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## FORMATION OF PARADIGMATIC THEORY OF REGIONAL ECONOMY

*This paper reviews the evolution of scientific ideas about the regional economy as an independent direction of economic knowledge. The growing interest of scientists, university lecturers and specialists to the regional economy is noticed.*

*The authors pay special attention to the origins of the regional economy, the contribution of Russian scientists to the disclosure of the content and nature of economic regionalization of the country as well as highlight the role of Soviet geographers and economists in developing the theory of clusters and the study of challenges to the rational distribution of production forces. It is emphasized that the new scientific discipline — regional economy — was born in the acute scientific discussions between Soviet geographers and economists, particularly regarding the subject of investigation.*

*The conclusion is substantiated that so far in economic science four major views on the subject of understanding and interpretation of the regional economy were formed.*

*The authors pay attention to the fact that at present there is a further extension of the subject of the regional economy, mainly over the border of the material space and location of productive forces.*

*The paper concludes that the formation of a modern paradigm of regional economy should be based on several basic principles, among which are the following ones: consideration of the regional economy as an evolving complex structural discipline; territoriality as a dominant feature of any research in the regional economy; the imperative of any study that claims to belong to a regional economy is not only to establish general patterns of development and organization of economic life in the territory, but also the identification of its regional (local) specific.*

**Keywords:** regional economy, economy of region, economic geography, region, economic regionalization, productive forces placement, spatial development, regional development

The economy of region is an important branch of modern economy, which is developing its traditional area of study to the sections of laws of formation and development of regional socio-economic systems of different size and type, location of production and distribution, created and accumulated wealth of the country. The interest in the regional economy and the educational processes of economic and other universities in the country markedly increased.

No matter how great was the desire to start this paper with an analysis of just the current state of the theoretical aspects of the regional economy, it seems necessary to introduce a brief historical review of its origin and formation.

First, the judgments and modes of previous scientific understanding of the regional economy that emerged in the late Soviet period are preserved up to this day, and their track on modern interpretations of definitions is very noticeable. And this track does not always fit into the emerging market reality.

Second, Russia has inherited a regional system that has developed during the Soviet period, in fact, in another state, the inertia of which proved to be

extremely high. On the way to create a modern and efficient management of regional development, archaic territorial structure of the country became a serious barrier.

Third, the regional economy in the scientific community now remains one of the few disciplines exploring theoretical and applied problems of productive forces placement, which have traditionally been studied by Soviet science.

A new understanding of the nature of the productive forces, theoretical understanding of space, its arrangement in the interest of development inevitably leads to a change in theory of location of production, which remains the core of the regional economy.

### Sources of origin of the regional economy

Taking into account that each scientific discipline and each research area arise in close connection with the practical needs and demands of the society, this emergence of regional economy at the time it was initiated by the need for practical solutions of complex problems of economic development and settlement of the vast Russian space, increase the impact

of the total capacity of the state, economic zoning of the country, regional development, rational distribution of productive forces, establishment of effective territorial-industrial clusters etc.

Many scientific ideas, problems and traditions of regional studies in Russia have been formulated and developed back in the pre-revolutionary period. First, we should highlight the studies by Russian scientists on the disclosure of the content and nature of economic regionalization of the country.

First, the region was reviewed as an integral territory (space, area, belt etc.), exactly marked on the map and selected on a specific set of (unique) inter-related features and phenomena, having an inner unity of its constituent components and different from adjacent areas on the same grounds.

Second, the process of zoning seeking to divide the state into separate parts on the basis of common general geographic, social, cultural, economic and other ethnodemographic features and processes at this stage of history, solved cognitive tasks, because it allowed to go deeply into the territory of this vast country like Russia.

Third, the process of zoning had some definitive practical importance, as it was intended to have a selection of complete internal unity of the economic field areas (territories), within which any regulatory administrative and economic activities could be carried out.

