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Universities and Local Communities: From Past to Future (Case of Tomsk, Russia)

Tatiana A. Medvedeva*

*Siberian State Medical University
Tomsk, Russian Federation*

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Abstract. In today’s constantly evolving world, universities should become not only transmitters of knowledge, but also be more proactive in social relations system in terms of communities to which they belong. The article analyzes the role of universities in Tomsk (Russia, West Siberian region) in their local community. The historical method provided tracing the genesis and transformation of interaction between universities and the Tomsk community from the end of XIX century to the present day. On the basis of analysis of a wide range of sources on the history of Tomsk universities, a conclusion that the leading function of universities in their interaction with the local community since their foundation was the cultural and educational one was reached. A detailed analysis of the forms of the function realization and their transformation within different periods of existence of the Russian state has been carried out in the article. The participation of local community in the foundation of, essentially, the first university in Tomsk has been noted regarding material and financial aid. The identification of features of the current stage of interaction between universities and local communities required the use of sociocultural approach relevant to the processes taking place both in Russia and globally. The study of university-community interaction through the range of notions of “creative capital”, “social capital”, and “social networking” has revealed a new – socially transformative – function of the university. The essence of this function is that the university and its representatives as independent actors become the drivers of changes in society, directing and structuring the network interaction in the cognitive-informational, value-semantic and social-organizational aspects. In conclusion, it is proved that the socially transformative function of universities is essential for the self-identification of the local community members and the formulation of their key interests. The difficulties in the implementation of this function due to the peculiarities of the historical development of Russian society as a whole are also noted.

Keywords: universities, local communities, city, Siberia, Tomsk, social networks, social capital.

Research area: sociology, sociology of culture.

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Университеты и местные сообщества: от прошлого к будущему (на примере г. Томска, Россия)

Т.А. Медведева

*Сибирский государственный медицинский университет
Российская Федерация, Томск*

Аннотация. В современном динамично развивающемся мире университеты должны стать не только транслятором знаний, но и занять более активную позицию в системе социальных связей сообществ, к которым они принадлежат. В статье проанализирована роль университетов города Томска (Россия, Западно-Сибирский регион) в местном сообществе. Используемый исторический метод позволил проследить генезис и трансформации взаимодействия университетов и томского сообщества с конца XIX века до наших дней. На основе анализа широкого круга источников по истории томских университетов сделан вывод о том, что ведущей функцией университетов в их взаимодействии с местным сообществом с самого момента их основания была культурно-просветительская функция. В статье осуществлен подробный анализ форм реализации культурно-просветительской функции университетов и их трансформаций в различные периоды существования российского/советского государства. Отмечено, что участие местного сообщества в становлении первого томского университета заключалось в материальной и финансовой помощи. Выявление особенностей современного этапа взаимодействия университетов и местного сообщества потребовало обращения к социокультурной методологии, релевантной процессам, происходящим как в России, так и в общемировом масштабе. Исследование взаимодействия университетов и сообщества сквозь спектр понятий «креативный капитал», «социальный капитал», «социальный нетворкинг» позволило зафиксировать становление новой – социально-преобразующей – функции университета. Сущность данной функции в том, что университет и его представители как самостоятельные акторы становятся драйверами изменений в обществе, направляя и структурируя сетевое взаимодействие в когнитивно-информационном, ценностно-смысловом, социально-организационном аспектах. В заключение сделан вывод о существенной роли социально-преобразующей функции университетов в деле самоидентификации членов местного сообщества и формулировании их ключевых интересов. Отмечены также сложности в реализации данной функции, обусловленные особенностями исторического развития российского общества в целом.

Ключевые слова: университеты, местные сообщества, город, Сибирь, Томск, социальные сети, социальный капитал.

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Introduction

Siberian city of Tomsk, located in the geographical center of Russia is a city of six universities. The city is called “Siberian Athens”. In the time of Socrates, the Athenians felt their responsibility for the fate of the polis – they were honest citizens. Is it possible to describe students and teachers of Siberian Athens as responsible especially in the context of history and the present time? Is a university necessary for a city? Are there any obligations of city towards a university? Is it possible to say that university is an integral part of the local community and a key element of the cultural space of the city? The author tried to give answers to these questions in the following article.

