflect the sociocultural, economic, and political aspects of society at a certain period in time. Cities and suburbs reflect the dynamics and changes in society over specific periods of time. This means that cities and suburbs should be viewed as phenomena that constantly evolve depending on the historical development of society, technologies, as well as other social, economic, and political factors. Understanding the historical aspect helps us see how cities and suburbs adapt to changing societal conditions and needs.

The sociocultural aspect, in the context of examining cities and suburbs, implies that they constitute environments where social practices, cultural traditions, and societal values are formed and manifested. Cities

and suburbs serve as carriers of cultural peculiarities that reflect trends and changes in society. This aspect encompasses various aspects of urban and suburban life, including social interactions among different population groups, forms of governmental organization, religious practices, cultural events, the level of education of the population, and so on. Understanding the sociocultural aspect allows for a deeper insight into the essence of urban and suburban life, as well as for identifying the peculiarities of cultural and social development of these territories across different historical periods.

The spatial aspect, in the context of examining cities and suburbs, encompasses the organization of space in these territories and its influence on the lives and activities of the population. Cities and suburbs are formed as a result of the interaction of various factors, such as geographical features, sociocultural and economic needs of society, as well as cultural and historical traditions. The main elements of the spatial aspect are the planning structure of cities and their functional zoning.

The planning structure determines the composition and organization of the city's territory, including the distribution of residential, commercial, and public areas, as well as infrastructure and green spaces. Functional zoning determines the specialization of territories according to their purpose. The features of city formation relate to the process of its growth and development, which occurs under the influence of various factors, such as changes in demographics, new technologies, and sociocultural trends. Understanding the spatial aspect allows for the analysis of the evolution of urban and suburban territories throughout history, identifying historical trends in their development, and understanding the influence of various factors on the formation of the urban and suburban environment.

Understanding the close interconnection between the historical, sociocultural, and spatial aspects of the formation of cities and suburbs will allow us to better grasp the essence and significance of suburbs as an urban planning phenomenon. This will enable us to identify key trends and factors influencing the development of suburban territories across different historical periods. The knowledge obtained can serve as a basis for developing more effective urban planning strategies aimed at creating sustainable, functional, and comfortable spaces for human activities.

Before the emergence of the first urban settlements, human life was closely linked to subsistence farming. In ancient times, society was organized into small communities where all members lived close to each other to collectively meet life's necessities such as food gathering, exchange, and protection from external threats. The primary and fundamental need of humans was food, and the entire way of life revolved around the search for sustenance. During this period, three types of settlements can be distinguished: permanent, temporary, and seasonal.

Permanent settlements were permanent places of residence where dwellings were located. Such settlements were situated in areas with good food production and favorable geographical features. Early settlements also served as trading points where people gathered to exchange goods or conduct religious ceremonies. Temporary settlements were temporary resting points; they served as stopovers during travel between permanent settlements. Seasonal settlements were used at certain times of the year when favorable conditions for hunting and gathering prevailed.

More efficient agriculture allowed people to transition from food gathering to its own production. People developed more efficient methods of food gathering and harvesting, which allowed them to become less dependent on constant movement in search of food, thus contributing to the further development of permanent settlements.

With the growth of population and the development of social interactions within settlements, there was a gradual transformation from settlements based on kinship ties to more complex urban communities. The formation of the first cities and the increase in population in them contributed to the development of a more complex social structure. The primary function of such settlements was the storage and protection of food. As cities developed, those who took on the organization and protection of food and inhabitants gained power, leading to the subsequent development of interpersonal relationships.

The logic behind the construction of the first cities was influenced by natural conditions and the topography of the area. The main factor for the formation of a city was access to fresh water, the presence of conditions nearby for food production, and the existence of maritime or overland trade routes passing through the city. Cities had layouts that included a main fortress or palace, where warehouses, temples, barracks, as well as the residences of leaders and their servants were located. The rest of the city consisted of complexes of residential and utility buildings, forming residential and utility districts. Thus, the core urban structure was formed, where essential strategic, cultural, and religious structures were located at the center, while less significant ones were around them. Wealthy individuals and the ruling class lived in the center of the city, while less affluent residents were located around this center. The city aimed to maintain a compact form, which provided the smallest perimeter for external defensive walls and fast internal connections.