The nature of zoning process has been deeply investigated and described in works by K. I. Arseniev, P. P. Semyonov-Tyan-Shansky, D. I. Mendeleev, A. F. Fortunatov, D. I. Richter, A. N. Chelintsev and other scientists. They have partially discovered the significance of economic regionalization for the scientific knowledge of the economic life of a vast country.

The first major all-Russian scientific center for regional studies was the Commission on the study of natural productive forces (KEPS), established in 1915 by the member of the Academy of Sciences V. I. Vernadsky.

In the years of socialist construction, essentially meaningful characteristics of the area and economic regionalization were investigated in the context of the methodology of the territorial division of labor, development planning and distribution of productive forces [17, 19, 31, 45, 47].

Main directions of regional studies (at that time — «territorial studies») in the USSR were associated with the identification of radical shifts in the

distribution of productive forces (movement to the East and North), the nature of the economic rationale for the new zoning, consideration of various aspects of the problem factors of the location of production as a whole and its individual branches, development programs of large territorial-industrial clusters formation, mainly oriented on the development of natural resources and creation of methodical principles of territorial planning and management [43, 44].

The leading organization for applied regional scientific research since 1930 is the Council for the Study of Productive Forces (CSPF).

A major contribution to the development of the theory of economic regionalization, formation of clusters, the study of challenges to the rational distribution of productive forces, territorial division of labor and integrated development of areas of our country was made by the Soviet economic geographers, among them — N. N. Baranskiy, N. N. Kolosovsky, Yu. G. Saushkin, L. L. Nikitin, G. N. Cherdantsev, V. M. Chetyrkin, A. T. Khrushchev, M. D. Sharygin and others, as well as such well-known economists: I. G. Alexandrov, G. M. Krzhyzhanovskiy, N. N. Nekrasov, P. M. Alampiev, V. F. Vasyutin, Y. D. Feigin, A. E. Probst, V. F. Pavlenko, L. A. Kozlov, A. G. Granberg, B. M. Shtulberg, V. P. Mozhin, M. K. Bandman, R. I. Schnieper etc.

The study of challenges to the location of production and specific manifestations of economic processes in the territorial aspect was carried out in the USSR under the determining influence of state structures and the dominant ideology.

Economic regionalization (same as zoning or zone division) is understood as a result of productive forces placement which was treated as an opportunity to build giant territorial production complexes and huge industrial complexes in certain areas, it was issued as an essential advantage of the socialist mode of production [61].

Regional development, which means fixation of the territorial diversity, strengthening of regional and local identity, original indigenous technologies and original traditions of regional communities, was not conforming to the laws of the operation of command centralized economy.

And the term «region» itself, along with the widespread term «area», became a part of the scientific vocabulary of geographers and economists since the early 1970s.

Social sciences in the USSR, including economics and economic geography, have been developed

almost independently from the achievements of foreign scientific ideas.

Major works by I. Tyunen, A. Weber, A. Lesch, W. Yzard (W. Ayzard), P. Hagget, H. Bos translated at different times into Russian language had no significant effect on the theoretical views of Soviet scientists in the field of production location and development of areas [4, 8, 11, 20, 30, 60, 63].

Popular theories of western regional science, theories of production location, methods of economic analysis and economic zoning, theory of growth poles and polarized development, theory of long waves and production cycles, concepts of urban development were severely criticized from the standpoint of the Marxist-Leninist ideology, and the absolute superiority of the Soviet practice of distribution of productive forces was proved [9, 12, 13, 25, 48, 53].

The formation of regional economics abroad as a full-powered element of economic science over time can be attributed to the late 1950s — early 1960s.

The economy of region includes not only the regional economy, which concentrates mainly on the study of the economy of individual regions and on explaining the causes and characteristics of regional problems, but also a vast area of so-called urban economy (urban economics), and has incorporated the theory of interregional trade (interregional trade theory), theories of urban growth (urban growth theory), theory of production location (location theory) [66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72].

