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## **THE UNIVERSITIES AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (THE CASE OF TOMSK REGION)<sup>1</sup>**

*The article focuses on the interaction of the local community of the city of Tomsk with its universities. The authors emphasize a significant role of the university complex for innovative development of the region and the ways and means of producing influence on the social life of the local community.*

*The universities are increasingly becoming the leading institutional centers of the regional community development. One of their main strategies in this respect is support of mutually beneficial contacts with regional communities. That are interested in recruiting and incorporating the university's intellectual and research potential into various social and economic practices serving the needs of various social groups. According to this ideological guideline, community steady development is closely associated with the active use of research and educational potential of the universities.*

*Key words: local community, innovation development, interaction, authorities, civil society, social institutions, commercialization, socio-cultural environment, non-profit organization, public association, Mass media.*

### **1. The local community of Tomsk: its structure and speciality.**

The universities are increasingly becoming the leading institutional centers of the regional community development. One of their main strategies in this respect is the support of mutually beneficial contacts with regional communities. That are interested in recruiting and incorporating the university's intellectual and research potential into various social and economic practices serving the needs of various social groups. According to this ideological guideline, community steady development is closely associated with the active use of research and educational potential of the universities.

However, looking beyond the ideological façade, what is the current role of the universities in the life of the local communities and in their possible futures? To answer this, we must clarify what we do understand as a community, what parts does it consist of and what kind of specific features does it possess. Respective literature offers several approaches to the study of the local communities: environmental, ethnographic, sociological and economical. Despite the differences of the above, the main features of community do include:

1. The population, communion of people (historical communion or cultural, neighbor or other).

2. The place or the territory, in other words, a space within some recognizable boundaries (geographical, administrative, economical, informational or other).

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3. The social interaction (the neighborhoods, accepted rules and norms of conduct, authorities, public services, non-governmental organizations, interdependency within the production system and other).

4. The sense of community, the psychological identification with the community (shared values, the sense of belonging, the sense of being part of the events in the life of the community, the sense of responsibility)(1)

Besides, we should distinguish two aspects or dimensions of the local community: “the community of the locus” based upon the neighborhood relations within given territory involving issues stemming from the fact of physical co-existence and “the community of interests” based upon the personal relations and not limited geographically. However, the community of interests is limited within the frame of respective interest.

#### **The constituents of the local community.**

In order to determine the role of the universities within the life of the local community we should highlight the institutional structures and social groupings forming the basic constituents of the community and select those representing the most important agents of the regional innovative development.

The latter include:

- Institutions of power (and respective groups within these institutions);
- Business structures, representing various sectors of the economy and represented by various interest groups;
- Universities as both the institutional structures and the communities within themselves including incorporated groups of the local population (lecturers, researchers, students, freelancers and other);
- Institutes of the civil society: NGOs, media and other;
- Lay public not involved into the innovative development.

Now we shall consider these constituent’s role in communication with (relation to) the universities in order to find out whether the latter could serve the principal agents of regional innovative development.

#### **The authorities**

During the previous ten year period the government of Tomsk region was implementing the program of strategic development with the purposes of creating innovative regional economy, organization of science intensive enterprises capable of providing high value added and turning the city of Tomsk into a prominent center of innovation. Not unexpectedly, the group of six state supported universities operating in Tomsk were given the central part in that strategy. The decisive role in the development and implementation of the strategy itself was played by the team of the previous Governor, Viktor Kress and by the Governor himself.

However, respective activity was and still is seen rather skeptically by the other interest groups within the regional power. Here is the opinion of one of influential representatives of regional administration:

*“... frankly, a lot was done, although not for the purpose or with the thoughts of the future regional prospects... We were doing that just to get plugged in the mechanism, to keep up with the trend, that is. “Let’s do that and we’ll think of what shall we be doing with that later”, this sort of thinking. That sort of ideology. Let’s*

*attract the federal resources first and we'll decide upon what to use these for later."*

In general, the relationship between the regional and city authorities with the universities are productive and mutually beneficial. The mechanisms of the authorities and the universities interaction, both institutional and informal are rather numerous. Worth noting is the fact that the personnel of both the regional and the city administration has for the long time being recruited almost exclusively within the pool of the graduates of Tomsk based universities. It was true for both administration at all levels. Typically, the officials appreciated the connections with respective Alma mater and this was highly beneficial in terms of the business affairs. Besides, a considerable proportion of high-level officials is employed at the university sector and teach there. The universities offer a number of academic courses intended for the officials. All the above form the basis of not just loyalty but for constructive cooperation of the authorities and the universities on the personal level.

