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**REPORT TITLE:**

The Archeology of the Russian Cities of the Western Siberia

**TALKING POINTS:**

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The role of cities in the development of the society can hardly be overestimated; numerous problems of cultural development of Russia can be studied on the examples from their history. As for the Russian cities in Siberia, they have played a key role in the reclamation of the region, the integration of the region into economic, cultural and political system of the Russian state.

Since the annexation of Siberia by Russia a large corpus of written sources (administration correspondence, military governors' reports, descriptions of military expeditions, diplomatic and administrative trips) started to accumulate in central and local archives. This corpus allows for thorough research and reconstruction of the Siberia annexation process and the analysis of the role of cities in this process.

At first sight, there seems to be enough written sources for research and one can reconstruct the complete historic picture of the evolvment and development of the first West Siberian cities with the help of this type of sources especially if they are numerous. This is proved by a large number of monographs and articles which analyze socio-economical processes which took place in the Siberian community, their political, administrative, military, diplomatic, trade and other aspects.

However, there are some aspects of history and the development of culture, which are not fully reflected in the written sources. This concerns, first of all, the formation of city architecture, the material culture, the peculiarities of Siberian lifestyle and some other aspects. Yet these can be studied on the material of written sources.

Professional focused archeological research, more or less large-scaled, in the cities has opened new horizons in studying numerous aspects of the culture and lifestyle of the Russian Siberians. Archeological sources accumulated within decades are numerous and various; they also reflect the real socio-economical

nature and the cultural image of a Western Siberian city. It is the archeological sources in combination with the written ones which lets to study the culture and the lifestyle of the Siberian population accurately and in more detail.

Materials which scientists have at hand belong to the end of the XVI– the XVII centuries and are represented by remnants of pottery, goods made of leather, iron, bone, clay, glass, birch and pine bark and vegetational fibres. Moreover, some remnants of fortification constructions, houses, temples and cemeteries have been excavated.

So, there are two corpuses of sources different in origin and contents. Their simultaneous use allows for a thorough, deep and large-scale consideration of the history, culture and lifestyle of the Russian population of Verkhotouriye, Mangazeya, Tara, Tobolsk, Tomsk and Tyumen.

It's worth mentioning, that the archeology of Western Siberian Russians, including Russian cities is still at the initial stage of development and has a huge potential.

The existent written sources significantly compliment the archeological sources, letting obtain new information absent in the documents and necessary for the reconstruction and interpretation of archeological findings and objects of museum collections, and also absolutely new data which is impossible to obtain from other sources.

We will now use Tara fortress excavations as an example. It is known that the town of Tara had a fortress and a dungeon. In general, the territory occupied by the fortress in the end of the XVI century corresponds to the territory occupied by the market in the end of the XX century and the modern Lenin Square. The planigraphy of Tara Fortress at the modern surface is totally unreadable. However, the materials of the excavations allow for tracing the lay-out of a rich man's estate (a house with entry hall, household buildings, a well, a banya (sauna), etc.), and also the planigraphy of the estate with the adjacent streets. As S.F. Tataurov suggests, this estate used to belong to Tara military governor. We succeeded in tracing several building horizons which lets make their relative chronology and follow the dynamics of changing forms of some categories of finding, e.g. ceramics.

In one section a tower was excavated, which used to have the name Kniazhya (Lord's Tower). Next to the excavation site there is a slope which leads to a small bridge across the Arkarka river. Comparing the drawing of Tara made by S.U. Remezov in the end of the XVI century with the modern plans of Tara one can come to a conclusion that this slope to the river formed in the time of Tara construction and the bridge across the Arkarka was on the way to the Irtysh.

In three locations (near the Kniazhya tower, on the premises of communications enterprise "Severnnyye Seti" and in the premises of the post office) human graves were found. All of them are situated along a terrace, in the probable location of the wall of Tara Fortress. One can make a conclusion that on the initial stage of Tara's development there was no cemetery and people were buried on the territory of the fortress.

Thus, having ultimately approximated the researchers to the city, archeology has helped consider the aspects absent in other sources and has enlarged the possibilities of objective and multifold characterising of the image and the inner life of the city.

It is archeology which lets approach the solution of the most complicated problem of the localization of historic objects in the space, which is often impossible to do with approximate written and cartographical data.

It's worth mentioning that the archeology of Western Siberian cities is still at the initial stage of its development and has a huge potential which needs to be realized with the help of new, constantly perfecting methods and techniques, including the complex approach proposed by us.

The necessity of the complex approach to the study of a Western Siberian city in relation to what has been said is so obvious that observing this demand may be proclaimed the first condition of successful solution of many problems.