Economy of region, being genetically related to economic theory, was intended to provide a «projection» of macroeconomic processes and parameters of a particular national economy on the territorial level, level of regions and cities taking into account the existing inter-linkages and relationships.

But many domestic scientists believed that a vast range of problems such as productive forces placement, spatial aspect of various economic phenomena and processes should be the focus of a new special branch of economics with its subject of study, its target attitudes, goals and methods of investigation.

It was initially defined as spatial/territorial planning, economy of areas and distribution of productive forces, science on the regions, optimal production planning and distribution etc.

Thus, S. A. Nikolaev describes successful formation of economic distribution of productive forces (the study of territorial proportions of production) in a framework of economic science, which, along

with the planning of sectoral rates and proportions of the national economy, is the main content of long-term macro-economic planning [39, 5].

Member of the Academy of Sciences N. N. Nekrasov in several of his works described the birth and formation of a special science on the region, which is «based on a comprehensive economic study of complex totality of productive forces are concentrated in the big zone or a single economic region, to identify options for sustainable use. In addition, each region is considered as an organic part of the national economy» [34, 38].

A new stage of scientific research in the field of distribution of productive forces and the territorial aspects of economic and social development is linked with the emergence and formation of a new scientific discipline on the territory of economics and economic geography — regional economy.

The time of birth of the regional economy in our country can be considered the beginning of the 1970s, since in 1973 proceedings of the conference on the regional economy, which took place in the SOPS [36], have been published as well as a booklet by the member of the Academy of Sciences N. N. Nekrasov [35] and his monograph «The Regional Economy» have been printed [37].

N. N. Nekrasov wrote: «The socialist regional economics as a branch of economics, based on the economic laws of socialism, is studying a set of economic and social factors and phenomena behind the planned formation and development of productive forces and social processes in each region of the country. Rational distribution of productive forces is considered as a basis, the main component of the regional economy» [37, p. 14].

According to N. N. Nekrasov, the main objects of study of the regional economy are economic areas and areas of industry branches distribution, agriculture and transport. Particular importance was attached to the regional policy of the state in the territorial organization of the economy as well as formation of economic systems in the country [32].

#### **In process of scientific debates, a new scientific discipline has arisen — regional economy**

After the publication of works by N. N. Nekrasov, a high-pitched discussion among the specialists involved in research issues on placing productive forces and economic development of economic areas, on the economic geography of the regional economy, on the delimitation of competences and the division of spheres of influence was initiated.

Should regional economy be considered a new branch of economic knowledge or a new direction in other sciences, in particular in economic geography?

We do not aim to thoroughly analyze the controversy over the relationship of economic geography and regional economy, on the division of their competence.

In this paper we attempt to remind of the important stage of birth of the regional economy in sharp polemics with other sciences and to examine the past from the position of present time.

In a number of publications by known geographers, the emergence of regional economy was perceived as a kind of a blow to economic geography, which object of studies was the fact that now many exponents of the ideas of regional economy considered as the object of their research [1, 2, 27, 28].

For example, O.A. Konstantinov wrote in 1974: «Over the past years, our country has made some strenuous efforts to create a new science — the regional economy... Its subject is declared as «economics of areas», distribution of productive forces and territorial division of labor, i.e. what has been engaged in economic geography for a long time» [22, p. 449].

Such well-known research scientists as P.M. Alampiev, M.S. Rosin, B.N. Semevskiy and N.I. Shishkin thought that regional economy as a science substitutes economic geography, and, taking over its functions, creates confusion and uncertainty in the main methodological positions [65, p. 17-18].

Professor A.E. Probst wrote that the most rational way is to consider regional economy a part of economic geography, its most important applied branch [46, p.71-86].

Such well-known research scientists like E.B. Alaev, F.D. Diakonov, E.D. Silaev and S.V. Slavin acknowledged the possibility to consider regional economy an independent science, but did not find significant differences in the object of research of economic geography and regional economy [59].