Since the universities form the sole basis of the regional innovative development, the use of the universities and positive positioning of the universities on the federal level served as a basis of the strategy of achieving the main objective of the regional administration, the goal of turning the region and the city of Tomsk into the engines of national modernization and into the globally important zone of innovative development.

The universities of Tomsk are among the leaders of Russian higher education, they carry out training of personnel in more than 300 specialties, including those directly linked with the so-called "priority directions" of modernization and technological development of Russia. The institutions of higher education of the city of Tomsk train more than 86,000 students (every fifth resident of the city), more than 50% are from other regions, 9% of whom are foreign students arriving from 30 countries of the world. Tomsk keeps the first place in the concentration of highly qualified scholars and scientists (more than 5,000 professors and associated professors).

There might have been some bluffing, but the result is Tomsk and its universities have become well-known all over the world: only during the previous year the city was visited by the ambassadors of four leading European countries, and they were attracted, of course, not by Siberian exotica but science-technical potential. This Tomsk's getting known would be impossible without active participation of the universities in cooperation with the regional authorities.

One of the institutionalized canals of authorities-universities interaction is carrying out researches financed from the regional (and federal as well) budget.

Here is the opinion of the expert representing Tomsk state university:

"On the part of the authorities this includes supporting the programs of the development of the University, participating in co-financing of its projects... Also, the orders to carry out scientific researches, and we have them, that is the support of scientific activity: I mean the scholarship fund, lobbying the University's interests. There is the maintenance of the Russian scientific funds such as RFFR, RHSF where Tomsk region contributes to. The regional administration places its researching orders; there is an order on target training. So, we can see this interaction on different levels".

The regional authorities do not restrict themselves to moral and lobbying support of the university complex, it can be confirmed, in particular, by the fact that in 2005–2009 the total financing of the institutions of the university complex of Tomsk was 64.4 billions rubles, in 2010 – about 21.5billions rubles, i.e. 8% of gross regional product. The total funding of scientific activity in 2010 amounted to 10.9 billions rubles (6.5billions rubles from off-budget sources).The value of the completed scientific projects in 2005-2010 increased 2.4 times and reached 25.5 billions rubles. Besides, there occurred a doubling of the proportion of investments in scientific and research development in the total amount of investments in the economy of Tomsk region, more than that, a remarkable increase of inner expenses on research and development in the total value of investments was marked while the part of the off-budget sources was increasing.

In October, 2011 the Government of the RF approved of the Concept of creating a center of education, research and developments in Tomsk region (INNO-Tomsk-2010 “ИНОТОМСК-2020”).

Nevertheless, there are serious barriers to the interaction between the authorities and universities. Mostly they are based on the fact that, being federal educational institutions, the universities are placed outside the local community, they are funded, first of all, from the federal budget and all their activity, to the last detail, is regulated by the Ministry of education and science, that, actually, prevents from their integrating with the local community.

“...our state universities are big, powerful, strong but they are, being departments of federal structures, not subject to local authorities, so, subject to a bit different laws, and here the authorities, no matter how they wish, have a very little chance, so to say, to influence the situation in some kind.”(The head of one of Tomsk mass media).

In spite of lots of positive examples of interaction of local authorities with higher educational institutions, part of which are described above, the effectiveness of this interaction seems problematic and has rather declarative and demonstrative character.

“We are not so innovative how we like to tell, unfortunately, though, on the other hand, if Tomsk region hadn’t declared itself as an innovation region so brightly, half of those achievements in innovations, we have now here, we wouldn’t have”.(The head of one of Tomsk mass media).

Another barrier to fruitful interaction of the universities with the authorities is diffuseness and the lack of unity in the local community (we mentioned it above).

“... we have some watershed between the efforts of our authorities, it means between people, the total mass of people, yes, this polarized part of the population, politically active, intellectual elite, as how you understand, in universities we see such people, in governmental institutions – others, and the third kind go to the streets, and the fourth kind live in Irkutsky and Kashtak, so, I see some disunity, it might be normal, we are like kaleidoscope, we still have it in our Russian society, not everything is divided between strata yet, not everything is clear concerning status, but I guess, the universities could make a great influence even on the authorities, why not”.(A representative of a big oil and gas company).