Research methodology

The choice of methodology was determined by the research objectives. In the first part of the article devoted to the analysis of interaction between universities and the Tomsk community since the opening of the first university and until the end of the 20th century, the historical method was used. The analysis was based on the published monographs and scientific papers on the history of Tomsk universities. The analysis of the current state of interaction between universities and local community required the use of sociocultural approach relevant to the development trends of modern society, the characteristics of the social and cultural situation in Russia and worldwide in the first third of the XXI century. The emphasis in the study of the current university – local community interaction on the sociocultural environment led to the application of the method of sociocultural fields reconstruction implemented in the study through the source analysis (publications in the Tomsk printed media, discussions in the thematic groups on the Internet) and participant observation. The named method, representing the object of research in its synchronous aspect, was used along with sociocultural and historical-genetic approach, which allows identifying significant

political and socio-psychological causes of transformations of the interaction studied. The final part of the study is based on the historical-comparative method, which allows to compare the nature of interaction between universities and the Tomsk community in the past and at present.

Discussion

Imperial period (1878–1917)

The first Tomsk University, called Tomsk Imperial University was founded in 1878 by the highest order of Tsar Alexander II. It was a privilege for Tomsk to have a right to open the first University in the eastern part of Russia from the Urals to the Far East. Several major Siberian cities had been struggled for 75 years in order to obtain this right. The construction of the University immediately became a common goal for all concerned citizens. In the XIX century Tomsk was a merchant city, and patronage was an important tradition among merchantry.

Tomsk merchants made the first contribution to the construction of the university. So, Tomsk merchant and gold producer Zakhar Cybulskiy contributed 158 thousand Rubles (Zinoviev, Nekrylov, Phominykch, 2017: 70; Popov, 1913: 3). Another philanthropist, merchant, gold producer, Arctic explorer, hereditary honorary freeman of Irkutsk – A.M. Sibiryakov contributed 100 thousand Rubles. Ordinary citizens also made contributions to the construction of the university. Total amount of expenditures on the construction of the university was 699 785 rubles, donative amount of which was 392,936 rubles. (Popov, 1913: 3). In 10 years after its foundation, in 1888, the first Siberian University was opened.

University lecturers were scientists who came from the European part of Russia – Kazan, St. Petersburg, Derpt (Yuriev/Tartu), Khar'kov universities, later – Moscow, Kiev, Odessa universities, St. Petersburg Military Medical Academy (Nekrylov, Gribovskii, 2018: 22–23). They were highly qualified people, who right from the start of their activities in Tomsk began

to favorably influence intellectual and cultural field of a provincial town.

Within a few years, about two dozen branches of all-Russian Imperial and local scientific, engineering and cultural societies arose in Tomsk; leading university scientists of Tomsk and Siberia acted as members of governing bodies of both institution directions. Among the local ones were the Society of Practicing Physicians, West Siberian Society of Agriculture, Society for Study of Siberia, and Pedagogical Society. At this time (the early 20th century), representatives of university science were clearly aware of the need not only to gain knowledge, but also to contribute to society, and above all, to Siberia and Tomsk in a real sense. Thus, the Society of Practicing Physicians was designed to help provide the population with "sufficient medical facilities and means", to take care of giving its members opportunities to improve their professional skills, and to engage in educational activities by organizing public readings (Nekrylov, 2013:149).

Unlike the scientific societies at Tomsk University, which had an academic character, other scientific societies of Tomsk, led by the same Tomsk professors, were more open to representatives of different strata of society. For example, the members of the Society for the Study of Siberia could be persons without distinction of sex, rank and nationality, who were engaged or interested in Siberia, "with the exception of persons not allowed to join the society by law" (Nekrylov, 2013:157).

It is difficult to overestimate the value of activities of these communities. As a result of Tomsk scientists' asceticism, participation in research work and inventive activity became accessible for a wide range of educated population stratum. (Liakhovich, Revushkin, 1998: 444).

Further movement of Tomsk to enhance intellectual and cultural capital was connected with the establishment of Tomsk Institute of Technology in 1896. It was the first higher technical educational institution in eastern part of Russia. The establishment of this institute was reasoned by the shortage of engineers, needed for a rapidly growing industry and the exploration of natural resources of the vast Siberian re-

gion. The teaching staff of the institute as well as in the first Siberian University was rapidly recruited by scientists from the European part of Russia.