Other specialists held a similar opinion, they claimed that regional economy in general has not substantiated its object of study and did not give clear ideas about its nature [42]. At the same time, the need for demarcation of economic geography and regional economics was stressed. The same was claimed by V.A. Anuchin: «Economic geography and regional economics are different science, be-

longing to different scientific systems, each having a substantive difference, and integrating them into a unified science does not have any reason» [6, p. 83].

V.A. Krotov concluded that a special science on the economy of individual trade and production complexes of equal rank should exist and develop — regional economy [23, p. 57].

A special place is occupied by a statement of E.B. Alaev, who wrote: «In our country, the research field that studies the problem of distribution of productive forces, has long time ago been spun off from both geography and from economic disciplines, but for various reasons even the conventional name of the of science was not worked out». He proposes to use the term «regional economy» or its shortened version — «regionics» for this science [6, p. 71-74].

Professor A.M. Kolotievsky believed that the regional economy (or more precisely — khoroconomy), which subject of study is the structure and dynamics of regional systems of industrial relations in connection with the development of productive forces and the deployment of regional and territorial aspects of the reproductive process, should be placed between political economy and economic geography [47, p.7].

Speaking about regional economy as an economic science, member of the Academy of Sciences A.M. Rumyantsev stressed that «it is particularly relevant for the solution of new theoretical problems, and therefore for the practice of communist construction... Regional economy not only does not exclude economic and geographical areas, but it makes it more purposeful in the scientific and practical terms and brings economic geography closer to the needs of the economy» [57, p. 52].

Discussions in Soviet science regarding «division of labor» between economic geography and regional economy have not been fruitless. They ran constructively in general, the right of both disciplines to exist was recognized, with many similarities in their object and subject of study. Both sciences were related both in challenges and research methods.

There are no objective obstacles found for cross-enrichment and exchange of results of both fundamental and applied research to develop a better understanding of spatial patterns of economic development.

But first of all, they differ in scope of research: regional economics explores patterns of spatial organization of production on the local, regional and

interregional levels, while economic geography, in addition — analyzes national, sub-national and global levels.

Moreover, economic geography uses in the research general geographic approaches and methods and works closely with the natural history disciplines, while regional economy is building the research in line with frames and methodology of economic sciences.

This was a period of «great reflection», i.e. self-knowledge and understanding of the regional economy as a science in determining its role and place among other sciences.

Regional economy was rapidly formed as an economic science, which aims to explore territorial organization of production, growth and spatial proportions of the national economy, distribution of productive forces, specialization and complex development of regions and regionalization of production, spatial distribution of labor and material resources, improvement of regional production structure in order to improve the efficiency of social production [58].

Sharp debates in the early-mid 1970s largely contributed to increased research activity on the regional economy and replacement of the traditional concept of «area» with the term «region».

In August 1993, Moscow hosted the 33<sup>rd</sup> Congress of the European Association of Regional Science, where a lengthy presentation was made by the member of the Academy of Sciences A.G. Granberg. He critically comprehended the retrospective of regional studies in the USSR, formulated the basic methodological points of modern regional studies, mentioned a departure of the regionalists from the old ideologization of economic analysis, assessed the prospects for regional integration of national research in regional science world, attracted the attention of foreign counterparts to the analysis of the first effects of the collapse of the Soviet Union, formulated and presented the main variations of socio-economic policy at regional level [16, p. 7-27].

After 10 years, A. G. Granberg again returned to the same issues and highlighted new trends in spatial and regional development of the country, noted the intensification of regional studies, the growth in the amount of publications on regionalistics, specially highlighted the systematic broadening and deepening of the research subject that goes beyond «regional economy» or «economic geography» [15, p. 57-81].

Regional economy in the Russian science was finally recognized as a separate and important branch of knowledge.

