

Transformation of local identities in peripheral districts of large Post-Socialist cities (a case of Yasenevo, Moscow, Russia)*

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Abstract:

Territorial identity is considered to be not a static phenomenon but a process. The purpose of our research is to study the manifestation of local identity in Yasenevo (a district in the south of Moscow, combining the typical aspects of urban periphery with huge hidden potential of local cultural landscape) and the impact of urban post-socialist transformation on it. The methods include a series of in-depth semi-structured interviews with residents.

The system of Yasenevo's spatial representations includes already formed layers of internal identity associated with the unique planning structure of the area, the presence of two old estates, remoteness from the center of Moscow and a separate position between park areas, as well as some other aspects of local history. It faced rapid changes during the post-socialist transformations: for instance, the role of places concentrating economic and transportation activities has increased dramatically. Some material characteristics of the area have turned into representational: Yasenevo continues to be perceived as an "isolated" and "young" urban entity (Carr, Servon, 2008; Hayden, 1997) although demographic statistics indicates high rates of population ageing.

References:

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