Obviously, collaboration and combining efforts of the regional authorities and the university communities for the sake of the regional development demand new

forms of interaction. So far, it has been concentrated, above all, in the sphere of science-technical innovations that actually gives a real, financially measurable (and in the infrastructure aspect) and highly demonstrative effect: there are trumps in political play with the federal centre.

But the situation will probably change in the nearest future. In the new structure of the Governor's administration expert councils have been recently formed. They are headed by the deputy Governors who supervise key directions of the economy and social sphere in the region. The members of the local community representing business, science, education and culture entered these councils. All in all, at present there are eight expert councils, they include 56 specialists. The share of the representatives of Tomsk universities and research institutes is rather big – 22 people (39%).

### **BUSINESS**

Business community of Tomsk is presented by the following interest groups:

– Raw materials sector, oil and gas production, is presented such structures as “Tomskneft” (“Томскнефть»), «Vostokgazprom» (“Востокгазпром”), «Tomsktransgaz » (“Томсктрансгаз»). The influence of this group is fairly big and, probably, it is going to grow (the present Governor S.Zhvachkin used to work in oil and gas companies).

– The sector of so-called “traditional economy» is presented by not numerous and rather small enterprises of machine engineering “Sibelektromotor” (“Сибэлектромотор»), “Sibkabel” (“Сибкабель»), “Kontur” (“Контур»), Tomsk electro-mechanical factory and some enterprises of food industry.

– Service sector: trade, public catering, consumer services.

– Innovative business operating in the sphere of production of Hi-Tech products (“Elekard” «Элекард», “Elesi” «Элеси»), small innovative enterprises in the frames of Tomsk universities). The possibilities of the development of this sector are seen as problematic by the agents themselves.

Frankly, they refer these problems not to the local but rather the whole – country conditions. Here is the opinion of one of the heads of innovative business:

“Well, the greatest barrier is the system which is being created now, exactly because of this system the major part of smart, perspective developers and strong businessmen are leaving this country.

The system under which it is impossible to achieve something. In fact, this system doesn't let active people in big business, except for...hm-m...through family connections,...may be through some political party, but this way is unacceptable for this sort of people”.

Taking into account the opinions above, it is logical to suppose that the regional business a priori cannot be an equal partner to the six state universities of Tomsk aimed not so at the local employers but rather the other regions of the Russian Federation.

Nevertheless, the opinion of the business community should be taken as a revealing indicator of the capacity of the universities to prepare specialists for innovations and develop innovative product as well. Business participates in competition, so it has the ability to give politically incorrect but quite reasonable assessments.

The common position of business concerning the contribution of the universities into the innovative development of the region, in the part which is connected with entrepreneurial activity, insists only in training specialists.

From the interview with the representative of business community:

“Well, so, Tomsk universities today perform the role of a personnel supplier, and they do it quite well, but they are very passive in doing research work, they pay very little attention to real research work. Just to train students is not enough. So, the universities should dramatically change their approach to recruiting applicants, first of all. Then, the universities should be involved into real research work and business activity”.

Summing up the fears of Tomsk business and their claims to the universities, we may single out the following points:

1) It is quite evident now that the level of applicants is becoming lower. Taking into consideration the fact that young scientists and tutors are usually graduates of the university they eventually teach and, besides, newcomers from central universities are rare, there is no “influx of fresh blood”, it is logical to suppose that in some period of time today’s weak graduates will become tutors and the process of degradation of the universities will enter a new threatening stage. If we speak about Tomsk, such situation will certainly do harm to the local community, as the future of the city is closely connected with the university complex according to the opinions of the experts from different spheres (business, authorities and Mass media). To prevent the decrease in the level of the students and future tutors and research workers Tomsk universities must be active while recruiting applicants beyond Tomsk region. Due to the business experts, universities and their administrations in particular must be responsible for it.

2) Personnel training for industries is being carried out in a paradoxical way: universities are not successful enough in preparing specialists, so enterprises have to take on this duty and complete the course of training, accepting 2-3 year students for manufacturing practice. Another form of the interaction of business and universities is to invite relative specialists, practitioners to teach at universities. Both forms are traditional and legitimate. Business is not satisfied with the content of the basic professional education. According to the experts, the problem is that the university tutors hardly take any part in the research work, if they do, the subject matter of their research is determined by the grant giver, not by the needs of business community, no saying about local needs. In this connection, the attractiveness of the topics of such researches for business seems quite problematic.