### **Main modern concepts of the regional economy**

What is now the regional economy studying? What has changed in the definition of the regional economy, after it was formulated by N. N. Nekrasov.

Regional economy as a separate and important branch of knowledge that is recognized in the educational system, the organization of science, the list of dissertation specialties, headings of scientific publications and other spheres, is still interpreted ambiguously.

Basing on the analysis of multiple definitions of the regional economy as proposed by different authors in scientific works and textbooks, we can say that so far four main views (standpoints) on the understanding and treatment of the subject matter of the regional economy were formed.

And this is understandable, because in the early stages of any science, including the regional economy, various researchers were confronting with the same phenomena, processes and categories, using a variety of methods, rules and assumptions and not always describing those, treating and interpreting them the same.

First look at the contents of the subject of regional economy is associated primarily with the conceptions and ideas of the member of Academy of Sciences A.G. Granberg, who sought to open some new perspectives for the development of the regional economy as a science, to suggest a new paradigm in its conceptual, research and applied usage. A.G. Granberg suggested that the regional economy as a geographical (regional) direction in the economy examines not only the characteristics and patterns of distribution of productive forces and the development of regions, but also deals with other regional aspects of economic life, in particular with the investment process, employment, finances, social issues and the level (quality) of life, inter-economic relations and connections, operation mechanism and management of the economy, forms of spatial organization of agriculture and settlement etc. In addition, the regional economy affects all aspects of regional and other disciplines — demography, sociology, culture, ecology, politics etc. Therefore, A. G. Granberg prefers the term «spatial economics» (or the economy of space — space economics), which was based on regional economy [14, p. 32-33]. Then the core of economic science,

according to the idea of the researcher, will be built as a three-pole system: macroeconomics, microeconomics and regional (spatial) economics.

The definition of the subject of the regional economy, as formulated by A. G. Granberg, is supported by the member of the Academy of Sciences P. A. Minakir. He stresses that such an understanding of the regional economy is well-suited for a theoretical description not only of team and hierarchical, but also any complex national economies construction [33, p. 17].

Supporters of a second point of view consider development and distribution of productive forces the basis of regional economy.

The textbook «Regional Economics» edited by Professor T. G. Morozova postulates that «the regional economy is an area of scientific knowledge dedicated to development and distribution of productive forces and socio-economic processes in the country and its regions in close connection with the nature and environmental conditions» [52, p. 11].

The scientists of the Russian Academy of Economics named after G. V. Plekhanov are considering the regional economy a formed branch of science and support the determination of the regional economy as it was formulated by N. N. Nekrasov, but highlighting that «a rational distribution of productive forces is seen as the main component of the regional economy» [51, p. 6]. The content of the subject of regional economy is similarly described by I. A. Rodionova [54, p. 6-7].

A brief definition of the regional economy is given by G. P. Yermoshina and V. Ya. Pozdnyakov: «Regional economics is science and practice of generalizing the ways and methods of control over the productive forces in the region for the benefit of people living in it» [18, p. 9].

The analysis of the conceptual position of this group of scientists in the content of the subject of regional economy gives grounds to assert that the subject of regional economy is being much narrowed. In addition, specific problems of the productive forces are traditionally discussed in economic geography. The authors did not disclose the contents of the modern category of «productive forces».

Some researchers, for example, G. I. Cherkasov, prove that productive forces are a collection of components that are directly involved in the creation of wealth but they do not participate in creation of social and spiritual values [64, p. 6].

In addition, according to the idea of G. I. Cherkasov, productive forces cannot be a part of the

economy, since they represent a set of technological, but not economic relations.

The proponents of «distribution/placement» paradigm of the regional economy do not disclose how and in what forms the basic elements of the productive forces (for example, the means of production) are being «projected» on a particular territory and are being distributed of the territory of a region.

Nobel Prize Laureate in Economics (2008) Paul Krugman relates modern theories of production placement and the analysis of production factors to the field of so-called «new economic geography» [24, p. 121-136; 41, p. 3-31].

