
RUSSIAN HUMAN GEOGRAPHY OF THE EARLY 21st CENTURY: STUDYING NEW PROCESSES AND USING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Cultural Geography in Russia in the Early 21st Century: Current State and Key Research Areas

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Abstract—The article reviews and analyzes trends in the development of Russian cultural geography at the beginning of the 21st century, its specific features, and the latest scientific achievements with respect to the evolution of cultural geography in Western countries. Similarities and differences in the transformation of the main theoretical approaches, scientific methods, and subject areas of specific cultural and geographical studies in foreign countries and Russia are revealed. The most important thematic sections of the article cover the most significant segments of cultural and geographical research in Russia in the 2000s—early 2020s. It is shown that the main focus in the formation of Russian cultural geography (after several decades of neglecting anthropocultural approaches in the Soviet period) was cultural landscape science. The latest advances of Russian cultural geographers in the field of cultural landscape for the first decades of the 21st century are characterized. Domestic ethnic geography, which developed during the Soviet period as part of population geography, is gradually transforming to ethnocultural. Much attention is paid to the correlation of ethnic and regional identity in polyethnic regions, ethnocultural aspects of the geography of nature management, cultural geography of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia, and the Far East. Religious geography is a new direction of cultural geography for Russia, which has gained great relevance in the post-Soviet period in the revival of religious life in a country characterized by exceptional complexity and the diverse religious composition of the population. The article discusses and analyzes the experience of Russian developments in humanitarian geography—a set of research areas focused on studying systems of ideas about the geographic space in different sociocultural contexts. The great practical significance of cultural and geographical research and the possibility of their use for regional development and optimization of the spatial organization of society are emphasized.

Keywords: human geography, cultural turn in geography, cultural geography, place and space, cultural landscape, regional and local identity, Russian geographical tradition

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INTRODUCTION

Cultural geography is one of the most successfully developing and authoritative scientific areas of world human geography, which developed as an independent branch of geographical science by the end of the first quarter of the 20th century, to a large extent as the heir to the former unified anthropogeography. Cultural geography has a pronounced interdisciplinary character: in its development, it integrated the richest scientific experience of various geographical disciplines (both physical geography and, above all, related disciplines of human geography), as well as cultural and social anthropology, ethnography, and the modern anthropology, ethnology, ethnic and cultural ecology, sociology, social psychology, historical and philosophical anthropology, etc., that grew out of it.

Nevertheless, cultural geography is unequivocally positioned as a structural part of precisely geographical science; in the structure of Western human geography, it is usually considered one of its four main branches (along with social, economic, and political geography). There are many scientific definitions of cultural geography, partly due to the ambiguity of the very term culture, which Patricia Price rightly draws attention to, the author of the cultural and geographical section in the renowned *The Sage Handbook of Human Geography* (2014, pp. 505–521). Despite the abundance of definitions of cultural geography (Gibson and Waitt, 2020), the main focus of her research since the time of Carl Sauer has been the identification of spatial differences in culture; a broader and stereoscopic view began to take root in the final decades of the 20th century.

Cultural geography in late Soviet and post-Soviet Russia in its development, along with the revival of interest in the traditions of pre-revolutionary Russian anthropogeography, was strongly influenced by Western scientific models and approaches. The subject of cultural geography is interpreted by Russian scientists very broadly; thus, one of the authors of this article posits it as “a scientific discipline that studies culture in geographic space, the spatial differentiation of its elements, their expression in the landscape and connection with the geographic environment, as well as the display of geographic space in culture itself” (Sot’sial’no-ekonomicheskaya ..., 2013, p. 119).

The history of the formation of Russian cultural geography has already been partially covered in works by Russian geographers (Druzhinin and Streletsky, 2015; Mitin, 2011; Streletsky, 2008; etc.). The focus of this article is a review and analysis of the specifics of the development of Russian cultural geography at the beginning of the 21st century, its most important research areas, and the latest scientific achievements with respect to global trends in the evolution of this scientific discipline.

EVOLUTION OF CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY BY THE BEGINNING OF THE 21st CENTURY, FEATURES OF ITS FORMATION, AND DEVELOPMENT IN RUSSIA

In the 20th century, world cultural geography underwent a grandiose transformation. As an independent science, it grew out of anthropogeography, spun off from it, and was particularly strongly influenced by the German school of F. Ratzel and the French school of P. Vidal de la Blache; it also inherited from its progenitor two of the most important scientific approaches: spatial and environmental. It is generally accepted that the first cultural–geographical scientific school proper was the Berkeley (California) cultural landscape school, founded by Carl Sauer in the 1920s, although many elements of his concept were presented to varying degrees in studies by predecessors in anthropogeography.

Until the beginning of the last quarter of the 20th century, the approach of Sauer and his followers clearly dominated world cultural geography. Culture was interpreted as an active principle in interaction with the natural environment, the natural habitat as a mediator (background) of human activity, and the cultural landscape as the result of their contact (Sauer, 1925). Cultural geography in the 1930s–1960s was distinguished by consistent scientism, objectivism, and rationalism, a value-neutral methodology for studying causal and functional relationships between the properties of geographical space and cultural phenomena. Typical topics of scientific research were identification of expression of the latter in the landscape, the relationship of the landscape with the culture of the local community, and the role of landscape factors in the

genesis of cultural and geographical differences, as well as the spatial analysis of culture.

