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**GENESIS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE NORTH-EASTERN PERIPHERY
OF THE SVERDLOVSK REGION:
A HISTORICAL-GEOGRAPHICAL DISCOURSE**

SUMMARY. In this article the development of the North-East of the Sverdlovsk region as a regional periphery is analyzed on the basis of the center-peripheral concept. The genesis and the development of the “center-periphery” system of the region are examined in a historical and geographical discourse.

KEY WORDS. The center-periphery system, the Sverdlovsk region, a historical and geographical discourse, timber industry.

Territory. The north-eastern periphery of the Sverdlovsk region forms the basis of the timber Ural — vast sparsely populated plain outskirts in the basin of the Lozva, Pelym and Tavda rivers on the area of 60.4 km² (31% of the region territory) [1]. It consists of four administrative-territorial units (ATU): the Ivdel, Gari, Tavda urban districts (UD) and the Tabor district. The local organizing centers of this territory are at a great distance from the region center — Yekaterinburg: Ivdel is 535 km far from Yekaterinburg, Tavda — 360 km, and Gari and Tabor settlements — respectively 415 and 359 km, thus the last have no railway and direct automobile communication with the regional center. For ATU of the north-east internal dissociation of settlements is typical due to their sparseness and lack of a constant road network.

There are cases when the centers of rural administrations are remote from administrative centers ATU for 100 km or more. For example, Horpiya, the center of the Horpiyskaya village administration of the Ivdelsk UD, is 87 km far from the city Ivdel, and village Shantalskaya, the center of the Verkhne-Pelym village administration of the Garinsky UD, is 120 km far from village Gari. There are vast distances among settlements within rural administrations: 56% of the rural settlements of the area are situated at a distance greater than 5 km (a distance of an hour walk) from the center of the village administration. The area occupies the border position with the Tyumen region.

Periphery and peripherality. The concepts “periphery” and “peripherality” in the economic and economic-geographical literature became wide-spread in 1966 after the publication of J. Friedmann’s book “Regional development policy: the experience of Venezuela” [2]. According to J. Friedmann, the theory of “center — periphery” is applicable to national and global levels. The national level of the problem in Russia is discussed in researches made by O.V. Gritsai, G.V. Ioffe, A. Treyvish [3],

A.I. Treyvish [4], T. Nefedova [5], N.V. Zubarevich [6], A.N. Pilyasov [7]. The disparities between the center and the periphery are determined by spatial polarization under uneven growth, and in some peripheral areas the conditions for a greater economic growth are created.

The analysis of the problems of regional development of the country in the context of the "center-periphery" system was first carried out by the well-known geographers O.V. Gritsai, G.V. Ioffe, A. Treyvish [3].

The transformational changes in Russia of 1990-2000's which deepened territorial disparities at all levels, have increased interest in the subject matter of geographers. However, in papers published in this period, A.I. Treyvish [4], T. Nefedova [5], [8], N.V. Zubarevich [6], A.N. Pilyasov [7] analyzed mainly territorial imbalances at the level of the Russian space in general. No less urgent is the problem of regional disparities at the regional level of the subjects of the Russian Federation. At this level the problem has acquired a real character and needs further research and practical study.

The given study is based on the position of the center-periphery concept as a theoretical framework. In this case, the genesis and development of the "center-periphery" of the region are considered in the historical and geographical discourse, which gives an opportunity to present the existing set of historical and geographical information on the region in the form of historical and geographical patterns.

The evolution of the center-periphery system. The current center-periphery system of the modern Sverdlovsk region, which includes its north-eastern part, began to develop long before the appearance of the area as an independent administrative unit under the influence of mining and smelting area, gold mining, shipbuilding, and cloth production, formed by the middle of XIX century.

The wood riches, which development went wavy, became a basis of industrial development of the North-East in the XX century and, thereby, the economic, demographic and social situation was changing.

In the development of the north-eastern periphery of the region the selection of five stages has been justified

Creating the framework for the development of wood industry in the period of acute needs of the Middle Urals iron and steel industry in charcoal (up to 1926). The access to forest resources of the Tavda area was given by the railway Yekaterinburg-Tavda, the construction of which was completed during 1913-16 period. According to the data presented in the historical and ethnographic Ivdel museum, in the adjacent areas, logging was carried out since 1925 by the logging part of the trust "Kamuralbumles". In 1923, the railway from Serov reached only the Samsky mine.