Proponents of the third point of view define regional economy as one of the specific economic sciences that studies the laws, principles, factors and problems of development of regions (areas).

An integrated approach to the study of socio-economic processes in the regions, when the region is seen as a holistic specific entity, as a part of the national economy, is characteristic for this methodological setting on the subject of the regional economy [56].

Among the prominent representatives of this scientific group are V. N. Leksin and A. N. Shvetsov, who substantiated the need for careful consideration of all sides of economic life in the territory (region) in their numerous publications. Moreover, they emphasize that «if we do not select the specific «territorial» component, than any studies on regional economy «becomes a commonplace part of the study of the national economy within a district or region» [29, p.76].

G. G. Fetisov and V. P. Oreshin say: «The regional economy in the process of its development expresses the relations between the center and the regions of the country, between the regions themselves, as well as within regions on the production, distribution, exchange and consumption of the product of industrial activity» [62, p. 5].

T. G. Rozanova proves: «The regional economy as a science is studying the economy of a region; to be more precisely, the economy of certain regions: the objective prerequisites for economic development of a region (geographical location, natural resources, population, production capacity), industrial structure, social and living conditions, system of distribution and placement of services, mechanisms of economic management etc.» [64, p. 33].

A. P. Gradov and his colleagues propose to design the regional economy from the standpoint of critical analysis and evaluation of organizational

and economic mechanisms in the region: tax, transfer, loan and investment — ensuring coordination of the interests of federal and regional centers, regional center, administrative districts, municipalities and regional economic entities and business units [50, p. 6].

Research scientists from Kaliningrad consider the most important aspect of the concept of «regional economy» the regions themselves, with their trends and specifics of development which become the main object of economic and political relations in the country [7].

Theoretical and empirical constructions made by this group of scientists who tried to give a holistic view of the mechanisms of formation, development and management of the economy of regions, contributed to the turn of the regional economy to the problems of formation of regional markets for goods and services in terms of a competitive environment, formation and development of entrepreneurship at micro- and meso-levels and other matters [40].

The fourth group of scientists (area studies specialists) is those authors who try to combine the last two abovementioned points of view in one definition. Thus, V.I. Butov and his coauthors of the textbook define the regional economy as one of the branches of economic knowledge, the subject of which is the study of productive forces distribution in the country and the main trends of socio-economic regional development and distribution of branches of the economy, the most important natural economic, demographic and environmental characteristics of the regions, as well as inter-regional, intra- and interstate economic relations [10, p. 6-8].

However, they summarize that regional economy is an area of scientific knowledge about the distribution of productive forces and of the essential foundations of a region's economy.

A similar handling of the subject of regional economy is given by A.V. Andreev and his colleagues: regional economy is an area of scientific knowledge about the location and development of productive forces, economic regionalization of the country and regional economy [5, p. 18].

N.M. Ratner also felt that regional economy, which arose from the theory of productive forces placement, formed into an independent scientific discipline in the economy, scientific and academic discipline that studies the characteristics and patterns of territorial development, distribution of productive forces and spatial dimension of economic development. It examines the economy of regions

and spatial-economic objects at three levels: inter-regional-national, regional and local, and most recently — and also at global cross-country level [49, p. 14].

An important role in regional development and distribution of productive forces is devoted by the authors to separate factors of production and ways of their best usage.

Of course, the differences between these four major views on the essence of modern regional economy should not be overemphasized. They relate mainly to the original understanding of the regional economy, but scientists — area research specialists eventually recognize and emphasize the existence of regional economics as a science.

The regional economy is not meant to be a completely accurate reflection of the socio-economic and other processes and phenomena occurring in space.

Economy of region permanently faces new problems that arise and require solutions. Therefore, the regional economy is in continuous development.

Currently, a further extension of the subject of the regional economy is going on, especially over the border of material production.

