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## Student Clubs in Siberia at the beginning of the XX century (Adapted from Materials of the Journal «Siberian Student»: 1914–1916)

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### Abstract

This paper is devoted to the research of activity features of the student clubs existing in the territory of Tomsk at the beginning of the last century, conducted on the basis of materials of sketches and articles published in the popular periodical of the beginning of the 20th century – «the Siberian Student». Student clubs were often considered in terms of the following thematic blocks:

- a parenthesis with the indication of concrete date or year of club establishment;
- the short description of its activity from indications of events, significant for it, and important dates of functioning up to date of the publication of this or that material;
- the description of achievements, results of the youth organization activity, a positive role in the creative development and association of students;
- emphasis of attention of reader's audience on daily and (or) most current and serious problems which concrete clubs or student clubs in general faced;
- the recommendations of authors about the solution of major problems in the organization and activity of the relevant student's organizations.

**Keywords:** Siberia, «The Siberian Student», higher educational institutions, Tomsk University, Tomsk institute of technology, students, youth, student clubs.

### 1. Introduction

At the beginning of the 20th century there were many clubs and unions in Tomsk – the city where the first higher educational institutions of Siberia have been established. An essential part of

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them has been established at higher education institutions, and some – at the public and charitable organizations.

The magazine «Siberian Student» was at that time a certain "voicer" of students' thoughts and moods. It was regularly mentioned about the most popular clubs and youth organizations existing in the territory of Siberia in this periodic publication. According to the number of thematic publications, the most popular among student's youth at the beginning of the XX century were: the engineering club, a photography club, an aero club created at the Tomsk institute of technology; a club of the war victims support, the Siberian and economic clubs organized at the Tomsk University.

## **2. Materials and methods**

The research is based on the analysis of materials published at the beginning of the XX century in the Siberian print media. The reports, sketches and articles devoted to the activity of student clubs and unions and published in the popular youth magazine - "The Siberian student" issued from 1914 to 1916 were mainly discussed.

The research was conducted by means of a method of the content analysis by means of which the reports, sketches and articles devoted to the student clubs activity and published on pages of the Siberian press at the beginning of the XX century were studied; the historical and system approach which has allowed to reveal interrelations of various historical events and facts and also to systematize the established data; a narrative method by means of which the elicited facts and events are stated in a consecutive order.

## **3. Discussion**

The activity description of Siberian student clubs functioning at the beginning of the XX century was represented in various historical sources, including the documents of the State archive of the Tomsk region (SATR) and also in the magazine «Siberian Student» published regularly from 1914 to 1916 (Belov, 1914; In a club..., 1915; Zinstein, 1914; Club..., 1914; Mirov, 1915; Petrovich, 1915; Student's..., 1914; Economic..., 1914; Enge, 1914).

These sources contain data on dates of student clubs' organization, their main activities with the description of significant events, achievements and results of work and also major problems which the management and members of given youth organizations faced.

While working on this article the authors used materials of some other periodicals of the studied period in which separate events in activity of clubs were considered, or announcements on behalf of their members were published: "The Siberian life", "The Omsk bulletin", "Morning of Siberia", etc. (Siberian..., 1908; Morning..., 1916; Omsk..., 1912).

Besides historical sources authors studied the scientific works which were published in the Soviet, Post-Soviet and modern periods devoted to the questions connected with the activity of the first Siberian higher education institutions at a turn of before last and last centuries. However in works of this type the activity of student clubs if it was mentioned, then it was done briefly – among the numerous other aspects connected with life and study of the Siberian student's youth at that time (Zaychenko, 1960; History..., 1975; Professors..., 1996; Lozovsky, 1971; Kuzminova, 2005; Vermeer, Van Der Ven, 2003; Dudgeon, 1982; Tolmacheva et al., 2017; Ustinova, Skifskaya, 2017).

## **4. Results**

The Siberian club was rendered as one of the most popular youth organizations functioning in the territory of Tomsk at the beginning of the last century. The reports, articles and notes devoted to the activity of this student's organization were regularly published on pages of Tomsk periodicals (Mirov, 1915: 63-66; Zinstein, 1914: 57-66).

The complex study of Siberia in all of its aspects, including historical, ethnographic, economic and cultural features was the key purpose of the Siberian club. As I. Zinstein paid attention in his report: "The urgent need of association of Siberian students for scientific studying of Siberia in all directions, scientific clarification of real needs of the country and ways of their implementation has become actual and the most important" (Zinstein, 1914: 59).