Such a structure was characteristic of Sumerian cities and the city of Mohenjo-Daro, one of the earliest cities in the history of South Asia. Similar systems were also found in ancient Mesoamerican cities and ancient Chinese cities.

An important feature that distinguished stages of civilization development was the evolution of the means of production system. In primitive communities, residents organized into primitive groups with roles such as hunters and gatherers, but there was no clear specialization, and each engaged in various activities. With the emergence of complex human interaction systems in urban settings, a more intricate system of human distribution in the production system emerged. As a result, privileged classes began to form: city rulers; service personnel providing services within the city; city residents with specialized means of production; residents of outskirts working under the authority of city dwellers; rural residents with food production means. The existence of a city indicated a significant level of division of labor and the separation of agriculture from crafts and trade, establishing a system of slavery in production.

The diversity of occupations and professions led to the formation of various social groups and classes. Rulers, religious figures, trading elites, artisans, farmers, workers, and slaves became characteristic elements of urban life, and the hierarchy of social classes became more pronounced. This process led to the formation of different layers of population in cities, each with its own characteristics and interests. The sociocultural dynamics in urban societies are largely determined by three main social groups, each with its distinctive features and roles. The first group consists of the wealthy and influential class, possessing significant social and economic power. Members of this class not only have substantial material resources but also hold authority and privileges that enable them to obtain necessary resources and decisions from other members of society. The second group consists of urban residents who submit to authority and adhere to established norms and rules, and due to the lack of food production means, they depend on rural residents. Their lives rely on crafts or trade. The third group comprises rural residents with their own means of food production, who submit to authority in exchange for loyalty and protection from it.

With the increasing complexity of urban structures, production processes, social interactions, and population growth, there arose a need for an efficient system of management and resource control in the city. This, in turn, led to the formation of a more advanced and complex administrative system. Thus, in the ancient world, cities continued to develop as centers of social and economic activity, but their structure became more intricate and diverse, reflecting changes in societal organization and governance.

The next stage of urban development was the medieval period. For this period, the characteristic feature was the social organization of cities, where the previously centralized administrative system gave way to feudal relations.

The feudal system was based on relationships of vassalage and serfdom, where land and power were transferred from the suzerain to the vassal in exchange for loyalty and military service. This led to the division of society into three main classes: the nobility, the clergy, and the peasantry. It was during the medieval period that we observe a trend of increasing importance of cities as centers of trade and craftsmanship.

Defensive structures, fortress walls, towers, and castles became characteristic elements of medieval cities. They served as a means of defense against external attacks and protected the city's inhabitants from raids. Fortress walls were built around the perimeter of the city and featured fortresses or towers at regular intervals. These defensive structures not only ensured the safety of the city but also underscored its strategic importance as a center of power, trade, and culture in medieval society.

In terms of spatial aspect, the framework of the city acquired a structure that included: the historical city center, intra-urban districts, areas beyond the city walls, and rural territory. In the medieval period, the historical city center served as an administrative and strategic hub, where feudal palaces and castles were located, as well as town halls and churches that played a key role in governance and religious life. The intra-urban territory was used for the residence of citizens and featured marketplaces, guilds, and craft workshops producing luxury items. Areas beyond the city walls were spaces for the housing and craft production of the working classes, as well as markets where agricultural and artisanal goods were traded. Rural territory was used for agriculture and the cultivation of agricultural products, providing the urban population with food and raw materials.

Agriculture played a key role in the formation of cities, with a large number of urban residents engaged in non-agricultural activities still relying on food production. Therefore, the presence of arable land for livestock and forest land within the city limits was a characteristic feature of early medieval cities. However, even with agricultural land near urban areas, city dwellers still required a large amount of produce from rural residents. The relationship between the city and the countryside in the Middle Ages was determined by authority and economic needs. Recognizing the importance of food supply, urban authorities often employed various methods of coercion and requisitioning against rural residents. This included taxation, compulsory deliveries of agricultural produce, and sometimes direct utilization of rural labor resources for the benefit of the city. These measures were taken to ensure the stable supply of food resources to the urban population and to maintain the economic viability of the city. In turn, rural residents, often dependent on the urban market as a place to sell their produce, were forced to comply with the demands of urban authorities in order to gain access to urban resources and markets.

