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SOCIETAL FORMS OF ORGANIZATION OF SCIENCE IN SIBERIA IN 1960s

1

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ABSTRACT

On the basis of both published and unpublished sources this article reconstructs the history of societal forms of organization of science in Siberia in 1960s. This problem is analyzed through the case study of Tomsk Interuniversity Coordination Council. This council was established in 1967 and became the first in its kind societal form of consolidation of scientists and universities. Further on the all-Union association of university rectors was established on its basis. The article examines causes of emergence of Tomsk Interuniversity Coordination Council, the main results of its activities are analyzed. Also, the contribution of this organization in socio-cultural and economic modernization of Soviet society is evaluated. The historical study of Tomsk Interuniversity Coordination Council in 1960s adds to the understanding of timely issues related to the development of science in Russia and particularly in Siberia. Also this work allows to broaden the understanding the role of societal forms of science organization in social life on the macro-regional example, and finally to determine the role of Siberian scientific and educational complex in the global research-educational sphere. The article is meant for all interested in Russian history, history and anthropology of science, and also in Soviet period of Russian history in general.

Keywords: Societal forms of organization of science, Siberia, history of science, anthropology of science

INTRODUCTION

The problem of cooperation between society and science as a social institute is particularly pertinent under contemporary conditions of modernization of science and education, working out goal patterns and prospects of development. Social regulation of science on the part of society includes forging value orientations, strategic priorities, legal norms regulating activities by scientific community, scientific-research organizations and concrete scientists. The necessity of such kind of regulation of society is determined by the fact that science being a social institute fulfills drastically important functions concerning grow of new knowledge and scientific-technical progress etc. That is why the society in general and separate social institutes in particular cannot stand by the problems of scientific development. In this respect the experience of societal forms of organization of science in Siberia during the period, particularly some social organizations, is especially instructive. 2013 saw the 50th anniversary of the Council of rectors of the Tomsk oblast. But this was not the first organization of scientists to be established. During the first days of the Great Patriotic

¹ Written in the framework of RFH grant "Social forms of science organization in Siberia in the 1941-1991-ies: the meaning and role in social, cultural and economic modernization of the Soviet society", the project "Man in a Changing World. Problems of identity and social adaptation in history and at present" (the RF Government grant No. 14.B25.31.0009).

War the Tomsk committee of scientists for assistance to industry, transport and agriculture in wartime on the initiative of the group of scientists from Siberian physical-technical institute headed by V.D. Kuznetsov, was created.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The main sources for this article are the archival materials from the following archival collections: "Tomsk Polytechnic institute", stored by the state archive of the Tomsk oblast. These are protocols of meetings of Scientific Council and Interuniversity of coordination council of Tomsk (1963-1972). The history of councils in documents and materials was reflected in the book "The council of rectors of universities of the Tomsk oblast (1963-2013): history in documents" published to mark the 50th anniversary of the Council of rectors. Some separate aspects that characterize the activity of the Scientific Council and Interuniversity of coordination council of Tomsk (1963-1972) were reflected on the pages of the newspaper Pravda.

The comparative-historical method served as the main methodological tool for our research. It allows to reveal the essence of phenomena at hand by analyzing similarities and differences as well as to draw comparisons in space and time. This method helped us to figure out common and specific in the state educational and science policy in different historical periods. To determine various qualitative and quantitative characteristics of training process in universities the statistical method, the method of historical sociology and biographic method were widely used. Apart from that, contemporary methods of biography, microhistory and oral history were used. Also, chronological, statistical, comparative and retrospection methods were the tools to conduct this research.

RESULTS

On 6 June 1963 the minister of higher and secondary specialized education of RSFSR V.N. Stoletov, following the initiative of rectors of Tomsk universities, signed the decree № 394 "On the creation of Interuniversity coordination council in Tomsk". The main impetus for the initiative on the part of Tomsk community of scientists was the front cover article of the newspaper Pravda of 31 March 1963 which emphasized: "... universities more decisively should concentrate on uniting efforts of related departments of not only one single university but of several universities in order to solve the problems of joint coordination plan"[1]. Shortly before signing the order, the minister took part in the work of the First scientific session of universities and scientific-research institutions of Tomsk and was able to personally observe the high-quality of scientific research of Tomsk scientists.