The industrial activity of lumber mills was characterized by low technical equipment, lack of transport and skills. The First World War drew a large number of local residents to the army, and the Civil War (1918-1919) led to the fact that by the end of 1920, the volume of industrial production in the Urals was 12% from the volume of 1913 [9; 313]. In contrast to the Siberian regions, the migration of peasants from the European part of the country during the Stolypin reforms did not cause strong economic recovery. The agriculture was not of a commodity nature because of the territory isolation from the markets, and some farmers were involved in industrial production.

The most important economic event of this stage was the creation of the railway Yekaterinburg-Tavda (1916), which related the wood-abundant north-east with mining and plant areal of the Middle Urals. Forest resources became available to steel mills. After the railway construction there took place a rapid development of timber industry, which was intended to serve the needs of the Ural metallurgical engineering. By 1917 three sawmills were built and five plants were under construction. In addition, a small cloth factory was working there [10].

Development of branch and territorial structure of the economy of the North-East in the period of rapid industrial development of the Middle Urals (1927-1940). The intensive industrial, residential and municipal construction in the Middle Urals needed a great increase in the production of lumber and other wood products. During this period in Tavda the formation of timber industry complex (TIC) started. Its main structural elements were: a standard factory building construction, timber factory № 8, mechanized ski factory, wood chemical gang named after Kirov. Wood processing enterprises provided the Tavda TIC and the Azankovsk mechanized timber unit with raw. The railroad could not solve all the problems related to the timber supply of consumers, so a significant part of the raw materials from the place of harvesting were floated down the rivers. There was a need in vessels. As a result, in 1929, the shipyard building began, and in 1932 it finished, that allowed the Tavda settlement to become a center of shipbuilding.

In 1930 logging operations were widely developed in the Gari, Ivdel and Taboriy areas. In 1939, the railway from Serov approached Ivdel, thus facilitating the transportation of timber to the consumer.

Alongside with the development of wood industry, the process of territory populating was extensively going on. From the late 1920s and in the 1930s the population of the north-eastern periphery grew mainly due to migrants. In accordance with the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR of the 11th of July, 1929 in order to colonize the remote areas and exploit the natural resources a network of labor camps was created here to receive all people sentenced to a three-year imprisonment. Later on, it was expanded by means of special exile organized for the dekulakized. As L.N. Mazur and L. Brodskayay [11] state, 11,000 dekulakized were moved to the Tavda area only during that time. The population of Tavda in 1926-1939 years increased by 6 times and in 1939 it was 25.2 thousand people [10; 284]. Special migrants were delivered to wood lots and accommodated either in woodcutters' houses or in built tents and dugouts. And only after a while the construction of special settlements began. However, the status of "settlement for special migrants", variability and the mobility of timber industry settlements caused by periodic moving of the centers of production, did not favour the creation of social infrastructure in them, and the huge size of the territory, strongly boggy besides, did not allow creating a developed network of constant roads.

Thus, the second stage is the stage of rapid economic development of the north-east of the Sverdlovsk region, when the foundations of modern industry and territorial structure of the area's economy were laid and close ties with the center of the region were formed. In the prewar years the northeast gave more than 80% of the gross output of sawmill of woodworking products of the Sverdlovsk region. The village of Tavda received the City status in 1937, but it could not effectively

serve as the organizing center of the north-east, as it took the extreme southern position in relation to the entire territory.

Creating new forms of territorial organization of wood industry in the period of the rapidly growing needs of the regional center in new branch materials (1941 — the end of the 1960s). Timber industry in the northeast of the Sverdlovsk region got a new development boost during World War II. In Tavda in July 1941, a plywood mill was put into operation, in July 1943 the hydrolysis plant using the sawmill waste as raw material was constructed, the timber plant, brick plant, turpentine-purifying plant, a group of industrial enterprises, household and woodworking cooperatives were still working. Thanks to its home front workers, Tavda turned from the city of primary wood processing into a center of complex wood-processing industry. Timber harvesting was conducted throughout the northeast. In the 1950s the Ivdel, Gari, Tabory and Tavda forestries and logging farms became the largest in the region. The total areas of these farms were: Ivdel — 2070 000 hectares, Gari — 1891000 hectares, Tabory — 771000 hectares, and Tavda — 513000 hectares [12]. In March 1960, the forest and wood industries of the northeast were enlarged by the Ivdel hydrolysis plant.