It is specified in the article that the Siberian studentship organized the "Siberian Club of Tomsk Students" at the beginning of 1907 (the contracted and often used name – the Siberian club). However this youth organization has found the legal status only by the end of 1908.

At the same time initially opening of numerous sections which would specialize in the solution of versatile questions was planned by the club activity, including: rogue classes, colonial policy, a labor question, national education, ethnographic, geographical, archaeological, historical, financial, commerce and industry, agricultural, territorial, classes of the Siberian bibliography, municipal economy and management, etc. (Zinstejn, 1914: 61).

However not all plans managed to be realized. As it was noted in one of issues of "The Siberian student", only a few classes were actually organized among which: research into the topic of unemployment in Siberia classes and also studying of economic life of Siberia (1909) under the leadership of Professor M.I. Bogolepova. Since 1910 two more sections under the leadership of professor N.Ya. Novombergsky have been created: regarding territorial and resettlement problems (Zinstejn, 1914: 61-62).

Further in I. Zinstejn's article there was a list of numerous difficulties and problems which this organization faced. Authors would mention some of such statements:

- "1911 comes – when all student's organizations have stopped their activity, thanks to the known ministerial circular, the serious crisis appears also in the club life";
- "The Siberian club was directed only by few companions supporting its existence";
- "Although much of efforts ... was not carried out, the first steps are taken, ... our duty is to continue activity", etc.

The significance of the Siberian club occupation, despite all difficulties and problems was repeatedly emphasized throughout of all article written by I. Zinshtejn, the strong patriotic epigraph which has ended the narration serving long time as the motto of the popular periodical at the beginning of the XIX century of "National reports" based by the famous diplomat, the traveler and the writer – P.P. Svinyin:

«God appeals to love the Homeland!

And to appreciate the Homeland is the nobility, the admirableness and duty" (Svinyin, 1904: 218-219; Zinstejn, 1914: 66).

One more popular club, organized at the Tomsk University, was possible to be recognized as the economic club. It was founded in 1909. Priority tasks of this student's organization are mentioned below:

- self-education by means of a research of political and economic problems;
- the study of the theory of political economy in historical aspect considering features of economic life development.

The main activities of a club were: making reports, thematic papers, its reading and discussion at special meetings.

As appears from materials of the Tomsk student press at the beginning of the 20th century, the head of this organization was the professor M.N. Sobolev from the moment of an economic club organization up to 1911 (Economic..., 1914: 73-74; Petrovich, 1915: 59-62).

It is necessary to notice that in 1911 the club has temporarily finished its activity, and in 1914 it restored its activity. On March 15, 1914 the administrative meeting was held and the board of members an economic club was elected circle. Since this period the board members of this organization became: M.A. Barushkin, N.I. Samoylovich, V.N. Lavrov, N.S. Yurtsovsky and V.V. Kalugin. As candidates for board members have been claimed: A.I. Bakin and S.M. Polushkin. Since the same period Professor P.I. Lyashchenko became the leader of the club. 43 members of an economic club have been registered in 1914 (Economic..., 1914: 73-74; Petrovich, 1915: 59-62).

It should be added that in September, 1914 the charter of one more youth organization – a club of the war victims' support was accepted at the Tomsk University. The special committee of a club was conditionally divided into several sections, responsible for the separate fields of work: section on project finance sourcing and on "intercourse" (that is, to building relations) with other organizations; on inspection and studying of financial situation of families of wounded and reserved; on supporting the necessary help to displaced persons; pedagogical; medical and judicial sections.

The club throughout all time of the existence was engaged in active charity, supported soldiers and their families (Pivovarova, Zubareva, 2017). For example, in "The Siberian student" it was reported that the section on project finance sourcing has organized a charitable performance in cinema "New" and cleared a profit of 258 rubles 63 kopeks. Proceeds have been allocated to the

categories of citizens mentioned above. Also other numerous charity events have been held and widely covered in the Siberian print media (In a club..., 1915: 57-60).

The technical club opened in 1909 at the Tomsk institute of technology was not less popular student's organization operating in the territory of Tomsk at the beginning of the 20th century. As key tasks of the youth organization have been designated:

- self-education and self-development in technical field of knowledge;
- empowerment of more detailed and broad studying of engineering sciences;
- training of students to individual research work;
- financial support to extremely needing members of a technical club;
- the development of amateur activity of students in the technical sphere of knowledge (Enge, 1914: 67).