From the interview with the representative of business:

“...it all happens vice versa, we do train senior students. Universities don’t do it. As I see it, the general training at our universities is fairly good but when we talk about specialized training of senior students, it is not satisfactory, as there is a lack of qualified tutors who are able to give proper training. The point is in order to prepare a good specialist in some field, the tutor must be involved in the research work in the same sphere. Otherwise, we will have no positive result”.

But the most serious claim to the universities is that the amount of innovative ideas is extremely small. Often, speaking about innovations, they mean the development based on the researches of the Soviet times.

From the interview with the representative of business:

“We stopped watching ourselves critically; we don’t ask ourselves uncomfortable questions. I have been observing some PR-strategy concerning innovation in Mass media since this topic became fashionable, I’ve noticed that we have been talking about the same, all the same, all the same... We have some development of some bearing or gear and we simply are talking and talking about it without suggesting anything at all, all the same, no move. In fact, we don’t see any revolutionary, breaking technologies, if there are some, they are not numerous, unfortunately, of course. Yet, if we speak about achievements in the sphere of lighting engineering or semiconductor technique, who invented all this? Young scientists? Not at all, elderly professors ...and they have been working on these things for years, these old professors constantly emphasize ”I’ve been working on this technology for 30 years””.

3) The next point deals with the problem of protection of property rights of business partners of the universities on the joint development. Due to the business experts, Russian law doesn’t protect a private investor, it doesn’t protect minority shareholders.

From the interview with the representative of business:

“The owner of the development is the university; it can use it, and then pass the right in some way. The university tries to get the development patented. It is awfully troublesome deal. All these judicial issues are driving people crazy! The sphere of private-public partnership is not properly regulated by the Russian law. Every sound businessman will say that it doesn’t worth it because as soon as your business acquires even one budget ruble, you immediately get million problems: loads of inspections, the Chamber of accounts in addition many vague moments concerning passing the property rights and so on. Suppose the university passed you the right but then these scientists add two molecules and pass the right on this development to somebody else. It’s not clear; just mess. In general it is completely impossible to understand who pays for what and who gets what in the end. Our present law system doesn’t regulate this sphere. All in all, private-public partnership is a nightmare of any businessman. Keep away from all this, buddy!”

Similarly, the university experts believe that the rights of the university authors also are not protected, therefore even the most perspective and efficient developments of the university are rarely realized, if they are at all: the authors are afraid of being deprived of the copyright as well as stealing their inventions. However, some businessmen hold that the number of innovative utilitarian development created within the universities is unacceptably small. Besides, commercialization of available developments cannot be effective because of their improper for business structures presentation, wrong “wrapping”. The issue of passing the property right is still unsolved both for the authors and the university administration.

The atmosphere of an absentee dialogue between the universities and business community, in general, is characterized with mutual discontent, irritation and absence of optimism. The evaluation of the interaction with business, given by the university people, is also pessimistic and full of criticism. Business is not ready to cooperate with universities, it is revealed in their being reluctant to invest in scientific researches and risk money. On the other hand, business is willing to take ad-

vantage of the vast offer on the labour- market without guaranteeing proper conditions for graduates.

Employers' claims, concerning high expectations of graduates, are not grounded and can be explained by a simple wish to economize on the labour force. Furthermore, the peculiarity of Tomsk region and university complex consists in the absence of large enterprises capable of ensuring wide-scale target orders on personnel training by the city's university.

Opportunities for effective interaction are also marked. They include both diversification and increase in canals of interaction between business and universities which are not necessarily connected with universities genetically; we do not mean business-incubator attached at universities, though their use is out of saying. We mean, first of all, establishing venture enterprises, R&D centers within business-incubators, such off-university assessment will let realize the "principle of reality" for university developments. The initiative to create such structures should come from business community.

From the interview with the representative of business:

"... university is no market, to my mind, so, if we talk about innovations which come rather from the market and are dependant on it, being no result of pure intellectual activity, they have an applied character, so, they are doomed to leave universities to search for the support in some structures adequate to the current market, above all, but it is extremely difficult to combine both aspects, educational and innovative-technological".