The situation began to change at the end of the 1960s—beginning to the 1970s under the influence of the so-called cultural turn, which affected, along with many social and human sciences, all sociogeographical disciplines (Jackson, 1997). True, the question of the time frame of the cultural turn in geography remains debatable (Cultural turns ..., 2018); thus, the postulates of the classical chorological concept of A. Hettner and R. Hartshorne, and even some ideas of C. Sauer, began to be revised in the mid-20th century. However, the rapid convergence of Western human geography with cultural sciences began only in the last third of the century, and this process was two-way; in addition to the cultural turn in geography at the same time, a spatial turn was also noted in social and human sciences. Since the 1970s, so-called humanistic geography began to develop rapidly, a new research direction that rejected positivism and proclaimed phenomenology and hermeneutics as the basis of its worldview. In Anglo-American geographical science, the work of the adherents of the new direction has radically changed the content and the problematic field of cultural and geographical research. The old cultural geography increasingly began to supplant the new cultural geography. In it, a phenomenological approach began to be used as a way of working in the semantic field of spatial relations and meanings of incidences and cultural phenomena. For adherents of the new cultural geography, the space of cultural phenomena is not so much the space of material objects as such, but, above all, the space of meanings (Streletsky, 2002).

However, already since the turn of the 20th–21st centuries, the humanistic and new cultural geography of the West, in turn, have begun to steadily lose ground. The growing interdisciplinary interaction in the sociohumanitarian sphere is a positive process, contributing to the ideological, conceptual, and methodological mutual enrichment of different sciences. However, it also has a downside: the prospect of a discipline that has lost its scientific identity. The new cultural geography, having previously almost pushed the former, traditional cultural and geographical directions to the periphery of the research field, faced the threat of dissolution in the related humanities and nongeographical sciences. Excessive emphasis on “representations of meanings,” spaces of symbols, study of satellite images, etc., was accompanied by new-generation cultural geographers’ insufficient attention to the daily practices of people and local communities, their cultural heritage, the material side of the cultural landscape, culturally determined nature management, and many other pressing issues.

Since the end of the 20th century and especially the 21st century, the new cultural geography began to increasingly lose in competition with so-called critical geography. The latter intercepted a number of import-

ant cultural and geographical themes and contributed to some extent to the “rematerialization” of cultural geography (Cultural Geography ..., 2005). Critical geography also partially came to replace the so-called radical geography, which originated in the 1970s almost simultaneously with humanistic geography. Critical geography, like radical geography, focuses its attention, among other things, on geographical problems of inequality, but not only socioeconomic; for critical geography, the *cultural aspects* of this topic are extremely important, including interethnic, interfaith, gender inequality, the rights of minorities as special sociocultural groups, etc. (Placing ..., 2021). In addition, compared to radical geography, it is less politicized, more academic in nature, and more reliant on the achievements of modern social and human sciences, in particular, cultural anthropology and sociology. Foreign critical geography, in its entire multicolored palette, develops not only in the cultural and geographical field, but goes far beyond it. In addition, for the world cultural geography itself at the beginning of the 21st century, this critical area is just one of several.

In Russian geographical discourse, in addition to the term cultural geography, another term is widely used—geography of culture, but the content of these phrases is not identical. Truly, in a broad sense, many Russian authors often identify the geography of culture with cultural geography; at the end of the 20th century, the phrase geography of culture was even more common in the Russian-language literature. The first dissertations defended in post-Soviet Russia on cultural and geographical issues¹ were posited precisely as works on the geography of culture; the name cultural geography began to supplant it around the turn of the century, which was associated with the growing integration of domestic geographical science into world geographical science (Phenomenon ..., 2014). However, this question is not purely terminological, but content—conceptual. The domestic term geography of culture focuses mainly on the placement research tasks (in line with similar and traditional chorological paradigms in population and economic geography of the first half of the 20th century), but at the beginning of the 21st century having little weight in world cultural geography (Streletsky, 2012).

In a narrower sense, the geography of culture in Russia is understood as the set of scientific areas that study the territorial organization of various spheres of objectified culture—from artifacts to mentifacts, from high professional to folk art, everyday, and (in Russia, however, little studied by geographers) mass culture. The focus of research on the geography of culture is the ontology of cultural and geographical differences on Earth (from place to place, region to region). Cul-

tural geography, on the whole, features a much wider range of research: it is interested not only in culture in geographic space, but also in geographic space in culture (Streletsky, 2012).

The formation of Russian cultural geography in the late 20th—early 21st centuries. took place, in general, in line with the global trends in the development of this scientific discipline, but with a significant time lag (in a number of trends - with a delay of several decades), and also had some specific (and very significant) features.

LANDSCAPE APPROACH IN RUSSIAN CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY: ORIGINS, TRADITIONS, LATEST TRENDS

One of the hallmarks of Russian cultural geography is the cultural landscape research direction. In Russia, unlike in Western countries, cultural geographers turned to the cultural landscape only in the late Soviet period; It is characteristic that it was precisely with cultural and landscape themes in our country, as in the United States in the 1920s, that the development of cultural geography as an independent scientific discipline began. At the same time, Russian cultural geographers successfully used the richest scientific experience of Soviet physical and geographical landscape science, in which world-class research schools arose in the 20th century.