The main function of the Interuniversity scientific council was the coordination of teaching and economic activities of 6 Tomsk higher education institutions: polytechnic university, construction-engineering, medical, pedagogic institutes, the institute for radio-electronics and electronic equipment. A.A. Vorobyov, doctor of physico-mathematical sciences, the rector of Tomsk Polytechnic university was appointed to the post of the head of the Council. Initially there were 20 members of the Council: rectors and vice-rectors, responsible for organization of research, of Tomsk higher education institutions, head of scientific-research institutes, representatives of regional, city, labor union and party organizations. After the Council was made responsible for teaching and methodical work, vice-rectors for education became members of the Council. A.A. Vorobyov had several deputies, including rector of Tomsk state university A.A. Danilov

(in 1967 he was appointed minister of education of RSFSR, A.P. Bychkov became rector of TSU and Deputy Head of the Council instead of him) and Associate professor of Tomsk Polytechnic institute V.M. Novitsky. From November 1970 I.I. Kalyatsky became the head of the Council, he superseded A.A. Vorobyov as rector of Tomsk polytechnic institute. All the members of the Council worked on the pro-bono basis [2]. The minister of the higher and secondary specialized education V.N. Stoletov set up the following goals in his order:

- close cooperation of scientists in order to solve complex scientific problems collaboratively studied by higher education institutions of the city;
- setting up priorities for the development of Tomsk universities (new educational programs, scientific institutions, strengthening of educational, production and material base, cultural-domestic construction and housing);
- the development of proposals concerning merging of scientific-production institutions and university enterprises that have universal significance [3].

In the first place, the Council occupied itself by the coordination of research in the framework of large complex scientific-research programs that concerned the most pertinent to that day research fields, particularly in geology, chemistry, physics of solid body and semiconductors.

For example, already in December 1963 the Council considered the question of coordination of geological studies which were at that time conducted by the Faculty of geology and geography of Tomsk State university and the Faculty for geological exploration of Tomsk Tomsk polytechnic institute. There were 11 professors, doctors of sciences, 46 associate professors – candidates of sciences, more than 100 lecturers and research fellows, more than 100 postgraduate students at these faculties. However, there was disunity in the organization of scientific-research work. Insufficient attention was paid to the research of petroleum zones in Western Siberia. The Interuniversity scientific council took the decision to unite efforts of scientists from both universities. These efforts were concentrated in the fields of paleontology and stratigraphy of western Siberia (leading researcher- Prof. V.A. Khakhlov, TSU); geological structure of separate areas of the USSR and common factors of extractable sources location (leading researcher – Prof. A.M. Kuz'min, TPI); the geology of the Western Siberian Lowland and the presence of petroleum zones there (leading researcher – Prof. I.V. Lebedev, TPI); engineering geology and hydrogeology (leading researcher- candidate of geological and mineralogical sciences, F.P. Nifontova) [3]. For the coordination of scientific-research work, the Interuniversity geological committee was established. Leading researchers were members of this committee. Throughout the period of 1966-1969, four interuniversity conferences on methods of engineer- geological studies, problems of petroleum gold-bearing zones were held.

The Interuniversity scientific council coordinated research in physics of semiconductors that was conducted in three Tomsk higher education institutions: Tomsk state university, polytechnic institute and institute for radio-electronics and electronic equipment. Among those who worked in this research area there were 4 doctors of sciences – professors, 25 candidates of sciences, approximately 100 research fellows, assistants and engineers and more than 300 postgraduate students [3]. On the initiative of the Council the unified program “Integrated study of atomic-valent semiconductors” was worked out. Within the framework of this program, the following research fields were planned to be developed: theoretical methods of synthesis, crystallization and analysis of semiconductor substances with co-valent and inco-valent connections

(leaders: Prof. A.G. Stromberg, TPI; associate professor G.A. Kataev, TSU); physical and junction phenomena, theory of phenomena in atomic-valent semiconductors (leaders: candidate of physical-mathematical sciences A.P. Vyatkin, SPhTI, associate professor M.A. Krivov, SPhTI); the study of physical basis of the creation of membrane equipment, methods of counting and constructing membrane and solid schemes (leaders: Prof. V.A. Presnov, TSU; candidate of technological sciences A.M. Trubitsyn, TIRiET); studies of physical basis and method of researching and constructing electronic emit systems (leaders: Prof. G.A. Vorobyov, V.A. Sokolov, TPI; candidate of physical-mathematical sciences P.E. Ramazanov, SPhTI).

As a result of these efforts, significant results in the field of physics of semiconductors were produced. For instance, the collective of scientists under the supervision of Prof. V.A. Presnov (TSU) and associate professor A.M. Trubitsyn (TIRiET) new micro-membrane generators and triggers were worked out, the equipment for reactive and micro-membrane flash were created. Collectives under the leadership of Prof. G. A. Vorobyov, Prof. V.A. Sokolov and associate professor P.E. Ramazanov researched electrical luminescence and candoluminescence. Under the supervision of Prof. Vorobyov researchers obtained mine salt glow affected by strong electric field [3].