### **Universities**

Tomsk is one of the recognized educational centers of Russia and the world. TSU and TPU are acknowledged by UNESCO a piece of particularly valuable national assets. Article 1 of the Charter of the city of Tomsk says "The city of Tomsk is a municipal establishment with the university complex forming a company town". At present regional university complex looks quite well-being. It is represented by six state-supported universities, three of which got the status "innovative", and two of them, Tomsk state and Tomsk polytechnic, became "National research universities". The number of students, studying at the universities of Tomsk has reached recently 88-89,000 people, while the population of the city is 560.5 thousand people.

Actually, the university complex plays for Tomsk the role of "the enterprise forming a company town" and organizes the cultural space of the city. Besides, Tomsk universities have been, at least until recently, some "magnet" for in-coming migration: The major part of the students, studying here, are from other cities.

About 60 institutions of the region are involved in scientific research work and development. Tomsk scientific center, Siberian Branch of RAS, comprises 5 research institutes: of Atmospheric Optics, of High Current Electronics, of Strength Physics and Material Science, of Petroleum Chemistry, of Monitoring of Climatic and Ecological Systems; a branch of the Institute of Petroleum-Gas Geology, two centers – innovational-technological center of Engineering and Design and of physics of environment and ecology, also, 2 departments – of structural macrokinetics and of problems of informatization. The Russian Academy of Sciences is

presented by 6 research institutes: of cardiology, of cancer, of pharmacology, mental health, of medical genetics, of obstetrics, gynecology and perinatology. Here works the Institute of Health Resort Medicine and Physiotherapy of the Ministry of Health of Russia. Tomsk keeps the first place in Russia in the concentration of research workers of high qualification (169 researchers for 100,000 residents).

During the last 2 years there have been formed 72 small innovative enterprises attached to the universities.

But the integration of the universities into the local community, economic and social life, is complicated by a few factors.

Firstly, it is the “dissonance” in the development of universities and regional economics. Here is the opinion of the expert representing TSU on this issue:

“... we have oil production, unfortunately, the situation with oil refining is poor, we have logging, but no timber-working, we have a small machine-building sector, thanks to the

geographical position of Tomsk oblast, it won't be able to develop without using the resource of the innovation activity. But the problem is that Tomsk universities exclude these directions out of their research activities and their innovative activity is being planned due to some known historical reasons, formed scientific schools, available infrastructure and acquired partners, it is being formed not on the level of the regional partners but rather as some federal infrastructure.

...it is hard to form the demand which the university complex of Tomsk is aimed at: if we say that soon the demand will be mostly of regional character, it means that the university complex has to be shrunk significantly”.

Considering all above, we may suppose that the range and the directions of research and engineering activity of Tomsk universities are “odd” for the economy of the region. The appearance of innovative products in the Russian, and especially the world market, is complicated by a set of factors, connected with imperfectness of the laws, administrative barriers and tough competition, the latter refers more to the world market.

Secondly, there is an objective factor that prevents the universities from fulfilling the role of personnel supplier; this factor is a demographical pit. So, the level of competition in higher education is pretty low.

Moreover, Tomsk universities cannot boast that the best school-leavers prefer to enter them: the average State Examination grade of applicant is not high: it doesn't exceed 70 points. So, this fact doesn't let many universities enter the top 20 in their profile. For example, the average grade in TSU is 67.3, while the average grade in Moscow and St.Petersburg universities, which traditionally take the top positions, is more than 80. No doubt, such situation can't help making influence on the image of the university and the labour force market.

“The fact is that in this city everybody who applied was enrolled. It means that in 5 years these applicants will be graduates, and in 15 years they, who entered without competition, will form the teaching staff of our universities and they will determine their image. It is just disaster! That is what is happening now to the students is destroying the foot the city of Tomsk is based on. That's why the priority direction which should be called today is a very active, extremely active attraction applicant from the whole Russia and former Soviet republics and from abroad as well”. (From the interview with a business representative.)

Tomsk universities are important not only because they are educational resources but, also, they act as a significant subject of the economy of Tomsk region.

“Yet, Tomsk is the only city in the country where higher education is an enterprise forming company town”. (From the interview with a Mass media representative.)