At the beginning of the war on the territory of the Ivdel district the mine working was organized at the Polunochny manganese ore deposit. The settlement of Ivdel was rapidly growing. In 1959 its population was 22 thousand people. It increased by 14 times compared to that of 1926, but the main population growth occurred in 1937-1955. In May 1943 Ivdel became a city. So there popped up another industrial center in the north-east. During that period the economic space of the North-East continued to expand. New industrial projects appeared, the foundations of the Tavda timber industry were laid, there was an increase in population, mainly due to the positive balance of migration, the settlement network expanded, the local centers Ivdel and Tavda gained strength. A large role in the economy was played by prisoners. During this period a network of labor camps was expanded. The central-peripheral communications kept on strengthening.

Economic stagnation as a result of the insufficient funding of the industrial use of outdated equipment and technologies (late 1960s-1991). The economy of the north-east was still dominated by forestry and wood industry. The Tavda timber industry complex became the largest in the Urals, but the level of complexity in wood processing remained low: 700-800 thousand m³ of waste were used in the production of only 50%, 2,2-2,5 million m³ out of 5.5 million m³ of harvested timber were processed and consumed for local needs, and the rest were exported in raw form [13; 316]. To improve the structure of the Tavda timber complex in the 1980s it was planned to build the Tavdinsky pulp and paper mill, but its construction did not start because of the current economic situation in the country.

Alongside the economic stagnation, the territorial curtailment of economic activity took place. It was basically "contracted" to the local centers: the cities of Ivdel and Tavda. Accordingly, the people were leaving the countryside and rushing to the cities. This was facilitated by the policy of small villages elimination. However, the mono profile local centers and the low level of social infrastructure led to the fact that the local centers started losing their population as well. The population of the north-east in 1970-1989 years decreased by 35.2 thousand people (from 149,1

to 114.9 thousand). The annual rate of decline in population over the period of 1970-1979 was about 2.5%, and in 1980-1989 — about 1.5% [14; 119].

Thus, during this phase, the economy of the north-east periphery of the Sverdlovsk region remained its branch structure, but substantially changed its territorial structure. It became bipolar: in the north there was Ivdel, in the south there was Tavda. Along with the strengthening of the local centers there appeared a great inner periphery, weakly related to the local centers. The regional center — the city of Sverdlovsk — aggravated the unfavourable economic and demographic situation in the periphery: there was an increase in the centripetal flow of migrants within the region.

Liquidation phase of economic activity in the period of transition to the market economy and the disruption of traditionally established relationships (since 1991). At this stage, many TIC of the north-east, as well as in the industrial branch on the whole, experienced difficulties. As compared to 1990, timber hauling, lumber and paper production, chipboard and fiberboard production were cut down significantly. Labour efficiency decreased as well. In the forest villages the level of both latent and registered unemployment was high as there were practically no other opportunities for labour reallocation to other areas of production. Many enterprises worked with morally and physically outdated equipment. Their work was unprofitable due to the existing wasteful production technology, the ever-increasing cost of energy sources and transportation fuels with relatively stable prices for timber products. Many TIC ceased to exist, including some enterprises, engaged in deep wood processing: JSC “Tavdinsky Hydrolysis Plant”, JSC “Ivdelsky hydrolysis plant”. Profitable work was carried out by enterprises producing goods for export, for example, JSC “Tavda plywood mill”.

The current economic situation led to further population degradation of the the north-eastern periphery of the Sverdlovsk region.

According to the assessment of the situation in terms of demographic security threats, all ATU of the area refer to the type with a threatening crisis geodemographic situation [15; 195]. A typical feature for this geo-demographic class is a sharp decline in population size (annual 1.5-2%) due to the depopulation and out-migration, resulting in deformation of the population age structure in the direction of its aging.

The historical and geographical analysis of the north-eastern periphery of the Sverdlovsk region has shown that many modern problems of socio-economic development of the periphery and its interaction with the regional center have their roots in the past. To work out the concepts and strategies for the development of peripheral municipalities we should base upon the analysis of historical and geographical development of the area, since, without taking into account the lessons of the past, we risk repeating mistakes in the present and future.

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