For the purpose of improving coordination of scientific-research activity of Tomsk universities, Interuniversity scientific council organized permanently active scientific-technological council and interuniversity research seminars on certain issues. For instance, joint seminars of geologists of TPI and TSU were systematically organized. They were dedicated to the problems of paleontology, historical geology, petrography, mineralogy, hydrology, engineer geology. The results of these seminars were published in collections of works [2].

The council paid significant attention to coordination of research in chemistry and biological sciences, engineering geology and hydro-geology. Thanks to the Council, bonds between departments and laboratories of Tomsk universities were significantly strengthened. These bonds concerned not only the abovementioned fields of research, but also radiation physics, radiation biology, information-measuring technology, cybernetics, the field of optimal and adaptive control systems and radio engineering [2]. The interuniversity coordination council in collaboration with the Council for development of production forces attached to the Tomsk regional branch of CPSU (*obkom*) took active part in organization of research and practice conferences, formed juries of competitions of scientific-research and experimental design works. It also organized an array of other events aimed at the development of production forces of the region. Scientists of Tomsk universities also took active part in creation of automatic control systems of Tomsk oblast.

At the center of Council's attention was also the scientific-research work of students. The regional council of young scientists was headed by the research fellow at Tomsk polytechnic institute, future vice-president of Russian Academy of sciences G.A. Mesyats. On council's initiative two All-Union conferences on organization of scientific-research work of students (1967,1972), Interuniversity meeting on the usage of electronic computing machines for training students and a number of regional and city conferences were organized. The council started to hold annual exhibitions of student research projects, competitions for the best student research award, for awards to the best department in terms of supervision of student research [5].

Educational-methodical work represented the second important problem which was to be worked on by the Interuniversity council. In 1963 on the initiative of the council, 16

educational-methodical interuniversity unions on theoretical and general disciplines. In 1970 the number of them reached 18. They were responsible for coordination of activities of congeneric departments of Tomsk universities: departments of history of CPSU, advanced maths, general chemistry, political economy, physical education and sports etc. each methodic union was headed by the most advanced department of one of universities. Among the head of methodic unions were professor of Tomsk state university M.A. Bolshanina (physics), associate professor of TSU M.R. Kuvaev (mathematics) etc. Functions of methodic unions were numerous: holding recurrent methodic seminars; organization of interuniversity methodic chairs; establishment of collectives of author for writing textbooks; organizing interuniversity methodic conferences; discussions of methods of teaching and exchange of experience [3].

The work of methodic unions demonstrate that they played important role in spreading the use of the most effective methods of training. They significantly helped teachers. Public shows of the best works implemented in training process were periodically organized. Young scientists club and regular lectures for improving qualifications of young lecturers were arranged [4].

Under the supervision of the council methodic conferences with participants from all over Siberia and Ural region were organized in Tomsk. These conferences were meant to discuss methods of teaching physics, foreign languages, physical education and sports. For example, on the initiative of the Interuniversity council, the methodic conference on physics with participants from different regions of Siberia and Urals was held in Tomsk in 1964 [2]. The primary part of the agenda was mastering the pedagogic skills of young university lecturers [4].

Organization student admission was also an important part of Council's work. There was a separate committee to deal with this set of issues. The committee was chaired by rector of Tomsk institute for radio-electronics and electronic equipment G.S. Zubarev and then by TPI professor I.I. Kalyatsky. On the proposal by the committee the whole territory of Siberia was divided between higher education institutions of Tomsk. This allowed to arrange pre-entry courses in as many cities and towns as possible. The total number of those who enrolled in this courses was 10-12 thousand of people [6]. In the same way, the work on conducting entry examinations was started to be coordinated. At the local level these exams were conducted with the use of unified programs and examination cards which were approved by educational-methodical unions and interuniversity admissions board. Standard requirements for applicants worked for all Tomsk universities and added to a more well-oriented choice of university [2].

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The third area in the work of the Council was enhancing material basis for education, coordination of construction and economic activities of Tomsk universities [2].

At the beginning of 1960s, the admission rate for Tomsk universities rose sharply. New programs, departments and faculties were opened, however the material basis became obsolete. Universities were located mostly in the buildings that were constructed before the revolution. Old equipment did no suit the needs of conducting up-to-date research and to train qualified specialists. The interuniversity council approved the 5 year construction plan (1966-1970) for universities at its meeting on 25 October 1965. Also, the council sent a memorandum to the Tomsk regional committee of CPSU (*obkom*), at that time headed by E.K. Ligachev. The memorandum requested to petition the government to allocate funds for construction at universities. Already on 2 February 1966 the Council of ministers of the USSR issued a decree "On measures to be taken for improving construction of higher and secondary education institutions and enhancing material basis of construction organizations in Tomsk" according to which in 1967-1970 32,5 million rubles were allocated including 25,7 million for constructions works [2].