Higher educational institutions provide a significant number of jobs, forming one of the major taxable bases on the territory, act as the orders of different works (for example, construction), also, they attract the students from other territories of the Russian Federation and other countries who can be considered as “investors” of the region.

“Universities bring a fairly good income – tax receipts. We are speaking not only about federal but more about local budget. In particular, we mean salary tax in the part which goes to the local budget and, we say, land tax”. (From the interview with a Mass media representative.)

One more role which universities have to assume is – **the role of expert community**.

No doubt, Mass media, authorities and business representatives turn to universities somehow for an expert opinion on respective problems.

“Universities give us experts on lots of problems, it is very important for news-making –universities supply us with an expert opinion and advanced, more extended analysis of the situation, so-called background”. (From the interview with a Mass media representative.)

However, the experts mark that the level of the expertise is not always high, sometimes it isn't simply good enough. They say they can't find the right expert on some urgent questions, the person should be, on the one hand, engaged in researching this certain subject, but on the other hand, he has to be ready to act as an expert and speak in public as well.

“Here is a paradoxical situation: on the one hand, we are educational and scientific center of Russia and it looks as if we couldn't have a lack of experts, but when it comes to some concrete issue, you face big problem”. (From the interview with a business representative.)

Educational, academic **migration** is of great importance for the city.

More than half of the students come from other cities. After graduation some of them settle down in Tomsk, contributing to cultural and multicultural variety of the city. So, it is not surprising that Tomsk is characterized with tolerant atmosphere.

The task, put by the authorities a few years ago, is to create the conditions under which the most talented graduates could stay in the region. We mean here creating comfortable conditions for living, for example, getting education, so-called “creative city”.

“Everything you can touch. Cafés, cafés...they are also infrastructure. I mean it's also good, it's not bad. A café lets an innovator have a rest, have some meal, meet friends relax, work in a Wi-Fi café”. (From the interview with a business representative.)

Unfortunately, some expert don't find Tomsk attractive to creative youth and young businessmen, the city is loosing the competition to our neighbour regions. The reason that is mentioned is provincial atmosphere of the city itself.

“Tomsk, for example, as a place of attraction for creative youth and young businessmen is losing to Novosibirsk, Krasnoyarsk, even Omsk” (From the interview with a business representative.)

Although, there is, undoubtedly, the understanding that innovative development is not possible without business and authorities as well. Yet, the experts’ opinion states that exactly the universities are the major agents of the innovative development of the region.

***The Institutes of the civil society.***

Among the indicators of the civil society we should call Mass media, non-profit societies and elements of socio-cultural environment, which are connected with universities and university complex itself.

Universities and their socio-cultural resources provide a particular base for the activity of the civil society as an integral actor, not identical with the state. Its elements are libraries, university museums, interest clubs and societies, art and jazz cafés, bands, ecological groups, student theatres and so on.

Among Tomsk Mass media are printed edition whose role is steadily decreasing (it is a common Russian trend), state (Tomsk SBRC “Томская ГТРК”) and private (TV-2 “ТБ-2”)

TV channels and numerous Internet resources.

Just a few years ago they said about “Tomsk Media phenomenon” in the Russian journalism. They meant that Tomsk Mass media demonstrated high level of freedom and independence from the authorities, in comparison with the other Russian Mass media at least, casually allowing themselves even sharp criticism of the latter. This, of course, could be possible due to high level of loyalty and respect to Mass media on the part of the regional and municipal authorities. Since recently the situation has been changing, the “territory of freedom” is shrinking, due to not only the change of the regional authorities, but rather due to the national information policy on the whole. It should be noted, Tomsk media maintain fairly close cooperation with the universities, which often appear as “newsmakers”.

Another significant element of the civil society in the region is non-profit societies.

According to the data of the Federal registration service for Tomsk oblast, about 1500 public associations are registered here. If we exclude trade unions, political parties, national-cultural and religious associations, the nominal number of non-profit societies themselves amounts up to 600, and only 30% of them really work.

Despite a rather big number of public associations and high activity of some of them, at present they operate in a few and rather specific niches. The main spheres they are active in are living arrangement of orphaned children, social rehabilitation of children with disabilities, associations of medico-social profile (The Fund Siberia-AIDS- Help “Фонд Сибирь- СПИД- Помощь”). Some socio-political and human rights organizations, which were quite active a couple years ago, had to minimize their activity due to the known political reasons.