University teachers made a significant contribution to the improvement of public education system in Tomsk. By the time of opening the first university the educational system was already developed to an adequate degree. In 1883, among 24 Tomsk residents one was a student. In Moscow in 1886 among 75 residents one was a student, and in St. Petersburg at the same time – one student was among 80 residents (Liakhovich, Revushkin, 1998: 439).

As a result of activities of the Welfare community of public education, founded by outstanding Siberian educator Peter Makushin, the number of primary schools and colleges in Tomsk was raised to 17 in 1888 and to 34 in 1912.

The system of secondary education was a source of pride for Tomsk. By the early twentieth century Tomsk had 8 gymnasiums, 2 non-classical secondary schools, a seminary, a commercial college. All these secondary education institutions fell under the positive influence of university culture. The professors from the University, and later from Tomsk Institute of Technology, gave lessons in secondary education institutions and in the Siberian higher female courses on a part-time basis. At the same time school teachers took part in activity of scientific society. Museum collections of universities were used in the process of education. This facilitated the quality of education. So, the first graduation of commercial college was in 1909 and almost all of its graduates were immediately enrolled in Tomsk Institute of Technology (Liakhovich, Revushkin, 1998: 440–441).

It is necessary to remember that many professors and staff members of the University and the Institute of Technology made regular donations to the fund of Welfare community of public education. Thus, the activities of enthusiastic educators were strongly and consistently supported.

The value of education was understood not only by university professors. The form of stimulation driven by the urban community of higher education in Tomsk was present-

ed by the establishment of private scholarships for students. Some wealthy citizens made donations to several scholarships. So, Zakhary Tsibulsky contributed funds for three scholarships: the name of the Sovereign Emperor, the name of the heir Tsarevich and on the occasion of the 300th anniversary of Siberia (Zinoviev, Nekrylov, Phominykch, 2017:70–71). The honorable citizen A.N. Portnova established 12 scholarships (Popov, 1913: 14). In total, 76 students were receiving private scholarships, and only 20 students were receiving scholarships driven by the Treasury (Liakhovich, Revushkin, 1998: 64).

The scientists from the University and the Institute of Technology made an enormous contribution to the exploration of natural wealth and to the study of Siberian culture. Even before the opening of Tomsk University mayor Zakhar Cybulskiy wrote: “the inexhaustible Siberian resources remain untouched, waiting for skillful hands to explore them” (cited by: Z. Zaichenko, 1960: 39). At the end of XIX – the beginning of XX century, the dream came true. For example, a scientist of the Imperial University P.N. Krylov went on 14 botanical research expeditions to Altai (Southern Siberia) and Tomsk region. The scientists from the Institute of Technology V. Obruchev and M. Usov founded the Siberian geological school.

The cultural environment of Tomsk was also transformed. Professors and staff of the University and the Institute of Technology together with their family members actively participated in the work of Tomsk department of Russian Musical Society; they made donations to the needs of music classes. The first rector of the University N.A. Gezekhus in cooperation with tradesmen school inspector A.A. Solodov taught everyone who wanted to play the violin, viola and cello. Four classrooms of the university were provided for these lessons. (Liakhovich, Revushkin, 1998: 449).

In 1909 the Tomsk Society of Art Amateurs (1909–1918) was founded. Professors and staff of the University, the Institute of Technology and Siberian higher female courses were among the founders of this society. Up to the October Revolution of 1917, the Society

had been organizing annual exhibitions, in which many artists of all major Siberian cities took part.

The transformation of the cultural environment of Tomsk was also facilitated by the resettlement of educated people in Siberia (more than a half who came from the European part of Russia permanently settled in Siberia). With this background, we can agree with E. Liakhovich that by the time of the revolution Tomsk had transformed from geographical Siberian center into cultural one. The mission of the first university was finally fully implemented. The university became a “center of science, education and culture, the center of enlightenment in colonial and supposedly hopelessly remote region” (Liakhovich, Revushkin, 1998: 451).

However, cultural stratum, created by educated people was still inconsiderable, and its growth required creative activity of many generations. The tradition of this activity was set up by university intellectuals, but it was abandoned by the revolution and civil war.

Revolution, Civil War, Soviet period (1917–1991)

The profound crisis related to the revolution and civil war also affected Russian universities. The transition of power (often repeated during the civil war) from one political force to another, the lack of political stability, and the extremely difficult funding situation were just a fraction of the problems that the university teaching community had to face. However, even in such a tough time, university professors and teachers continued to contribute to the development of the city and the entire Siberian region.