The market became the central hub of life in medieval cities, where trade and the exchange of urban craft products took place. The market facilitated exchange between the city and the rural countryside, as well as

between other cities. In medieval cities, the location of markets and market squares could vary depending on a number of factors, but there were common trends. Markets and market squares, in particular, were often located within the city walls, especially in large and prosperous cities. This was due to the need to ensure the security of trade activities, quality control of goods, and the collection of taxes on transactions. Inner-city markets often became the focal point of urban life, attracting crowds of traders and buyers. On the other hand, in smaller or less developed cities, and in cases where the city expanded beyond its walls due to population growth and economic development, markets and market squares could be located outside the city walls. This was due to the more available space outside the city fortifications, where trade activities could be organized, as well as the need to meet the demand from suburban and rural populations. The layout of cities during this period was often characterized by concentration around a central square or market, around which important institutions such as the town hall, church, or palace were situated.

In the medieval period, suburban areas represented distinct districts characterized by several key features. Firstly, their location: suburbs were situated outside the city walls or on its outskirts. Due to dense construction within the city walls and a lack of space for new buildings, construction took place beyond the city walls. Secondly, their functional purpose was determined by their economic activity. Suburbs served as permanent residential areas, as well as territories for crafts and agriculture. Thirdly, the population mainly consisted of rural residents from the city itself and migrants from neighboring villages. Suburban residents had ties to the city through trade or craftsmanship, and the population in the suburbs was usually lower than inside the city walls. Fourthly, the economy: economic activity in the suburbs focused on craft occupations, the service sector, and to a lesser extent on the production of agricultural products. Such products were supplied to the city for sale at markets or used to provide city dwellers with food and other necessary goods.

In the medieval period, the interaction between the city and its suburban areas was a crucial aspect of societal life. Urban authorities sought to control the activities of suburban regions to ensure the city's supply of necessary goods and foodstuffs. Such control included the imposition of taxes and regulations on suburban residents, as well as the utilization of their labor in urban productions.

The socio-cultural sphere also played a role in shaping the relationship between the city and its suburbs. Although suburban residents largely depended on the city for their livelihood, they also maintained their unique cultural identity and traditions. This was evident in their religious customs, architecture, cuisine, and other aspects of daily life.

There was a particular architectural feature in the suburbs, as large and durable structures were not built beyond the city walls due to the risk of capture and use by adversaries. In the event of an enemy attack on the city, the population of suburban areas would evacuate to the city, and the suburban territories would be deliberately destroyed through fires to prevent the enemy from using them to their advantage. After the siege ended, the suburban areas were rebuilt and returned to their usual economic and residential functions. It is worth noting that wooden structures predominated in medieval suburbs, unlike urban centers where buildings could be larger and made of stone, indicating the socio-economic difference between the city and its surroundings.

In the modern era, industrialization became a key factor that significantly influenced the structure and functions of the city. Whereas previously the city represented a compact settlement proportional to the human scale, serving as a center of trade located at the intersection of maritime and land routes, in the modern period, the city became an industrial center of an extensive region, a major hub connecting railways and highways, concentrating industrial production functions within itself.

The appearance of cities began to change rapidly. Due to the development of military technologies and the use of dynamite for military purposes, walls and castles lost their initial significance. The mechanization allowed for achieving high production capacities in both raw materials and food production. The exploration and utilization of the steam engine enabled the creation of transportation vehicles capable of covering long distances.

Alongside traditional trading and craft zones, the city became a center of industrial production. Industrial districts became characteristic features of the urban landscape due to the influx of labor and the placement of factories and plants. These districts often concentrated on the outskirts of the city, in the suburbs or near them, leading to the formation of working-class neighborhoods with dense construction and intense industrial activity. With the changing needs of society, new educational, cultural, commercial, and recreational centers emerged in urban centers. These centers became places for education, social gatherings, cultural exchange, and entertainment, giving the city a unique character and enriching urban life.