The regional economy is actively studying questions of the distribution and concentration of new economic activities in space, as well as the municipal economy, the economy of cities, new forms of innovation-based economy, the problems of agglomeration, environmental management and recreation services from a different angle of view.

In summary, we can conclude that the formation of the regional economy as an independent branch of knowledge has not yet resulted in the creation of a single paradigm.

Regional economy as a scientific discipline was not a product of the inductive generalization of human activity, it was created first through interdisciplinary interactions, accumulation of concepts and theories from other fields of knowledge, and only then began to enrich the own experience, get supplemented with the new ideas, tools, techniques and methods of theoretical and empirical analysis and synthesis.

As T. Kuhn pointed out, the formation of «a paradigm and the emergence on its basis of a more esoteric type of research is a sign of maturity of any scientific discipline» [26, p. 29].

Today its condition is characterized by a variety of theoretical approaches and conceptual installations, emergence and development of new direc-

tions, looking for new premises, principles of universal constants which would contribute to the establishment of clear universally accepted paradigm of the regional economy.

The formation of a modern paradigm of regional economy should be based, in our opinion, on a few basic provisions, the totality of which can be regarded as its conceptual basis:

1. Currently, the regional economy should be seen as a complexly constructed evolving discipline, which subject are theories of production location, patterns and features of different regional social and economic systems in the context of modern theories of regional development, the space of Russia as an object of understanding and apprehension, reflection and arrangement, set of heterogeneous interrelated economic, social, demographic, environmental and other factors, processes, events, objects, which are localized in specific spatial boundaries of cities, municipalities and regions, often established by federal and regional authorities and is an integral part of a unified economic space. From the above-mentioned theses, regional economy can be briefly defined as the science of territorial organization of the economy on the interregional, regional, and intraregional levels.

The proposed definition of the subject of regional economy can involve into its orbit and the area of interest not only corporations and complexes, but also the space of regional and local markets for goods and services, labor, infrastructure service areas, and space of living communities and their systems.

2. Territoriality is the dominant feature of any research in the regional economy, because the territory (region) with its resources and conditions has direct or indirect influence on the development and operation of various facilities which are mastering space, on the intensity of the flow in the region, socio-economic and other processes.

A look at human activity through the prism of a whole block of knowledge about space always poses new challenges to the regional economy, the search for solutions of which stimulates the emergence of new theories and concepts, eventually changing the configuration of the regional economy as a disci-

plinary organized science and its place among the other branches of knowledge. In particular, of great scientific interest is the study on the emergence of new forms of spatial organization of the economy within the region and (or) municipalities, among them — business area, clusters, special economic zones, innovational cities etc.

Right now comes the understanding that systemic transformation of the economic space of the country should be based on the provisions of the paradigm of self-territorial economies, on the principles of the theory of polycentrism, indicating the need for transformation of the centralized economic space into the polycentric network-nodal one.

3. The imperative of any study that claims to belong to the regional economy should be not only the establishment of general patterns of development and organization of economic life in the territory, but also identification of its characteristics, specific, objective assessment of the dynamics of tempos and rhythms, the original definition of the regional (local) peculiarity of real relationships and connections, processes that occur as a result of activities in a particular area, offering a choice of hypotheses and strategies for future development of regional economies in time and space.

Careful study, examination and identification of the role of regional specificity to the economic, institutional and other changes and processes allows formulating and implementing an active regional policy at the subnational level, aimed at: arrangement of the territory, construction of production facilities, development of regional socio-economic infrastructure, most effective usage of all resources in the region, provision of social welfare of citizens, respect to social justice, introduction of program-targeted budgeting, development of mechanisms for public-private partnership, provision of strategic integrated socio-economic development of the region, reflection of the particular historical, natural, political, social and other conditions, way of life, traditions and other elements of the spiritual and cultural mentality and guaranteeing, as a result, a relative independence of the region in the national economy and state structure.

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