One of the most important tasks of this time was the development of the public education system, as the “old” school did not meet the demands of the new reality. The difficulty of realisation of this task was to a great extent in the shortage of teaching staff and their low qualification. The work of teaching courses in Tomsk, inspired and organised by Professor S.I. Gessen of Tomsk University, was linked to this very circumstance. The courses were held in the summer of 1918; due to the

events of internal political life, the opening of the courses was complicated.

Teachers of schools of the Omsk and Tomsk railways, as well as urban and rural teachers from 12 cities and 20 counties of Siberia became the listeners of the courses (Kulyabko, 1919:14, 16). The total number of those taking the course was 715, of which 127 were men and 588 women. The huge influx of those enrolled in the course exceeded all the expectations of the organisers (Kulyabko, 1919:1).

Lectures on various disciplines of the school program were given by professors of Tomsk University – N.A. Alexandrov, B.P. Veinberg, S.I. Gessen, A.A. Kulyabko and others. In addition to lectures and practical training, university professors organised excursions to the anatomical institute, the zoological museum of the university and the mining museum of the Institute of Technology, the university library, the botanical garden, to the Anzherk and Sudzhensk mines, etc. (Kulyabko, 1919:12, 67).

The active involvement of the university community in the life of Tomsk and the Siberian region was also demonstrated by the opening of the Institute for the Study of Siberia in 1919. The aim of the institute was a comprehensive study of Siberia and its riches, as evidenced by the names of the institute's departments: geography, balneology and resort studies, natural history, industry and technology; history and ethnography; statistics and economics (Dunbinsky, 2012:54).

In addition to actual research tasks, the organisers of the institute solved the problem of personnel training. An important step in this direction was made by organising training courses for Siberian researchers and instructors in compiling school collections and creating school museums under the guidance of S. S. Neustruev. The course was open to citizens aged 16 and above with secondary education or sufficient background in natural history (Dunbinsky, 2012:55). The range of disciplines taught covered all areas of the institute's activities and included not only theoretical aspects of science, but also issues of practical use of scientific knowledge. The lectures were given

by professors of Tomsk University and Tomsk Technological Institute.

The courses were opened at the beginning of March 1920, and in July 1920 by the decision of the Sibrevcom (Siberian Revolutionary Committee), the ISS was closed. However, despite such a short period of activity, the courses organised by university scientists made a significant contribution to the cause of enlightenment and training of researchers and educators.

In the conditions of the authoritarian system formed in the 1920–1930s the university had completely lost any autonomy and became a government entity with the single objective: human resources supply for various branches of national industries. Cultural and educational mission of the university were essentially replaced by ideological one. Intensive supervision over its implementation was carried out by party bodies together with the authorities of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The connection between universities and enterprises started to establish since the 1930s. Many research institutes of Tomsk State University worked within the sphere determined by practical needs: the research on crop improvement, the search of better practices of metal processing, the development of production process of essential oils of Siberian cedar, etc. (Zaichenko, 1960: 398–400).

During World War II, when dozens of enterprises were evacuated from European part of our country to Siberia, Tomsk became a major industrial center. This fact even more brought together research fields with the needs of the industry. Thus, the cooperation between university activities and city administration in the context of productive capacity of Tomsk started to develop since prewar period. At the same time, it revealed the costs of excessive centralization: many valuable inventions lost their practical implementation because of endless bureaucratic procedures (Zaichenko, 1960: 400).

The relationships between Universities and local communities at that time were under harsh conditions of ideological norms. In this regard, the tradition of enlightenment and charity underwent radical transformations. During this period the topic of public lectures of teach-

ers and active students was predominantly political, representing the Marxist-Leninist doctrine. The lectures of scientists on scientific topics were ideologically reconciled. It is important that in the Soviet period a mutual voluntary, the main principle of Enlightenment was destroyed. Political education was compulsory for everybody: for some as – lecturers, and for majority – as listeners.

Examples of “organised enlightenment” include the practice of “science brigades” travelling to lecture in units of the Siberian Military District (1930s), and the organisation of the Red Army University of Culture at Tomsk University in 1934. Two faculties, natural science and history and literature, held classes totalling 200 hours. (Raskolets, Sorokin, 2021: 74). From the second half of the 1930s, teachers at Tomsk University explained to Red Army soldiers and commanders the issues of domestic and foreign policy: decisions of party congresses, congresses of Soviets, meetings of the Comintern, etc. (ibid.).