Here is the opinion of the representative of the “third element”:

“As for non-profit societies themselves, here there is a clear border distinguishing two types of non-profit organizations. The first, which is loyal to the state,

someway, I call them fake civil society. They include all public chambers of levels, federal and local, being formed now in regions. Various, for example, anti-corruption public organizations, whose profile has become fashionable recently, are an up-to-date feature, also, those organizations that are autonomic and non-profit, indeed, that is, they correspond to their name. But now they are having big problems in this country”.

In view of the above, we cannot accept non-profit organizations as a key element of the civil society on the local level, though, in particular, such organizations are its conventional sign. Universities and their socio-cultural environment seem more stable and culturally integrated. In this sense, preservation of the university environment as the foot of the civil society depends on the status and character of the university complex itself but it may be reduced due to its commercialization.

The interaction of the universities and the institutions of the civil society of Tomsk are of ambiguous character. On the one hand, the universities are strong constituents of the cultural space, as though, using their infrastructure (we mentioned it above), they create specific atmosphere of “the cultural city”: the students of Tomsk universities are recruited as volunteers by non-profit associations, the universities themselves give birth to different public organizations and some projects of non-profit associations are carried out in collaboration with the universities. On the other hand, some experts hold that the universities’ ”third role” is realized not enough; they form some space, limited to their own interests only. Here is an opinion of one of the editors of Tomsk media:

“Well, yes, they are involved, somehow, but I don’t think that their participation is big – they are, indeed, different worlds, to my mind. We haven’t got many examples when the tutors or scientists of Tomsk universities were directly involved or got interested, one way or another, in the city problems, yes, there are some ties, some contracts, but I mean not only financial and economic relations,...I guess, there must appear some leaders among them – public figures who come to the radio and TV to express their views on the city or regional problems. Unfortunately these people are quit rare. Though, if the universities are integrated into local community, there must be some public figures, well-known in the city, who can speak on the local problems”.

Summing up our consideration of Tomsk local community, it is reasonable to return to the beginning of this chapter where we speak about its dimensions: the community of place and the community of interests. And if we consider the city in the term of the community of interests, we can differentiate two cities of Tomsk. The first Tomsk is a university city, advanced, cultural which actively develops and promotes innovations. Rather large groups of population are involved in this space: research workers, tutors and other university staff (and their families), students, representatives of innovative business, “enlightened officials”, freelancers and other creative people. These people form some virtual unity that have common senses and values. Exactly these people are potential drivers of the innovative development of the region, break into the future. It should be also noted that the most part of these people is characterized with a high level of well-being (maybe, except for some students), they have an access to the social lift, so , are involved in the process of social mobility, have big adaptation potential. Innovative development

for them is an opportunity for self-realization; possible risks suggested by this process are only barriers to overcome.

But there exists the other Tomsk, represented by the groups of population not connected with the universities or innovative ambitions of the authorities: workers, large part of state-supported institutions personnel, office workers, representatives of small and medium business, not connected with innovations, pensioners and many others. A significant part of them (except for representatives of business) has low and not regular income, their opportunity of social mobility is restricted, they live “here and now”, focused on their every-day needs. Their welfare depends mostly on social transfers, so, investing financial and other resources in a technical innovation zone or encouraging Hi-Tech production and other unclear things, is, for them, like stealing from their pocket, just wasting money and corruption. All talks about innovations, abused by the authorities and media, annoy them, giving rise to a latent, unarticulated displeasure. Here is a view of one of business representatives involved in innovative development:

“... a friend of mine, an Englishman, lived here, he said “Siberian Oxford”. He saw Siberian Oxford, he saw that part of the city where State university, Polytechnic, he saw all this, yes. He saw the history, and he, perhaps, thought that it was the city. But our city is Irkutsky tract, Cheremoshniki and all others, all of this sort. And they live, somehow, their own life, I would say. No matter that people who work in these universities and study as well, go to Kashtak, Raduzhny and others in the evening. One way or another, they live in two a bit different dimensions”. (The head of an investing company).

Working out the strategy for the innovative development of the region, we may accept that the role of social foundation of this process objectively belongs to the first type of community. But we mustn't ignore the interests of the latter, including the majority population of the city, no saying, of the region. The Russian, Soviet and post Soviet history gives a lot of examples of how such ignoring led to the failure of the reforms, carried out by the authorities.