The cultural landscape concept was rethought and reconceptualized by domestic cultural geographers, introduced into the cultural and geographical narrative as early as the end of the 20th century. The “noospheric” concept of cultural landscape proposed by Yu.A. Vedenin (1990) and rethinking the traditions of Soviet geographical science², was of paramount importance for the formation of Russian cultural geography. In his interpretation, culture enters the landscape through fluxes of energy and information; cultural landscapes are not just man-made, but also filled with spiritual content. Yu.A. Vedenin’s holistic, logical, but rigidly structured scheme has no pronounced foreign analogues and does not fit well into the mainstream of the world cultural geography of recent decades. Modern cultural geographers of the Anglo-Saxon, Francophone, and other national schools in their approach to the cultural landscape mostly avoid rigid oppositions between material and spiritual culture, cultural heritage and living culture, traditional and innovative culture, etc.

In Russia, in whose scientific community zoning is considered one of the most important national geo-

¹ The first dissertation was defended by A.G. Druzhinin (1995); another milestone event was the publication of the first scientific monograph on the geography of culture, which had an all-Russian territorial scope (Sushchii and Druzhinin, 1994).

² The cultural landscape, according to Yu.A. Vedenin, is multilayered: it includes natural (natural and transformed nature) and cultural layers. In the cultural layer, strata of material and spiritual culture are distinguished, on various grounds of classification; cultural heritage and “living,” modern culture; the latter contains elements of traditional and innovative culture (Vedenin, 1990, p. 7).

graphical traditions, representatives of this scientific direction have carried out many multiscale studies on *cultural and landscape zoning*. The territorial testing grounds of these studies were like the entire space of Russia (Andreev, 2012; Turovsky, 1998; Vedenin, 2004), as well as individual historical, cultural, or administrative regions of the country. Yu.A. Vedenin and his colleagues also originated Russian *studies of cultural landscapes as heritage sites* (Kul'turnyi ..., 2004; etc.). Modern research in this area is focused on the development of territorial approaches to the study and conservation of cultural landscapes (Sel'skie ..., 2013; V fokuse ..., 2017; Vedenin, 2018; etc.), as well as on practical issues of nominating cultural landscapes as UNESCO World Heritage Sites (Kuleshova, 2018; etc.).

In Russian cultural geography, other approaches to studying cultural landscapes have also been created. Studies by V.N. Kalutskov, completed back in the 1990s–2000s, formed the basis of his monograph *Landscape in Cultural Geography* (2008). In many ways, they revived the traditions of the *environmental approach* in cultural landscape science, including Sauer's classical scientific legacy. In V.N. Kalutskov's model, the focus is on the natural landscape and the local community of people in their close interaction. The basic components of the cultural landscape also include the economy (its traditional type), housing, language, and spiritual culture. This is a consistently culture-centric model of the cultural landscape (five of the six basic components of the cultural landscape belong to the cultural sphere). For the formation of Russian cultural geography, regional cultural and landscape studies by V.N. Kalutskov, his followers and associates are very significant, primarily in the North of European Russia. They have studied in detail traditional forms of settlement inscribed in the Northern Russian cultural landscape, local and regional landscape toponymy, landscape-oriented folklore, and they have prepared and published extensive cartographic material. Kalutskov's studies in the 2010s (2016, 2021, etc.) are largely centered on the categories of "place," "name" and "palimpsest"; in this narrative, the cultural landscape concept acquires new facets. The palimpsest approach makes it possible to study the historical transformation of the cultural landscape, identify its half-worn and forgotten layers, and consider it as a multilayered phenomenon (Kalutskov, 2021).

Works by V.L. Kaganskii in terms of cultural landscape are close in their approach to the Western "phenomenology of landscape," which developed particularly rapidly in "humanistic" and "new cultural" geography in the last decades of the 20th century. At the same time, works by B.B. Rodoman,³ a famous Russian geographer and theorist of geography, had a vast influence on the author's cultural landscape concept. Kaganskii (2001, p. 61) emphasizes the actual

identity of the cultural landscape and landscape in general: the cultural landscape is both an earthly and semantic space; each place has its own meaning associated with the natural basis of the landscape and its spatial position. The cultural landscape is always a continuum, in which it is often impossible (or even not feasible) to separate natural and cultural components closely intertwined with each other; it integrates the "space of everyday life," and the semantic in it cannot be separated from the pragmatic. Therefore, the cultural-landscape approach is vital in solving local, regional, and even global geographical problems (Kaganskii, 2020; etc.).

M.V. Ragulina made great contribution to the domestic cultural landscape science in the book *Cultural Geography: Theories, Methods, Regional Synthesis* (2004). The cultural landscape concept presented in this monograph is centered on the concept of the life necessities of local communities, and its theoretical provisions have been well tested on the results of many years of the author's research on ethnic communities in Eastern Siberia and historical and geographical analysis of the interaction of the corresponding ethnocultural landscapes. In a new monograph (Ragulina, 2015), she attempted to synthesize different (theoretically dissimilar and contrasting) areas of modern cultural landscape research based on the so-called integral approach (claiming to reveal the comprehensive relationship of all strata of human activity in line with the "holistic" philosophy of postmodernity) of the American philosopher Ken Wilber (2006; etc.).

The cultural landscape, despite the significant differences in its interpretations noted above, is the pivotal, basic concept of the still relatively young Russian cultural geography. It began to form at the end of the 20th century with cultural and landscape studies and theoretical developments; a variety of specific areas of domestic cultural and geographical research were constructed around this concept at the beginning of the 21st century. In one way or another, all leading Russian cultural geographers have paid tribute to cultural landscape studies. The cultural landscape concept is an important link in modern cultural geography, but, as world experience shows, it is one of several key links in a series of equals. Priority attention to the cultural landscape reflects the specifics of Russian cultural geography.

ETHNOCULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS GEOGRAPHY IN POST-SOVIET RUSSIA

For Russia, with its colossal ethnocultural diversity, ethno- and religious–geographical problems are very import. Russian *ethnocultural geography* grew out

³ The fundamental works of B.B. Rodoman, who were ahead of their time in many ways, unfortunately, were very rarely translated into English. English-speaking readers can gain an idea of Rodoman's "polarized landscape" concept in (Rodoman, 2021).

of the former Soviet *ethnic geography*—a scientific discipline in the structure of population geography, closely related to related nongeographical sciences, primarily ethnography, various historical sciences, demography, and sociology. In the USSR, ethnic geography developed steadily and, on the whole, successfully, having experienced its maximum ascension in the 1960s–1970s (the school of V.V. Pokshishevsky, S.I. Bruk, and V.I. Kozlov). Its main task was to study the geographical distribution of ethnic and subethnic communities, including at the local level (ethnic settlement issues). Of course, the actual cultural and geographical subjects in works by Soviet ethnogeographers were also considered, but mostly in joint research with ethnographers.⁴

By the end of the Soviet era, ethnic identity began to be interpreted in Russia (and throughout the scientific world) as a key category of ethnology⁵, and this was one of the consequences of a kind of cultural turn in domestic ethnogeographic research. Domestic ethnic geography began to more and more master cultural–anthropological and cultural–geographical problems. At the turn of the 20th–21st centuries, ethnic geography was already seen as one of the leading trends in the emerging Russian cultural geography; its main objective was to study the problems of ethnic identity in a geographical sense (Kul'turnaya ..., 2001, pp. 37–38). At the same time, in the very interpretation of ethnicity and ethnic identity in Russia (including among geographers), primordialist approaches were widespread much more widely and longer than in Western countries, where already in the last quarter of the 20th century they began to increasingly lose competition to constructivist concepts of ethnicity. Ethnic primordialism is widely represented in Russian ethnocultural geography in the early 2020s as well.⁶

In Russia, where regionalism (including grassroots regionalism) was strongly suppressed during the long Soviet era and regional self-consciousness was eroded, *ethnic lines* acted (and partly do to this day) as the starkest, most obvious and contrasting markers of differentiation of Russia's cultural space (Streletsky, 2017). Truly, the rapid revival of cultural regionalism

in the Russian-speaking core of the country in the post-Soviet years gives grounds to consider this thesis less rigid and unambiguous. However, all the same, the role of ethnic borders in the Russian space remains colossal, and ethnogeographic plots retain significant importance in Russian cultural and geographical studies.

During the post-Soviet period, significant ethnogeographical and ethnocultural shifts have taken place in Russia, which have become the subject of research by Russian geographers, including at the level of the entire country (Manakov, 2018, 2019; Safronov, 2014; Streletsky, 2017); the transformation of the settlement pattern of different ethnic groups in Russia during the post-Soviet period was also considered in detail. Studies were carried out on comprehensive ethnogeographical and ethnodemographic mapping of the country's regions (Belozarov, 2005; Belozarov, 2016; Belozarov et al., 2014). Much attention was paid to the specifics of ethnocultural landscapes in different parts of Russia (Degteva, 2016; Lysenko, 2009), the adaptation of ethnic migrants in local communities (Savoskul, 2011), the influence of ethnocultural factors on the evolution of the rural settlement pattern (Imangulov et al., 2021), and the importance of ethnocultural traditions in land use for the development of modern agriculture (a frequent subject in studies by T.G. Nefedova).

The end of the 20th–beginning of 21st century was a period of rapid development of ethnic ecology in Russia, an independent science, but closely related to cultural geography (Yamskov, 2013; etc.). The ethnoecological approach is widely used by modern Russian cultural geographers (in particular in studies of traditional nature management and life support systems of various ethnic groups, including small ones). At the same time, interaction with geography is also of great importance for ethnoecology itself; a number of leaders of modern scientific schools came to ethnoecology from geography in the late Soviet and post-Soviet years. The first doctoral dissertation on the geographical foundations of ethnic ecology was defended in 2006 (Gladkiy, 2006).

One of the most socially significant and topical (and at the same time relatively well-known in foreign countries) scientific areas is cultural and geographical studies of indigenous peoples of the Arctic, Siberia, Russian Far East, the specifics of their settlement pattern and demography, traditional nature management and economy, life systems, and material and spiritual culture. In development of this interdisciplinary direction, the experience of related (ethnoecological and cultural–anthropological) studies in the Soviet era was of great importance; back in the 1970s, the renowned anthropologist V.P. Alekseev developed the doctrine of anthropocenoses; somewhat later I.I. Krupnik (1989) developed the more general doctrine of ethnoecosystems. Russian cultural geogra-

⁴Thus, in the third quarter of the 20th century, the Soviet geographical and ethnographic school of M.G. Levin, N.N. Cheboksarov, and B.V. Andrianov received worldwide recognition; they developed the concept of economic and cultural types of peoples of the world and carried out unique studies on mapping them into different historical slices.

⁵In Soviet ethnography, the role of ethnic identity as the most important indicator of ethnicity was underestimated for a long time (in comparison with other elements of the latter—language, common origin, etc.).