Private charity which was developed among the educated stratum of pre-revolutionary Tomsk was virtually destroyed as a remnant of bourgeois epoch. Donations became of collective nature and as a rule were initiated by party bodies.

During the liberalization of the Soviet regime (1956–1964) the free spirit of university culture began to revive. Teachers of Polytechnic Institute created a “lyrical Polytechnic” – the image of the Institute with a “human face”. Intelligence, delicate irony and romance of untraveled roads penetrated the songs by creative team of teachers in the 1960s. High intellectual culture along with humanity presented the message of these people to cultural space of the city.

Thanks to the existence of a university and a number of academic and research institutes, in the 1960s–1980s, Tomsk became the largest scientific and educational centre in the Urals. The main tasks of higher educational institutions in this period, as in the 1930s–1950s, remained the training of personnel for the national economy, the conduct of scientific research to help solve the tasks of communist construction, and the spread of political and scientific

knowledge among the population (Tomsk University. 1880–1980, 1980:332). Along with this, other features of the previous period of development were also preserved: the lack of autonomy of universities, the implementation of the cultural and educational function under strict ideological control, predominantly institutional forms of activity in the cultural and educational sphere.

It is worth noting that, despite the ideological context, this period witnessed the formation of creative teams that won the love of the city residents and became, without exaggeration, a recognisable “face” of the university as well as Tomsk itself for many years (jazz orchestra “TSU-62”, TSU Choral Chapel, etc.).

Post-soviet period (1990s–2000s)

The spirit of freedom inherent to the university culture emerged with a new force in the period of the Soviet Union collapse. During those years vigorous activity to restore the historical memory of the people was launched in Russian society.

Ever since tsarist times Tomsk province was a place of exile for political convicts. During the reign of Stalin, the city confirmed its unfortunate status. In Tomsk region, in 1930 famous philosopher, an expert of phenomenology and hermeneutics Gustav Shpet was exiled as well as Russian poet of the early twentieth century, representative of so called “rural” Russian poetry – Nikolai Klyuev. Both of them were there re-arrested and executed.

In the task of reconstruction of historical memory, activity forms of non-institutionalized nature were developed. For example, teaching stuff of the philosophical faculty of Tomsk State University decided to perpetuate the memory of Russian philosopher Gustav Shpet. Thanks to their efforts in the house where the philosopher lived before the last arrest a memorial plaque was installed. The organization of scientific conferences under the title “Shpet’s readings” became a tradition. Active participants of the conference were represented by scientists from Russia, the United States, Italy, Germany, as well as by children and grandchildren of the philosopher. The permanent inspirer and organizer of this activity was Olga

Mazaeva – the senior lecturer of the Faculty of Philosophy.

The fate and the work of Gustav Shpet became not only the property of the university intellectuals. The speech of M.G. Shtorkch – philosopher's daughter on the air of Tomsk television during her repeated visits to Tomsk, publications devoted to Shpet (particularly, the book "Shpet in Siberia: exile and death", composed by M.G. Shtorkch, the grandson of the philosopher M.K. Polivanov and Tomsk investigator N.V. Serebryannikova) became a part of the cultural consciousness of the local community.

Another example of socially significant activity of university environment representatives was conservation of wooden architecture monuments of the XIX century. In the XIX century in merchant Tomsk remarkable wooden towers, called *terems*, were built with fancy carvings adorning their facades and roofs. These *terems* became architectural landmark of the city. However, since the 1990s many of them were barbarically destroyed by unprincipled businessmen in order to clear lands for new housebuilding.

The struggle for the preservation of this great heritage was launched by representatives of university environment. These people organized various pickets, initiated the discussion of the problem with extensive public coverage, searched for professionals to investigate houses and to create projects on its restoration. With the help of university intellectuals and their active position, the residents of Tomsk also joined the struggle for the preservation of wooden architecture. Only this joint struggle, transformed into a social movement helped to save the cultural heritage of the city from destruction. Nowadays, the problem of preservation of wooden architecture monuments remains relevant, but due to the active position of society, it is controlled by the city authorities.

At the present time

Professors and teachers of the first Tomsk University actively participated in cultural life of Tomsk. It is to be recalled that the first rector of Tomsk Imperial University gave violin lessons to those who want during his spare time,

and many professors were the founders of Art Amateur Community.

