



Review on *Мусиездов А. А. Социологическая концепция городской идентичности : [монография] / А. А. Мусиездов. – Х. : ХНУ имени В. Н. Каразина, 2013. – 372 с.*

In modern studies the interdisciplinary approach is becoming more and more important. It allows us to enrich substantially the views of researchers and methodological possibilities and to expand the number of using receptions and methods of extraction the information. In this context, we must remark the monograph of Kharkiv's sociologist A.A. Musiezdov, which is dedicated to studying the questions of urban identity, self-knowledge and self-understanding of citizens as active participants of an urban community. The problems the author raises are situated on the border between sociology, history, cultural study and philosophy. The theme of the monograph is almost new in the Ukrainian scientific field and it has many aspects and debating questions. That's why it is not accidentally that the author dedicates the main part of his book to outlining the history of forming contradictory views of the research on the questions connected with urban identity, construction and perception the image of the city from the 19 th to the beginning of 21 st. We supposed that the book comes out of the frames of sociology and fits the field of intellectual history.

The book consists of five chapters divided on 2-7 paragraphs. Some paragraphs consist of 2-7 subparagraphs. This structure of the text on the one hand facilitates the perception of the material, on the second hand made some subparagraphs very laconic. Each chapter is accompanied by a short introduction with a topical issue, and that involves a reader to the author's searching for the answer to the debating problems. The conclusion after chapters and paragraphs helps clearly understand the line of the author's thoughts, it forms a bridge between one theme and another.

The first chapter «Identity and territory: problematic field of searching urban identity» is dedicated to studying origin and evolution of the term «identity». And it is quite reasonable because it is impossible to start analyzing the sociologist conception «urban identity» without having a closer look at different approaches – logic, philosophic, psychologist – to personal identity. The author pays much attention to analysis of the terms he uses. He also appeals to etymology these words. It helps us get deep in the matter and to approximate to the narration of urban problems. Under the circumstances when on the one hand a person consider his territorial belonging to be logic and reasonable, and on the other hand the globalization is coming rapidly, the author asks – can we generally talk about the existence of urban identity (p. 40)?

The second chapter of the book is devoted exactly to these questions. It is named «City and urban identity as subject of sociological analyze». In this part, the author describes the points of sociological views. The author consistently leads the reader to problems of forming modern sociologist theory of urban identity. He begins with the conception of M. Weber, then deals with ideas of G. Simmel (p. 45-49), Chicago school sociology (p. 50-51) and the Soviet urban historiography of the cities (p. 52-59) and after that, he presents postmodern urban constructs of H. Lefebvre (p.61-63), M. Castells (p. 64-72), developments of the Lois-Angeles school sociology (p. 76-81) etc. We have to note that many of these authors are out of view in Ukraine. However we can only express regret that the variety of earlier works, for instance, M. Castells's one in urban search such as «City, Class and Power» (1978), «The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements» (1983), which are also unknown for Ukrainian historians and urbanologists, do not became the object of analysis. And the book «The Informational City: Information Technology, Economic Restructuring, and the Urban Regional Process» (1989) is analysed only in connection with his later works about information society. Considering the genre of work the author could

have attracted the works about urbanologists and their heritage, for example, I. Susser «The Castells Reader on Cities and Social Theory» (2002) and joined the discussion in this monograph. Summing up, the author makes a reasonable conclusion that classical sociology has not got the idea «urban identity». However, he insists on using this term and offers to look for it in the sphere of culture (p. 95).

The third and the fourth chapters of the book named «Urban identity and urban society» and «Imaging of the city» are focused on detailed researching such aspects as interaction between city and society, establishment of cooperation in cities, origin of the urban space, which is created consciously by central power, cities actors etc. or springs up spontaneously. A. Musiezdov in this issue bases on the idea of B. Anderson about imaginary societies and analyses how urbanologists understand and solve who can «imagine» or «construct» urban identity. The author's attention to the conceptual issues and theoretical generalizations makes the text sometimes very rigorous. The text is overloaded with long phrases from urbanologists' works. However this academic style is offset in paragraphs 3.2 «The common language of the pavement: public space as interaction places of urban communities» (p. 120-128) and in the chapter 5 «Urban identity as subjective category». In our opinion they are possibly the most interesting parts of the monograph because of the use of vivid examples and metaphor (p. 132-133) about the interaction issues between a personality and an image of the urban identity. We must specially distinguish the detailed narration techniques, methods and conceptual aspects of the search by F. Znaniecky «The city in the Consciousness of Its Citizens» (1931; p. 272-280). The acquaintance with this lead researcher of the Chicago school sociology is very interesting for sociologists, historians and all of the scholars involved in the urban researches. We wish that such works, as for example «The new approaches to the historiography» by P. Burke, would be translated and published in Ukrainian. They would play an invaluable role because of new methods and approaches, which are acquiring the right to exist in modern Ukrainian humanities.

The analysis of the approaches expressed by the representatives of different schools, countries and continents allows A. Musiezdov to make conclusion about distinguishes in connections between a person and a city in the traditional and modern literature. According to the author, in traditional works «a city was imagined as a place where a community was formed, and it eliminates previous distinctions». In modern literature the author finds the next idea: «a city does not blur out the distinctions, but produces new ones, and free communication and interaction between citizens as a condition of forming a new society is more an ideology myth than a real fact» (p. 321). The author determines identity, first of all, as the feeling of individual's connection with a city and accordance with the specific but imagined options of urban life. And the most important aspect in feeling this belonging is not the common territory, but the psychological connection with urban environment, cultural differences and mutual interests of the citizens. Thereby A. Musiezdov comes to the conclusion that «images work when they influence the people's life, when they included in their everyday and symbolic practices. It occurs when they become an element of the culture, style and a way of life» (p. 321-322), when the interaction between different social groups of the city is established and the creative class is formed.

Finally we could point that this monograph contains a large number of researchers' names and theoretical concepts, so it would be desirable to make indexes of the names and issues in the end of the book – it will greatly simplify work with the book. The monograph of A. Musiezdov will be interesting for not only sociologist and other specialists in this field, but also for all of the readers who have ever wondered what a city is and why we perceive the citizens of other towns in such a different way.

PhD D. N. Chorniy
Master V. O. Nesterenko