⁶For example, many ethnic and cultural geographers (in particular representatives of the St. Petersburg geographical school) share the primordialist concept of ethnogenesis L.N. Gumilyov (1912–1992). The ideas of this great thinker - ethnologist and geographer - about the relationship between the ethnos and the “enclosing” landscape had a huge impact on the development of modern Russian ethnocultural geography.

phers working in this area focus primarily on the relationship between the traditional nature management of small peoples and the geographical landscape; in the 2000s–2020s, many in-depth and serious scientific studies were carried out on this issue (Klokov, 2012, 2016; Ragulina, 2000; Territorii ..., 2005; Schmidt et al., 2015).

Another priority area in ethnocultural geography is the study of ethnocontact zones (Gerasimenko and Filimonova, 2011; Lysenko et al., 2011; Manakov, 2019; etc.)—their delimitation, structuring, and correlation of ethnic and regional identities in such poly-cultural regions. In particular, as shown in studies by T.I. Gerasimenko on the Orenburg–Kazakhstan border, the convergence of cultures often becomes a geographical reality over time, despite the fact that representatives of different ethnic groups initially develop different ecological niches. However, adaptation to landscape allows the gradual convergence of different ethnocultural groups; regional ethnic contacts are intensifying, and this favors the formation of stable spatial ties and, as a result, the formation of a common regional identity, despite persisting ethnocultural differences (Gerasimenko, 2018, 2020).

Russian cultural geographers, together with political geographers, are also widely involved in interdisciplinary research on ethnoconflictology, geography of ethnonationalism, ethnic separatism, and regional ethnopolitical problems. An overview of the most significant of these works is presented in another article in this issue of the journal, written by V.A. Kolosov, M.V. Zotova and N.L. Turov. The leading research center in Russia in this area is the Geopolitical Research Laboratory of the Institute of Geography of the Russian Academy of Sciences; important work is also being done by geographers from Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kaliningrad, Rostov-on-Don, and Stavropol universities, as well as scientists from two other Russian geographical institutes (in Irkutsk and Vladivostok).

Religious geography as a new research direction in Russian cultural geography actually was formed only in the 1990s, after the return of religion to public life. Representatives of the scientific community were faced with the need to choose a path for the further development of research areas in religious disciplines, including the geography of religion. Russian geographers of religion took the path of “catch-up development” (Gorokhov, 2019a), making up for lost time and focusing on Western schools.

A geographer by education and Doctor of Historical Sciences P.I. Puchkov is rightly considered to be the founder of the modern national school of geography of religion. He has established the Center for the Study of Religions and Ethno-Confessional Mapping of the N.N. Miklouho-Maklay Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Dr. Puchkov was not only a talented adminis-

trator, but also a prolific author whose works became the basis for further researches, for example he has published the first monograph on the geography of religions in Russia (Puchkov, 1975), the sections on religion and faith groups in the encyclopedias “Countries and Peoples”, “Peoples and Religions of the World”, and hundreds of articles on the geography of world religions in foreign countries and in Russia, etc.

Nevertheless, in modern Russia, there is a clear shortage of studies on religious geography. To a certain extent, analysis of dissertation research gives an idea about the peculiarities of its development. During the 30-year period of the existence of the Russian Federation, 14 candidate and 1 doctoral dissertations have been defended in some related to this scientific direction.

Most employ a synthetic approach, which has become widespread since the last third of the 20th century after the release of the book *Geography of Religions* (Sopher, 1967), which was truly a revolution in modern religious geography, contributing to the expansion of research topics and the growing popularity of interdisciplinary projects.

About half the dissertations were devoted to religious geography proper (Gorina, 2011; Gorokhov, 2017; Safronov, 1998; Zakharov, 2019; etc.); others were carried out at the intersection of religious geography and other fields: social and political geography (Dementiev, 2019; Gorokhov, 1999; etc.), geography of cultural heritage, recreational geography.

By the beginning of the 2020s, two large scientific centers for research on the geography of religion had evolved: academic–university–based Moscow (Institute of Geography RAS, Institute for African Studies RAS, Moscow State University, Moscow Pedagogical State University) and university-based St. Petersburg (St. Petersburg State University, St. Petersburg State University of Economics, Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytechnic University). Each of these centers has its own specialization in the geography of religion.

The St. Petersburg center is represented primarily by *ecclesiastical* (after (Isaac, 1965)) *geography* (Balabeykina and Martynov, 2017), *historical* (Manakov and Dementiev, 2018), and *political* (Gladkiy et al., 2017) *geography of religion*. The main territorial area for research by representatives of the St. Petersburg center is the Baltic region, including its Russian part (Balabeykina and Martynov, 2015; Manakov and Dementiev, 2019).

The Moscow center, despite the institutional dichotomy, was formed primarily by representatives of the emerging scientific school, one of the heads of which was an author of this article (S.A. Gorokhov, R.V. Dmitriev, I.A. Zakharov, M.M. Agafoshin, I.S. Martynov, O.A. Tereshchuk, and I.V. Petrushev). They are united not only by their scientific background of research supervisor–postgraduate/undergraduate, but also by the unity of views and sectoral

specialization: *theory of the geography of religion* (Gorokhov, 2014, 2019b, 2020; Gorokhov and Dmitriev, 2016a), *spatial expansion of Western Christian (Roman Catholic and Protestant) churches* (Gorokhov, 2016; Zakharov, 2020; etc.); *geography of religious conflicts* (Dmitriev et al., 2020), etc. Studies by S.G. Safronov (the author of the first dissertation on the geography of religions in Russia, the religious sections of the National Atlas of Russia, many publications on the geography of the Russian Orthodox Church, etc.) are of great importance for the formation of religious geography in Russia. The main territorial research areas of Moscow center specialists are Russia (Safronov, 2001, 2013; etc.), India (Gorokhov and Dmitriev, 2016b; etc.), European countries (Agafoshin and Gorokhov, 2019; etc.) and Africa (Zakharov, 2019, 2020; Zakharov et al., 2020).