This tradition continues nowadays. In recent years, several events, the so called *etnoforums*, dedicated to the preservation and development of traditional cultural values were held in Tomsk. Program Director of *etnoforums* is Daniel Krapchunov – associate professor of Tomsk Polytechnic University, the head of the ethnic art project "Vasilyev Evening".

In summer 2015 the IV Tomsk *Etnoforum* was organized. The main events of the Forum took place in Zorkaltsevo – a township near Tomsk. There, for three days of August the festival sites were open, "outdoor university" – the discussion about the Russian folk culture was led by university professors of Tomsk and other cities, also master classes on traditional food cooking, handicraft workshops and *etno-disco* took place.

Under the auspices of this forum such art installations as "Red Corner," "Russian Wedding" were arranged, an art mystery "Cincture in the traditional culture," and *ethno-fashion* show of traditional costumes were exhibited before the public. The major attraction of the forum was real "Russian match-making", conducted according to national ritual (Tomsk *Etnoforum*, 2015).

Beginning in the 1960s Tomsk started to form a powerful scientific potential (Nowadays there are six universities and several research institutes in Tomsk). This has made it possible to launch the creation of special economic zone of technical innovation type for the realization of innovative projects in the field of nanotechnology, biotechnology, information technology and electronics in the middle of the 2000s. Nowadays the creation of conditions for science and business cooperation, high-technology products output and its introduction to the domestic and foreign markets is one of the critical tasks of the Tomsk region administration.

Thus, universities and the city actively interact in two main areas: cultural and educational, and scientific and technological. Humanitarian field is of particular interest within the framework of this study. Here, the specific character of interaction between universities and local communities is that a significant

number of cultural, educational, social projects are initiated by the state and its institutions rather than by individuals or their associations.

This is clearly seen in the projects carried out by universities today. For example, since 2013, Tomsk State University has been implementing the Open University cultural and educational project as part of the development of supplementary education system. As part of the project, scientists from Tomsk universities give free lectures to the residents of Tomsk and the local region and hold other educational events in various fields of knowledge. Special attention within the project is paid to working with third age people. In 2013, Open University received state support, and in 2017, TSU became a member of the International Association of Universities of the Third Age (IAUTA/AIUTA). (Open University, 2020).

The cultural and social significance of such events is indisputable. However, for the development of social and communicative interaction between the universities and the urban community it is important that the actors on both sides are the individuals and their associations, and not the institutions. It can be stated that the current state of the social and communication environment of the city provides weak but encouraging examples of such interaction.

It is known that an essential component of the quality of life is the environmental conditions. In today's urban environment, green spaces are a major element. In the city administration, now acts the Landscape Commission – a structure whose purpose is “conservation and reproduction of green spaces and landscapes, control over the demolition of green spaces in the city of Tomsk”. The members of the Landscape Commission include biologists of Tomsk State University. However, since an absolute majority in the Commission belongs to officials of the mayor's office, the decisions often turn out to be opposite to the expert opinions of scientists of the Commission. The consequence of this has been to replace “preservation and reproduction of green spaces” with their barbaric pruning and felling.

In this situation, biologists see their role as informing citizens about what is happen-

ing, combined with education about the characteristics of different plants, their ability to minimize the effects of environmental hazards on humans, the length of their life cycle, and the subtleties of caring for plants. This role is carried out primarily in the online space. In Tomsk groups on the Internet, there is an active discussion about the mayor's policy, polemical positions are sharpened, proposals for “green building” are formulated. On the one hand, the citizens' demand for the expert opinion of scientists (specialists in the field), on the other hand, the active position of scientists as independent actors of the socio-cultural space of the city is revealed. It is also important that the city residents form a balanced and clearly articulated position, supported by specific actions. For example, the active felling of city trees in the spring of 2020 caused a flurry of public indignation, which resulted in numerous appeals to the authorities. The result has been a cessation of active tree felling.

It now seems clear that a significant potential for interaction between universities and local communities lies in the social and communication environment – a broad public discussion of urban problems, social and technical (landscape, construction, infrastructure) projects involving independent specialists and active city residents.

