

THE CONCEPT OF “DOMESTICATION” AND THE MAKING OF DOMESTICATED SPACE (EVIDENCE FROM CHUVASH ETHNOGRAPHY)

The article explores the concept of “domestication” in relation to space. The authors interpret domestication as a process of complex development and transformation of the environment by humans, which results in the creation of a “domesticated space”, i. e. a sphere of life that combines utilitarian and sacred aspects. The concept of “domesticated space” is analyzed in the context of related categories, such as “habitat”, “cultural landscape”, and “anthropogenic landscape”. The article emphasizes its social nature, including artificially created objects such as settlements, dwellings, economic and cult-ritual buildings and other loci. This space is structured and has certain boundaries separating the developed “own” from the undeveloped “alien”. The paper considers a hierarchical model of space development, using the ethnography of the Chuvash as an example. Its center is the dwelling with its sacred zones, then come the yard, the street, the entire settlement and the surrounding lands. The degree of domestication weakens with distance from the center. Particular attention is paid to the ambivalence of some loci: cemeteries and sanctuaries are simultaneously located both inside and outside the domesticated space, acting as mediators between the worlds. The article also characterizes the symbolic practices of domestication, such as rituals and the marking of boundaries that endow the space with protective and semantic functions. The domesticated space of the Chuvash is a dynamic system formed through everyday economic activity, spiritual views and cultural practices. This is a process of constant development, adaptation to the landscape and creation of not only a material but also a symbolic environment that ensures the cultural identity and security of the community. The concept of domestication demonstrates the deep interconnection between material culture, religious beliefs and the organization of living space.

Keywords: domestication, domesticated space, traditional culture, ethnography of the Chuvash, settlement, dwelling

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