CULTURAL AND HUMANITARIAN GEOGRAPHY

The term *humanitarian geography* is used mainly to refer to a set of closely interrelated areas in Russian science that study “the patterns of formation and development of systems of ideas about the geographic space (in the minds of individuals, social, ethnocultural, racial groups, etc.), according to which a person organizes his activities in a specific area” (Zamyatina and Mitin, 2007, p. 151). The core of *humanitarian geography* (in D.N. Zamyatin’s interpretation) consists of *imaginary geography*, *mythogeography*, *cognitive geography*, *sacred geography (geography of sacred places)*, and a number of other humanitarian areas. The term *humanitarian geography* itself was proposed by culturologist and geographer D.N. Zamyatin (1999), who published about a dozen monographs on this issue, including (Zamyatin 2014, 2020, etc.). Many works were also published by his followers and associates (Mitin, 2004; Lavrenova, 2010; Geokul’tury ..., 2017; etc.).

Similar research directions since the last quarter of the 20th century (beginning of the cultural turn discussed above) are also widely represented in other national cultural geography schools. However, in Russia since the beginning of the 21st century, they are usually grouped under the common heading *humanitarian geography*, positing its certain methodological similarity, due, in particular, to the commonality of problems in studying ideas about the geographical space in different sociocultural contexts. Of significant importance is the fact that in Russia, within humanitarian geography posited in this way, a certain professional community of researchers has formed; the same authors are widely involved in research of different content, from cognitive geography to modeling and representing geographic images.

In modern foreign geography, there is no generally recognized special term that integrates different directions characteristic of Russian humanitarian geogra-

phy. In the English-language literature, the term humanitarian geography has not been disseminated at all: in contrast to the consonant—but differing in content—terms humanistic geography (works by such authors as Yi-Fu Tuan, E. Relph, D. Cosgrove, N. Entrikin, etc.) and human geography (covering the entire subject field of economic, social, cultural, and political geography).

The formation of humanitarian geography played an exceptionally positive role in the development of Russian cultural geography in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, significantly expanding the range of research; in Russian cultural geography, new scientific directions have emerged, already represented in foreign scientific schools, and new promising horizons of scientific research have opened up.

The question arises: is there a correlation between Russian cultural and humanitarian geography (in this interpretation). According to I.I. Mitin, in Russia “humanitarian geography, in its actual content, has ‘absorbed’ all the main cultural and geographical topics” (2011, p. 23); “we can confidently speak about the final formation of humanitarian geography as a kind of direction that serves as the Russian version of cultural geography” (2011, p. 25). However, this statement greatly simplifies and reduces the real and polyphonic picture of the development of Russian cultural geography at the end of the 20th—first decades of the 21st century. This is by no means limited to the study of systems of ideas about space; its subject field is much broader. The relationship of geographical space and culture is multifaceted; methodological approaches to studying different aspects of this relationship are also extremely diverse (from scientism to phenomenology). And this is typical both of world cultural geography and its Russian counterpart.

STUDIES OF TERRITORIAL IDENTITIES IN RUSSIAN CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY

Territorial identity is one of the varieties of cultural identities: it is a system of existing ideas of people about their belonging to a certain territorial group, to a territorial cultural community. Each of its cells is formed at the level of the individual (a particular person’s feeling of a special connection with a certain place or territory), but as a sociocultural fact; territorial identity is affirmed, manifested, and expressed as a collective identity, which actually forms a local or regional community (Streletsky, 2021). The latter is cemented not only by common ideas and values shared by their actors, but also by the common interests of those arising in connection with the territory of residence.

Territorial identity is a typical example of interdisciplinary research, in which, in addition to geographers, sociologists, historians, socio- and cultural anthropologists, ethnologists, culturologists, special-

ists in the field of political regionalism, social psychology, etc., are widely involved. At the same time, studies by sociologists, anthropologists, and political scientists on territorial identity, with rare exceptions, are not focused on the problematic field of geographical science; they consider territorial identity as a research subject of the relevant social sciences. The spatial aspect in these studies is by no means the most important, and the space itself is interpreted from a perspective that is very different from that adopted in geographical scientific discourse. Such, in particular, is the concept of “social space” in many of its existing varieties (including G. Simmel and other classic sociology scholars). However, the main thing beyond (or nearly so) the field of view here is a key question for cultural geography: the role of different properties (qualities) of the geographical space in building socio-cultural interactions and their territorial configurations. It is no coincidence that one of the leading Russian human geographers, L.V. Smirnyagin (1935–2016), who in the late 20th–early 21st century made a significant contribution to the development of Russian cultural geography, was very skeptical of the prospects of using the theoretical background and methodological tools of sociological science in geographical research (Smirnyagin, 2016). And although the thesis he often voiced, that “space is only a metaphor” for sociologists (Smirnyagin, 2011, p. 179; etc.), is extremely vulnerable to criticism; the fundamentally different approaches of sociologists and geographers to territorial identity raise no doubts.