In view of the above, the Russian specifics of implementation of the concept of “smart cities”, put forward by N. Komninos (Komninos, 2015), are clearly observed. The “Smart city” movement, which marks the global transition from an industrial, urban model of space to a post-industrial and post-urban model (“new urbanism”), includes a number of components. These are “smart technology”, “smart governance” and “smart community”. It is obvious that in order to fully implement the idea of the smart city, their organic unity and interaction is necessary. The analysis of introduction of smart city elements into information and communication, visual, social infrastructure and other spaces of the city allowed us to conclude that the emphasis made by the authorities exclusively on technologies (the degree of modernity of these technologies is a topic of a separate conversation) is an inefficient strategy,

moreover, it is archaic in its spirit corresponding to the managerial psychology of the era of industrialism.

Today, it is obvious that it is impossible to realize the smart city concept without inclusion of a humanitarian, socio-communicative component. This component combines such types of significant capital in the post-industrial world as creative, social, and intellectual (Shcherbinin, 2018:184). The important fact is that the social-transformative potential of these types of capital is multiplied by their interaction forming a pronounced synergetic effect. Thus, creative and intellectual types of capital, which are assets of organizations or individuals, are usually capable of actively generating innovations in an environment that is ready for their perception, support and dissemination. The latter, in fact, constitute what is called social capital.

Signs of this effect can be seen in the interaction between universities and the local community. The situation shows that knowledge and talent can become – and in some cases do become – a real force in networking situations. Here, there is the “Strength of weak ties” effect, suggested by Mark Granovetter, the American sociologist. In contrast to the strong ties that exist within families and ethnic communities, weak ties bring together a wide variety of people as “channels through which ideas, influences or information socially distant reach the subject” (Granovetter, 2009:41). Expert knowledge, which university scientists are the bearers of, through modern means of communication, becomes accessible to people who are very distant from science. This knowledge, acquired in a broad social network, expands the intellectual and cultural horizons of its participants and, conversely, “the less indirect contact a subject has, the more limited will be his knowledge of the world outside his circle of friends” (ibid.). However, the significance of weak ties goes beyond mere information exchange. M. Granovetter pointed out that this kind of connection is “a necessary condition for the formation of individuals’ capabilities as well as their integration into communities” (Granovetter, 2009: 47). This position is confirmed, in particular, by the fact that public discussions on topical is-

ues of Tomsk life, initiated by representatives of the university community (as it was in the situation of barbaric felling of city poplars), become a kind of trigger for social activity of citizens, thereby actualizing and strengthening the social capital of the community. In its turn, the building of social capital creates the necessary atmosphere for public discussions, origin and implementation of social and other innovations, because no living being can appear in an airless space.

We should also note the factors that complicate the interaction of universities and their individual representatives with the local community. In this regard, we will again have to refer to the concept of social capital. Russian sociologist named Leonid Polishchuk includes in this concept not only networks, but also trust and values shared by society (Polishchuk, 2014). Given the low level of trust and lack of values that unite society (Fukuyama, 1995; Kukatas, 2003), we can conclude that this type of capital is low both in Russia as a whole and particularly in local communities. Atomization of society, as a consequence of the low level of trust, does not encourage people to enter into various kinds of coalitions, and the lack of common values leads to conflicts in communication and the fragility and short duration of emerging ties. These circumstances explain the fact that local communities reveal low ability to form a demand for a cultural product – ideas and innovations that could change the technological, cultural and social image of Russian cities in cooperation with citizens. All this fully applies to Tomsk.

Due to the low capacity of the society for self-organization and control over the actions of power institutions, municipal authorities in a significant number of cases direct material and financial resources to the implementation of projects assessed by the residents as untimely, not bringing real benefits, or causing direct harm to the urban environment. Interestingly, to justify the “reasonableness” of such projects, authorities resort to invoking the authority of scientists. A sad example is the activities of the Living Lab in Tomsk. The network of living labs is supposed to be an intermediary “between residents, research organizations, in-

novative companies, the city and the region for joint value creation, rapid prototyping or proof of scalability of innovations” (Livinglabtomsk). In fact, Tomsk Living Lab has become a structure affiliated with the city administration and implementing its policies, but positioned as a creative community of young scientists: architects, designers, sociologists. As a result of the lab’s experiments, the area of green spaces in iconic places for city residents has shrunk by almost 20 %, replaced by absurd installations and lifeless spaces lined with paving slabs.

In this situation, it is encouraging that scientists, who are still committed to scientific truth and high social responsibility, are invariably debunking the quasi-scientific nature of such “experiments” in social media, thus raising the awareness and environmental culture of urban dwellers (Razgon, 2020).