Reading reports, papers and messages; demonstration of the equipment, devices and experiences; organization and holding trips and excursions; the commercial activity directed to increase financial means of the club; the organization and arrangement of reading room, library, museum and other institutions in compliance with the purposes of a technical club; provision of summer practice to members of the organization; the arrangement of competitions with appointment and issue bonuses to the best of members of a club; edition of the best student's works and also other original and translated works of technical orientation; sale of books and guides, scientific literature in the field of technical science; holding exhibitions of drawings and projects; organization of the plants inspection, etc were distinguished as the main directions of activity.

The analysis of the print media of the beginning of the XX century has allowed authors to reveal key stages and important dates of functioning of this student's organization (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Key stages and events in activity of the student technical club created at the Tomsk institute of technology (Enge, 1914: 69-70).

The main stages	Event in the club activity
1909	Establishment
	Confirmation of a foundation, definition of main objectives and tasks
1910	The organization of engineering section
	Adoption of the new charter
1911 to 1.09.1912	Formation of archeological section
	Allocation of chemical section
	Holding of a big summer excursion
	Opening of a shop by club's members
From 1.09.1912 to 1.01.1914	Holding a big summer excursion
	Organization and holding of the exhibition
	Change of the charter
	Commercial activity expansion

Besides the description of key stages of activity, the features characterising the current situation and achievements of a student technical club from the moment of its establishment up to date of the publication of the corresponding material in the magazine (Table 2) were also published in "The Siberian student".

**Table 2.** Some indicators of the state, activities and achievements of the students' technical club, established at the Tomsk Technological Institute in the period from 1909 to 1914 (Engel, 1914: 69-70).

No.	Period	Number of club members	Number of reports	Number of books in the library	Number of magazines in the reading room	Cash cycle of the club	Expences for the library
1.	1909	122	12	111	15	157 rubles 55 kopecks	26 rubles 71 kopecks
2.	1910	116	5	199	24	294 rubles 49 kopecks	74 rubles 31 kopecks
3.	from 1911 to 1.09.1912	202	13	330	31	6578 rubles 7 kopecks	96 rubles 12 kopecks
4.	from 1.09.1912 to 1.01.1914	173	18	680	45	14989 rubles 89 kopecks	229 rubles 42 kopecks

Based on the indicators shown in Table 2, the activities of the students' technical club as a whole can be considered as successful, despite the occasional problems of material equipment and financing. The number of books in the club library for this period increased more than 6 times, and the number of magazines in the reading room tripled. Cash cycle of funds grew significantly: from 157 rubles 55 kopecks up to 14,989 rubles 89 kopecks, that is, more than 96 times.

In 1909, at the Tomsk Technological Institute, a photo club was created, which aroused a special interest among students. In one of the articles published in the "Siberian student", significant peaks of the development and functioning of the photo club were considered through the prism of its material support. The publication indicated the following significant dates for the development of the club:

- from 1909 to 1910 it was the placement and functioning of a photo club in the basement of the chemical building of the Tomsk Technological Institute, where, with the permission and support of the university management, a special dark room and a darkening laboratory with the purpose of working with photographic paper were organized and equipped by the members of the club;

- 1911 the photo club got a separate room on the first floor of the chemical building of the Tomsk Technological Institute;

- by 1914, there were already at the disposal of the club: a special room intended for working with photographic paper, a dark room, two dark laboratories, a separate light laboratory, a room for drying fingerprints, etc. Laboratories of the club were already equipped with gas, water, electricity, the necessary set of "accessories for photographic research" and apparatus (Belov, 1914: 69-70).

The following key objectives and tasks of the photo club were distinguished:

- the promotion of the study of Siberia through photographic documentation of its life;
- obtaining the theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the photographic work;
- filling gaps in teaching the photography at the Tomsk Technological Institute;
- facilitating the club members the "earning a living" by performing the private orders on the basis of acquired knowledge and skills (including reproductions and enlargement of photo images) (Belov, 1914: 77).

There were the main activities and those implemented on the club basis:

- Reading and listening to the lectures and speeches of specialists in photographic work;
- (Participation in practical experiments in specially designated laboratories (toning of photographs, enlargement of images, classes on reproduction, etc.);

- Holding of exhibitions of photographic works;

- Participation in photographic competitions (for example, a contest entitled "The Life of the Institute" with three established awards in nominations: the best photographing, originality, vitality of the plotting);

- Conducting the general administrative meetings;



- Organization of scientific meetings and so-called "comradely conversations" (within the framework of these events, abstracts and reports on photographic subjects were read, camera models, photographic processes, and the results of photographic activity were demonstrated);
- Fulfillment of private orders for photographic work;
- The organization of work and the use of its own library, which contained a large information base on the topics under study, including also periodicals such as "Bulletin of Photography", "Bulletin of the Odessa Photographic Society", "Photographic Sheet", "Photographic News" and etc. among other publications.