The pioneers in the study of territorial identity among geographers were the founders of Western humanistic geography, which proclaimed its main objective as the study of the perception and comprehension by a person (individuals and groups of people) of the geographical space surrounding them. The key concepts of this scientific school were space and place; the ideological manifestos were studies by the British Canadian geographer E. Relph (1976) and the Chinese American geographer Yi-Fu Tuan. The place narrative, wrote Yi-Fu Tuan, does not involve fixing the location as such, but sensory experience—the particular attitude of people to their living space, expressed in a wide range of emotions and perceptions generated by the specific qualities of this area, the events that are experienced there, and people and their historical memory (1977).

On the question of the *scales of territorial identity*, there is no unity of opinion. In studies by Western geographers, two of its main hierarchical levels are usually distinguished: local and regional. However, there are also more detailed classifications, including those interpreting national identity as one of the territorial levels (at the level of individual countries). In addition, the range of opinions on taxonomic levels of territorial identity also reflects the polyphony of the terms themselves (Streletsky, 2021). Cultural regions are not only territorial parts of individual countries,

but often entire communities that unite several or even many countries; Accordingly, regional identity can be understood as different taxonomic links, both intracountry and interstate, as well as cross-border.

For Russia, with its vast space and cultural and geographical diversity, the study of territorial identity is of tremendous importance. In the post-Soviet years, the revival of cultural regionalism has become an obvious fact that has attracted the close attention of Russian geographers. The turning point for Russian cultural geography was the monograph by M.P. Krylov (1952–2015) *Regional Identity in European Russia* (2010), based on his doctoral dissertation defended several years earlier at the Institute of Geography of the Russian Academy of Sciences (2007). For Russian cultural geography, this work was a breakthrough in many respects, because it allowed a rethinking of the evolution and specifics of Russia’s cultural space, making it possible to overcome some of the stereotypes that existed in this area. Russian historians, ethnographers, and geographers have written much about the comparative ethnocultural homogeneity of a significant part of the Russian space (within the main settlement zone), the high degree of similarity of key features of culture and lifestyle, and the commonality of cultural archetypes of behavior of different territorial communities of ethnic Russians who settled vast lands from European Russia to the Pacific Coast. Hence, a conclusion was often drawn about “underformed,” underdeveloped cultural regionalism and the low contrast of intra-Russian regional and cultural differences, which were supported by references to classic studies by outstanding Russian thinkers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries (P.N. Milyukov, V.S. Solovyov, in part P.N. Savitsky etc.), who wrote about the absence of rooted “historical provinces” in Russia. Studies by M.P. Krylov (2007, 2010 etc.) showed that, at least in European Russia, there was a developed regional identity, moreover, as a relatively autonomous cultural phenomenon, resistant to external socioeconomic or political influences. It is important to emphasize that the territorial testing grounds of cultural and geographical research by M.P. Krylov were mainly the “Russian” regions (oblasts) of European Russia, while the national republics, with rare exceptions, were not considered. In his studies, the author attempted, as it were, to put aside the role of the ethnic factor in the regionalization of culture, focusing on territorial identity as such and not on transformation of the latter in a heterogeneous ethnocultural environment.

The number of publications devoted to the cultural and geographical aspects of studies of territorial identity in Russia increased markedly in the 2010s and early 2020s (Gritsenko and Krylov, 2012; Kazakova, 2017; Pavlyuk, 2015; Puzanov, 2012; Vendina et al., 2021; etc.). This trend reflects the awareness of Russian geographers to the theoretical significance and practical relevance of the scientific development of

issues that unfortunately up to the end of the 20th century had not been given due attention in domestic geography. It was also very important that Russian geographers take into account the rich research experience in foreign cultural geography. During the same period, many studies on territorial identity were published by Russian sociologists, political scientists, and anthropologists. Let us in particular note studies by the political scientist M.V. Nazukina on Ural (2015) and Far Eastern (2021) identities, published in a leading Russian geographical journal and close to cultural and geographical discourse. Studies by Russian sociologists pay particular attention to the Siberian and Southern Russian identities, but they often lack a cultural and geographical focus.

In territorial identity studies by Russian cultural geographers at the beginning of the 21st century, *vernacular areas* were widely discussed. This concept (from the English *vernacular*—local, characteristic of a particular area; ordinary; folk; commonly used as an antonym to scientific) appeared in Anglo-Saxon (mainly in North American) geography as early as the 1960s. This term was borrowed from linguistics, in which it denotes regional languages and local dialects. Vernacular areas are those that exist in the ordinary consciousness of society (Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskaya ..., 2013, p. 35); in Russian geography they are sometimes directly called “common areas.” Vernacular areas exist in the self-consciousness of the local population without a direct relationship with the borders of administrative-territorial units, because they form spontaneously and organically, in the long cultural history of a regional or local society. However, sometimes, the boundaries of vernacular areas and administrative formations and their names coincide. There are cases when the name of a vernacular area has become so ingrained in the culture of the local society that it replaces the former name of the administrative-territorial unit. Or there is a rebranding of old (and even actually lost) names as a variety of the “social construction of reality.” A vivid example can be cited from Russia’s recent history: in 2003, the very old (but forgotten by many) vernacular toponym Yugra was included in the official name of the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug.