During the development of cities in the modern era, the immediate suburbs received significantly more attention from urban administration and gradually began to be integrated into the urban structure. There arose a need to integrate suburban areas into the overall city structure to ensure the efficient functioning of the urban system as a whole. Suburbs in the modern era experienced development through connection to urban infrastructure, including utilities and transportation networks. Enterprises and entrepreneurial initiatives began to emerge in the suburbs, creating job opportunities, which contributed to reducing dependence on urban centers and the development of suburban communities.

Simultaneously, there was an intensive increase in the city's population, mainly due to rural-to-urban migration in search of employment and better living conditions in the suburbs. With industrial development and population growth, cities expanded their boundaries by annexing rural territories and forming new suburban areas.

Primarily, the growth of suburban areas occurred around railway stations and depots. These suburbs appeared as ribbon developments along railway lines because residents of these areas could conveniently commute to the city center for work using trains. As the city developed, its infrastructure expanded and modernized. At this time, railways played a primary and essential role. The construction of roads, bridges, transportation networks, and communication systems became a priority direction of development to ensure connectivity between city districts and provide transportation accessibility for their residents.

Alongside changes in the socio-economic structure of society, the suburb became an important element of urban planning and socio-cultural life. During the Industrial Revolution, suburban areas became places of residence for a diverse range of people. Primarily, these were workers and their families relocating from rural areas to cities in search of employment in factories and mills. These families typically had low income levels and lived in relatively inexpensive housing in the suburbs, often provided by employers.

The social and cultural characteristics of suburban residents reflected their economic status and way of life. Working-class individuals living in suburban areas usually had limited access to education and cultural opportunities because their primary concerns were survival and providing for their families. At the same time, they were often tied to the traditions and culture of their native areas, which could manifest in the nuances of their language, manners, culture, and life perspectives.

In recent times, cities have undergone significant changes in spatial organization, economic activity, socio-cultural environment, and technological solutions.

The spatial organization of cities is becoming more flexible and multifunctional. Instead of predominating industrial zones, mixed-use areas are emerging, combining office buildings, residential complexes, shopping centers, and recreational zones. Industrial labor is giving way to services, creative professions, and high-tech industries. Information sector workers, IT specialists, and representatives of creative industries are becoming important elements of urban social structure. The main priority of development has shifted from industrial production to an economy based on knowledge and information.

The main incentives for living in the city center have become significant improvements in the quality of the urban environment and living conditions compared to suburban areas. The first and decisive factor is not the distance from point A to point B, but the time required to cover it. The second factor is the universality of the city center. The multifunctionality of the city center provides freedom of choice for almost every individual. In combination, these factors make urban life attractive to everyone, contributing to the growth of the urban population and the active development of urban areas.

Suburban areas have faced decline due to the combined impact of the same two factors. The first factor is time. Currently, what matters is the amount of time needed to reach necessary destinations, rather than just distance. Underdeveloped transportation infrastructure and public transit systems in the suburbs do not address this factor effectively. The second factor is the quantity and diversity of services. Modern individuals require not only a place to sleep but also a range of other essential services: education, healthcare, cultural activities, recreational areas, places of employment, cafes, and restaurants. In most cases, suburban areas are primarily oriented toward residential function and do not provide sufficient access to these services, forcing residents to leave their neighborhoods to fulfill their basic needs.

Suburban areas cannot compete with urban centers, which is reflected in both economic and socio-cultural aspects. As a result of decline, there is a decrease in the value of land and real estate prices in the suburbs, which discourages potential residents and businesses. Due to limited access to diverse services and amenities, suburban areas often attract individuals with low levels of education and income, which may contribute to the formation of disadvantaged social groups and lead to an increase in the number of individuals prone to marginal lifestyles and socially disapproved behavioral patterns.