By the time of publication of the article published in the "Siberian student" in 1914, the photo club consisted of 64 members, three of which were honorary members of the mentioned organization: Professor Ya.I. Mikhaylenko, R.T. Tyumentsev and B.V. Nedtsvetsky. Professor Mikhailenko was the chairman of the photo club for all time of its existence. The staff of the club was divided into three groups: professors – 3 people; laboratory assistants and teachers who did not have the status of professors - 2 people; students - 59 people (Belov, 1914: 76).

As it was mentioned in the article, the activity of the photo club increased every year in the volume and number of directions, which was confirmed by specific figures (Table 3).

**Table 3.** Indicators of the activities of the photo club established at the Tomsk Technological Institute (Belov, 1914: 77)

Indicators	Years	
	1910	1913
Number of members, people	38	64
Incoming, rubles	269	526
Expense, rubles	257	466
Purchased inventory for the amount of, rubles	164	181
Spent on the purchase of supplies for the photographic work, rubles, including:	70	247
Reactives, rubles	28	84
Paper, rubles	42	106
Photographic plates rubles	-	57

As A. Belov pointed out in his review, the laboratories of the photo club were never empty and were open from morning till late in the evening. In addition, they were often crowded with visitors. Often it was necessary to conduct long lines of students who expressed a desire to work with reproductive magnification devices (Belov, 1914: 77).

Among other successes, the high popularity and attendance of exhibitions organized by the forces and members of the Tomsk photo club were especially mentioned. In the paper of A. Belov, information is provided that only at the first exhibition of this student' organization more than 1,500 visits were officially registered. The second exhibition, in comparison with the first one, was even more equipped with various exhibits. Also, it was distinguished by a great variety of processing of papers and photographic plates, that is why people wishing to attend the event did not decrease, but, on the contrary, they only increased (Belov, 1914: 78).

Also the aero club, founded at the Tomsk Technological Institute in 1910 enjoyed the great popularity among Siberian student youth. As a key goal of the work of this student organization, it was stated the increasing of students' knowledge in the aviation field. Among the key work areas and activities implemented within the club, there were:

- lectures and reports on aviation;
- the organization and participation in exhibitions of models of flying machines;
- attempts to assemble an airplane by the members of the club;
- collection of funds for the functioning and development of the mentioned organization, including those through the organization of students' evenings and screenings of cinematography;
- organization of work and use of a library containing the literature on aviation issues, etc.

Among the successes and achievements of the aero club in the magazine there were indicated:

- acquisition of its own airplane in 1913;
- conducting several flights on an airplane;
- high attendance of speeches and reports on aviation subjects, which reading was more than 200 people often attended by (Students' ..., 1914: 77-78).

However, the successful club work had undergone serious failures over time. As the author of one of the articles, published under the pseudonym "Fail-aviator", noted in the "Siberian student", at one time the period came when the members of the club stopped flights because of the airplane failure. "There is an airplane and we would only fly, but, it is a small obstacle. One wing is broken, and no one wants to fix it, and we sit by the sea and wait for the weather ... it is unknown what will happen next," wrote "Fail-Aviator" in his note (Students' ..., 1914: 78).

Besides articles describing the purposes, tasks and important events in the activity of concrete student clubs, individual sketches and notes describing the general characteristic of the youth organizations position were also quite often published on pages of "The Siberian student". One of typical statements occurs in the article written by B. Yeniseiskiy where the following lines are given:

"The studentship experienced so heavy loss of strength that even scientific clubs began to suffer anemia. There was no wish either work, nor to think, it was so dark around, was so heavy, disturbing in soul. The spirit of ideological proximity and support has been expelled from various organizations" (Yeniseiskiy, 1915: 35).

## 5. Conclusion

Summing up the result, it is possible to note that the articles published at the beginning of the 20th century in «The Siberian Student», in whole or in part devoted to student clubs' activity more often contained criticism of their current situation, complaint to the shortage of material benefits, the equipment and facilities.

Nevertheless, the significant mission, noble purposes and tasks formulated initially by organizers of clubs and their members were also emphasized almost in all articles of this thematic series. As a rule, authors of materials appealed student's youth not to lose courage, and, despite all difficulties and problems, to continue to study the native land, to be engaged in creative and scientific activity for the sake of the Homeland, public wellbeing and prosperity.

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