The peak interest in vernacular areas in cultural geography (in particular, distinctly in the United States) was in the second half of the 1960s—end of the 1970s. However, by the end of the 20th century in Western countries, the problem of vernacular areas has lost its popularity and is now considered by many cultural geographers as bygone stage. Vernacular areas have come to be perceived by some leading Western cultural geographers as something rudimentary, folkloric—ethnographic, inferior in significance and relevance to the key relationships between place, space, landscape, and cultural identity.

In Russia, where until the end of the 20th century, studies of vernacular areas were not actually carried out, a “vernacular boom” occurred at the beginning of the 21st century. This is very symptomatic and can probably be considered another argument in favor of the conventional wisdom about the trends of the predominantly “catch-up development” of Russian cultural geography compared to the rest of the world (which, however, is a serious simplification of the real situation). As in other large countries, in Russia there are vernacular areas of different scale levels, among them, large ones that retain their stark specifics in the everyday consciousness of a certain (today, certainly, smaller!) part of the population in respective regions.

A peculiarity of Russian studies of vernacular areas compared to Western countries (clearly manifested since the early 2010s) is the focus primarily on the microlevel (mainly, intracity). Urbanists, urban sociologists, and architects are widely involved in these studies, along with geographers. Their important centers in recent years have been the Higher School of Urban Studies of the Research University Higher School of Economics, the Institute of Urban Economics, and the Faculty of Geography of Moscow University. The most significant studies in this area were carried out by K.A. Puzanov (2012), S.G. Pavlyuk (2015), and G.M. Kazakova (2017).

At the end of the 20th—first decades of the 21st century, globalization processes, international migration, postindustrial development trends, and the creation of the digital economy have strongly influenced the strengthening of extraterritorial ties and interactions between people and social groups. *Network identity* is becoming an increasingly significant competitor to the traditional territorial identity: the attachment of an individual to a home, a specific place, a local community is gradually being lost. The connections of a person to a territory are changing, becoming more and more mobile, the sociocultural foundations of self-identification are becoming more diversified. Territorial identity, distinguished in past historical eras by its *exclusivity*, is more and more filled with *inclusive* content. People leaving the places where they grew up and where many generations of their ancestors had lived are partially integrated into new territorial communities.⁷

⁷ In this regard, the cultural and geographical consequences of the phenomenon of “translocality”, which fixes the plurality of identities within the same group of people, are clearly manifested (Appadurai, 1995; etc.). “Translocal diasporas” arise, the situationality and variability of people’s self-identification increase; geographical works emphasize the special significance of cognitive (incoming information, “flexible” knowledge) and reflexive (focusing on oneself, self-reflection) components. Mobility and plurality of identities in the context of globalization is accompanied by mobility and, often, the blurring of cultural boundaries separating territorial communities.

CONCLUSIONS

As a whole, the development of Russian cultural geography as an independent discipline, one of the branches of geographical science, was organically inscribed in the world context in the post-Soviet period; its evolution was distinguished by trends similar to world ones. At the same time, the geographical and ethnocultural specifics of Russia itself (the colossal size of its territory, its huge latitudinal and longitudinal extent, the complexity of its ethnocivilizational history, the ethnic and religious composition of the population, the deep polarization of the Russian space, and the hypertrophied sociocultural potential of the capital with respect to the size of the state) is directly reflected in the nature and characteristics of cultural and geographical research in our country. Let us note several specific features that distinguish Russian cultural geography against the world background: the special significance of the research direction of the cultural landscape (in the first post-Soviet decade, which became a kind of trigger for the revival of Russian cultural geography), the great weight of the ethnocultural component in problems of cultural–geographical research, the continued relationship between the latter and ethnology, inherited largely from the Soviet era (and laid down even earlier, during the period of close interaction of Russian pre-revolutionary anthropogeography with ethnography). One of the striking features of Russian cultural geography is the copious attention to the culture of the small indigenous peoples of the Arctic, Subarctic, Siberia, and the Far East. There are obvious parallels in the development of cultural geography in Russia, Canada, and the countries of Fennoscandia. Since the beginning of the 21st century. The study of territorial identity (at the regional and local levels) has become an important direction in the development of Russian cultural geography.

At the same time, some areas of cultural and geographical research have become much less widespread in Russia than they have abroad (in particular, foreign continental Europe and countries of the Anglo-Saxon geographical tradition). Thus, in Russia, such a direction as the geography of mass culture is still very poorly represented, which has become extremely popular in Western, in particular, Anglo-Saxon countries, since the final decades of the 20th century. In leading cultural geography journals (*Journal of Cultural Geography*, *Social and Cultural Geography*) the share of articles directly or indirectly related to the geography of mass culture in the second decade of the 21st century in some years reached 25–30%. In Russia, in most aspects such studies are represented by single studies. There are also few geographical studies that trace the relationship between the spaces of traditional and modern culture (one of the few is A.A. Sokolova's dissertation (2013)).

Cultural-geographical research is not only theoretical; it is also important from the applied and practical standpoints. Thus, in foreign human geography in the last few decades, much attention has been paid to territorial differences in value systems and their influence on the spatial organization of economy and society. The results of cultural and geographical research in this case are of particular and undoubted value. In Russian geography, however, such studies are relatively scarce; the role of cultural factors in spatial socioeconomic development is clearly underestimated. Therefore, for the Russian scientific community, the importance of the international experience of scientific research accumulated in world cultural geography, among other things, cannot be overstated. For the concepts of normative culture, behavior patterns, human, social, and symbolic capital acquire important, in many cases paramount, significance as tools for understanding the processes of socioeconomic development and its geographical differentiation.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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