Building space and myth at the edge of empire:  
Space Syntax analysis of St. Petersburg, 1703-1913

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Abstract:
The foundation of St Petersburg in 1703 involves a tension between Scandinavian and Slavic identity. By reviewing grid maps over a period of time, it is possible to create connections of authorial structures and show how they not only come into tension with mythologies being associated with the city but how they also continue to generate a mythos for the city. Drawing on space syntax analysis of five stage of the evolution of the city, I show how the ongoing building of the city cannot be separated from the construction of an evolving mental model of the city. The mythic associations attributed to the city at her foundation stand in stark contrast to the ongoing problems of not only creating an idealized plan but in building a city that was rapidly becoming the major architectural and civil engineering project taking place in the north.

Notes
1 I owe my thanks to many libraries for archival and cartographic material: the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg, the Academy of Sciences Library in St. Petersburg, Carolina Library at the University of Uppsala, The Newberry Library in Chicago, and the Regenstein Library at the University of Chicago. For my work in St Petersburg, I am indebted to Professors Daniel Alexandrov and Yuri Tretykov. For help in Sweden, I would like to thank Ulla Birkegård. At the Newberry Library, I would acknowledge the help of Paul Gehl, and at the University of Chicago, Professor Michael Murrin. For the analysis of specific maps and the digital rendering of the space-syntactical analysis, I am indebted to Ermal Shpuza of the Architectural Ph.D. program at Georgia Tech. Finally, I want to thank my friend and colleague John Peponis for counsel on this project and for the pleasure of working together.
2 Although, I am also collecting cartographic and archival material on the Soviet and Post-Soviet period, I have limited this paper to the early plans of Petersburg.