

# Building space and myth at the edge of empire: Space Syntax analysis of St. Petersburg, 1703-1913<sup>1</sup>

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**Kenneth J. Knoespel<sup>2</sup>**

Georgia Institute of Technology, USA

## 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 stages 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

## Keywords

Constructing the "view" of St. Petersburg, phenomenology of mental space, Space Syntax and the Tartu School, narrative space, Dostoevsky and urban development

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kenneth.knoespel@iac.gatech.edu

## Notes

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<sup>2</sup> 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.