The total amount of funds allocated to the construction and enhancing material basis of Tomsk universities during 8th and 9th five-year plan period exceeded 40 million rubles. Each of Tomsk higher education institutions got one-two educational or laboratory buildings. Tomsk state university and Tomsk university for construction secured building for physical education and sports. 12 dormitories were build for students. In 1967 special health center for academic and teaching staff started to operate. In June 1970 interuniversity hospital with 130 beds started to work and in December – the polyclinic department of this hospital was opened. As a result the quality of medical service for students, academic and teaching staff improved. Suitable dwellings for lecturers and academic staff were being built [2].

The council took active part in the formation of the prospective plan for development of Tomsk universities. On the proposal of the Council Tomsk executive committee (*ispolkom*) made a decision to drive factories in the immediate vicinity of universities out of the city. Also the executive committee decreed that housing stock build on targeted funds should be reserved for universities. Pursuant to the decree repair bases for physicist, medical equipment and other facilities were created.

Apart from the abovementioned achievements of the Council, there were also some significant drawbacks. For example, many decisions were failed to be fulfilled because of unwillingness of universities to truly cooperate with each other. This concerned primarily some economic issues. For example, Council's decisions on merging medical institutions (polyclinics, preventative clinics, in-patient facilities) were left unfulfilled, on the establishment of joint stockpiles, on joint health and sport camps etc.

Недостаточно осуществлялась Советом и работа по организации крупных комплексных научно-исследовательских работ в области автоматизации производственных процессов, повышения надежности электрических машин, технологии машиностроения и внедрения в промышленность законченных научно-исследовательских работ.

Work on organization of large complex research projects on automatization of production processes, improving reliability of electric machines, technology of mechanical engineering, introduction finished scientific-research works into the industry, was also carried out in insufficient way [2].

The interuniversity council, as it was noted above, worked on pro bono basis. Current issues were resolved by a sort of a presidium which consisted of chairman and two of his deputies. Meetings were held once a month on a rotation basis at each university [7]. The work of the council was carried out according to plans that were accorded with department for science and higher education of Tomsk regional committee of CPSU (*obkom*), regional committee for higher education and scientific institutions. Plans were approved at Council meetings. In practice, sometimes crucial decision were made jointly by the interuniversity council and Tomsk regional committee of CPSU. Decisions of subjects of primary concern were drafted by spokespersons in advance. At actual meetings they were only discussed and amended [2].

The Council repeatedly submitted proposals to further develop the interuniversity cooperation to party and Soviet organizations as well and to the Ministry of higher and secondary specialized education of RSFSR. Among the most important issues raised by the Council were the construction of university campus in the outskirts of Tomsk, establishment of the interuniversity printing house under the auspices of Tomsk state university publishing house, introduction of locality pay factor for lecturers and research fellows of Siberian universities etc. [7].

The experience of the interuniversity council attracted attention from the part of the Republican committee of education and science employees labor union. On 14 March 1964 Deputy Head of the Committee V.M. Novitsky presented the report on the activities of the Interuniversity scientific council at the meeting of the Republican committee in Moscow, that approved of its activities and recommended to use them as an example in other regions. In March 1967 the activity of the Interuniversity council of Tomsk was discussed at a joint meeting of the board of the Ministry of higher and secondary specialized education and Presidium of the Republican committee of labor union. The activities were highly appreciated and recommended to universities of the republic, regional labor union committees, as pattern to follow. Such kind of councils were established in other university cities of RSFSR, Novosibirsk, Omsk, Ivanovo. Would-be heads of such kind of councils from other cities came to Tomsk to get first-hand experience. All the abovementioned facts speak for widespread acknowledgement of a form of coordination of universities that was developed in Tomsk [2].

The reformed Interuniversity coordination council of Tomsk gained official rights when pursuant to the Decree of the Central Committee of CPSU (18 July 1972 № 535) “On measures to be taken for further improvement of higher education in the country” the system of councils of rectors was started to be established. On 29 December the minister of higher and secondary specialized education of USSR V.P. Elyutin issued the Order № 926 which approved the Statement on Council of rectors of higher education institutions. According to this document, in all large university centers of the country for the purposes of “coordination of universities, generalization and spreading positive experience in organization of training process, ideological, scientific-research work, professional development of lecturers” councils of rectors of higher education institutions were established [2].

CONCLUSION

The Interuniversity scientific (coordination) council constitutes an interesting case as a first in its kind social-state organization that coordinated activities of Tomsk universities in scientific, educational-methodical and economic spheres. Close cooperation with state and party organizations, labor unions of state, regional and municipal level served

as an important factor of progressive activity of the council. This cooperation also contributed to realization of scientific projects within shorter time periods. Despite all shortcomings to activities of the council, its experience was used by the top layers of power as pattern for other university centers of Russia.

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