Place and identity

The essential question is how the interaction between universities and the community affects the formation of local (urban) identity. As R. Florida notes in his study “Who’s Your City?: How the Creative Economy is Making Where to Live the Most Important Decision of Your Life”, ‘the link between place and identity is visible everywhere’ [Florida, 2014:160]. On the one hand, “place is something to which one can belong with a sense of pride and attachment”. But a place is also “one of the means of self-expression. It provides an environment that one can embrace by making it one’s own” [Florida, 2014:159–160]. Considering the city not only as a spatial entity but also as a socio-cultural field, whose configurations depend on the perceptions and actions of many actors, broad perspectives for analysis are opened.

Representatives of universities (part of the creative class) are, in our opinion, the force that forms the ability to access the resources of the city as a sociocultural field in the rest of the community. As V. Ilyin, the Russian sociologist, notes, “it is possible to live in a rich country and be poor, to live next door to a university and remain ignorant” (Ilyin, 2006:44). Gaining access to resources, in particular to intellectual and cultural capital through social networking, people master (and begin to shape themselves)

the cultural program and language of their field. Thus, in the process of interaction of the individual and sociocultural, internal and external, the identity of a city resident is formed.

It is worth noting that the most important factor in the formation of urban identity is the visual environment. In this environment, consciously or unconsciously, people highlight what R. Florida, following I. Tinalli, calls “symbolic amenities” – parks and open spaces, cultural opportunities [Florida, 2014:159]. The presence of all these things in the city creates a feeling of happiness and at the same time encourages people “to do more than they would do in other conditions”; thus, the place acts as “a serious source of inspiration and stimulator of creativity, a necessary component of human psychological well-being” [Florida, 2014:157–159]. Unsurprisingly, it is university representatives who are the drivers of changes in public consciousness about preserving/creating a comfortable urban environment. These people intuitively feel the connection between place and creativity, between place and prosperity. When university scientists speak out on social media for the preservation of the Mikhailovskaya Grove, the city’s springs, the scientific approach to the development of the University Grove, they are thereby speaking out for the preservation of a city in which one would want to live and create. For city residents taking part in the Internet discussions, so often directed by Tomsk intellectuals, it is important to form a clearly articulated position on the key issues of city life, such as urban beautification as well as to be ready to act actively in defense of the image of the city with which they identify themselves.

Conclusion

Summarizing the analysis of universities’ interaction with local communities on the example of Tomsk, we can note that historically the most important function of universities in interaction with the community was the cultural and educational function. Forms of its realization were diverse: leading role of university scientists in organization and functioning of scientific, engineering, cultural and educational societies, contribution in improvement of

Tomsk public education system, etc. Participation of local community in the formation and development of universities consisted, first of all, of material and financial aid. Wealthy Tomsk merchants made considerable donations for the construction of university buildings; wealthy townspeople established private scholarships for students.

During the Soviet time, the cultural and educational function of the universities was almost completely replaced by an ideological one, and dozens of scientific, educational, technical and charitable societies ceased to exist in the 1920s and 1930s. The emergence of civil society at the turn of the XIXth and XXth centuries replaced an all-powerful state, which was reflected in the relationship between the university and the city. This relationship became purely institutional; any other kind of activity was viewed with suspicion by the state.

Today, universities, above all, retain their historically established cultural and educational function, as demonstrated by a variety of projects (in particular, the aforementioned Open University project). In contrast to the pre-revolutionary period, this function is predominantly carried out within an institutional framework.

At the same time, universities – but more often individual scientists as independent actors – have become the key “nodes” in the loose networks emerging in the society, directing and structuring the network interaction in the cognitive-informational, value-semantic, social-organizational aspects. On this basis, we can talk about the signs of formation of another university function – socially-transformative, – which is realized in the construction of new reality through the growth points, which are, first of all, the bearers of intellectual and creative capital. Historically conditioned features of Russian society, such as weak civil society, low level of trust between people, blurred values and meaningful attitudes, significantly complicate the implementation of this function, focusing on social activity. This is confirmed by the analysis of the situation in Tomsk, which has revealed the passivity of the urban population and its low ability to form a request on a cultural product to universities. However, it is the socially transformative role of universities that is to help local communities in the important matter of their self-identification, formulating their key interests, asserting their rights and, thus, moving if not to an ideal, then simply to a good society in which one wants to live.

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