Summarizing all the information presented in the study, the following conclusion can be drawn:

1. Historical aspect:

In ancient times, cities played a key role in shaping early civilizations, such as Mesopotamia, Ancient Egypt, and ancient Greek city-states. They were centers of power and trade, where the political and cultural identity of society was formed. At that time, the first suburbs appeared, with residential and economic structures built outside the city walls. During the medieval period, cities continued to be centers of trade and crafts, but with changes in social structure. The era of the New Time was characterized by the growth of urban culture and the development of capitalism. Cities became engines of economic progress, attracting capital and labor from rural areas. Suburbs became integrated into the city. The modern era differs from previous periods due to globalization and the digital revolution. Cities become hubs of the global economy and information flows, leading to changes in social and political life.

2. Socio-cultural aspect:

In ancient times, cities were centers of developed culture, education, and religion. They served as gathering places for residents, where trade, exchange of ideas, and cultural values took place. During the medieval period, power became more decentralized due to the feudal system. In society, inequality became firmly entrenched. In the period of the New Time, cities became centers of scientific, cultural, and technical development. They attracted artists and intellectuals, contributing to the advancement of science, art, and literature. Urban life became more diverse and culturally rich. In modern times, cities have become centers of industrial and technological development. They attract labor resources and provide access to new technologies and services. Urban culture has become more diverse, reflecting the diversity of ethnic and cultural groups.

### 3. Spatial aspect:

Cities in ancient times were compact and densely built. They often had defensive walls and fortifications for protection against external enemies. The main trade and administrative buildings were located in the center, around which residential and artisanal districts formed. Medieval cities were built with defense in mind, often featuring fortress walls and castles. They were situated on high ground or near rivers, controlling trade routes. Cities of the New Time became more urbanized and diverse in their architecture. They became more widespread, with the expansion and blending of zone functions. Urban planners began to pay more attention to transportation and the convenience of city dwellers. Modern cities are characterized by high population density, vertical construction, and modern infrastructure systems. They have become places of intensive information exchange and communication.

Studying the evolution of cities and suburbs from ancient times to the present allows us to better understand and assess their role in shaping society and culture. Despite the diversity of socio-cultural contexts, cities have always remained the epicenters of human activity, innovation, and progress.

Social-cultural, spatial, and historical aspects are factors that define the essence of cities and suburbs and their influence on society. At different times, cities have served as centers of trade and culture, as well as sites of industrialization and technological innovation. However, their role as places of social and cultural interaction has always remained unchanged. The same applies to suburbs; being part of the city, they have evolved throughout history.

Thus, a comprehensive understanding of the evolution and significance of the city and its suburbs becomes a key factor in shaping a stable and sustainable society in the future. By further studying and analyzing their impact on various aspects of human life, we can gain a deeper understanding of how to make our cities more resilient, comfortable, and safe for human activity.

### *References / Список литературы*

1. *Engels F.* The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State. In Connection with the Research of Lewis H. Morgan. Moscow: "Politizdat", 1980. 238 p.
2. *Gutnov A.E.* Evolution of Urban Planning. Moscow: "Stroyizdat", 1984. 256 p.
3. *Toffler E.* The Third Wave. Moscow: "AST", 2009. 795 p.
4. *Glazychev V.L., Egorov M.M., Ilyina T.V.* Urban Environment. Technology of Development. Moscow: "Izdatelstvo Ladya", 1995. 240 p.
5. *Glazychev V.L.* City Without Borders. Moscow: "Territory of the Future", 2011. 400 p.
6. *Mizhnev P.G.* Gardens - Cities and Housing Issue in England. Moscow: "Novoye Vremya", 1916. 528 p.
7. *Milyutin N.A.* The Problem of Building Socialist Cities. Moscow: "MOSCOW", 1929. 90 p.
8. *Jacobs J.* The Death and Life of Great American Cities. New York: "Vintage Books", 1961. 458 p.
9. *Nanzatov B.* Ancient and Medieval Cities of Central Asia. Preliminary Results of Field Research. [Online resource]. 2013. 85 p. URL: <https://pdfslide.net/documents/tartaria-magna-1-2013.html?page=87> (Accessed: 15.03.2024)
10. *Samoylov K.I.* Architecture of Kazakhstan in the 20th Century: Development of Form-Making.: Diss. PhD of arch. Almaty, 2004. 1402 p.