

AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF SOVIET SOCIOLOGY

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Sociology is a relatively new academic discipline in the family of social sciences. It is also true that sociology has been considered as a western or American social science phenomenon. However, Sociology, unlike a developed science has no unifying opinions about its nature of the subject, field of study or methods of inquiry.

In light of the above, the contribution to sociology by Russian and Soviet scholars has not been sufficiently examined. The author of this article attempts to understand Soviet sociology in its historical perspectives.

The history of sociology in the Soviet Union goes as far back as to the 18th century and until the beginning of the 20th century this area of study was offered in Russian higher academic institutions not as "sociology", but under philosophy of history, social foundation of economy, introduction to general theory of law, social psychology, etc.

The major stages of the development of sociology in the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union (after 1917) are identified and considered as follows (Simirenko 1967 : 13) :

1. Period of Proto-Sociology (1782 - 1870)
2. Pioneering Period (1870 - 1885)
3. Classical Period (1885 - 1924)
4. Period of Reorganization (1924 - 1956)¹
5. Period of Revival (1956-up to now).

Period of Proto-Sociology

The Tsar Peter the Great, the greatest figure in the development of State as well as science of the Russian Empire, founded in 1724 the Imperial Academy of Science, which was staffed mainly with foreign scholars. This paved the way to the introduction of West European knowledge and practice, which was a catalytic factor in Russia's academic development.

It is considered the year 1782 as the beginning of sociology in Russia when Montesquieu's *The Spirit of Laws* published in Russian and French in Moscow (ibid.).

The activities of institutions, schools of thought and ideological movements in the 19th century contributed much to the development of science and technology in Russia.

The well-known ideological conflict between the Slavophiles (Russian religious authorities and their followers) such as A. S. Khomiakov (1804-1860), I. V. Kireevsky (1806-1856), brothers K. S. Aksakov (1817-1860), I. S. Aksakov (1823-1886), Yu. F. Samarin (1819-1876), K. N. Leontyev (1831-1891), V. S. Salavyev (1853-1900) on the one hand, and the Westernizers (new scientifically and technologically oriented intelligentsia) such as A. I. Herzen (1812-1870), T. N. Granovsky (1813-1855), M. A. Bakunin (1814-1876), N. G. Chernyshevsky (1828-1889), V. G. Belinsky (1811-1848), M. P. Dramanov (1841-1895) on the other hand, was the most important factor in the development of proto-sociology in Russia. Slavophiles, being theologians, were also interested in politics, philosophy, literary criticism, history and so on. They were familiar with the Western intellectual streams, but generally rejected them as inapplicable to the Russian condition. Highly appreciating Russian culture as based on spiritual values in contrast to European culture, based on material values, they analysed in these terms the European and Russian social structure, social changes and other relevant problems.

Westernizers, on the other hand, were more amorphous and greater in number while the most common feature of them was their antipathy towards Slavophiles. They attempted to develop Russian society by co-operating with western science and enlightenment, but generally opposed to the introduction of capitalism into Russia.

Some Westernizers such as Herzen, Belinsky, Bakunin, Chernyshevsky were well-known not only in Russia, but also in the Western world. A. I. Herzen has been compared with Marx and Tocqueville and considered one of the best sociologists of that period (Simirenko 1967: 15-16).

Pioneering Period

The year 1870, when Herzen died, is regarded as the end of proto-sociology period and the beginning of the pioneering period of Russian sociology. The distinction between proto-sociologists depends on the degree of preoccupation with sociological problems. Proto-sociologists were deeply involved in social problems such as rise, development and change of society rather than contemporary sociological problems.

The key figures in the pioneering period interested in sociological problems, were N. Ya. Danilevsky (1822-1885), N. K. Mikhailovsky (1842-1904), Peter L. Lavrov-Mitrov (1823-1900), G. V. Plekhanov (1856-1918), P. A. Kropothkin (1842-1921), etc.

Danilevsky was an eminent Slavophile, while the others were liberals and socialists.² Danilevsky presented his theory of civilizational change in his book "Russia and Europe" (1869). Oswald Spengler has developed a very similar theory in his "The Decline of the West" (1918). Pitirim Sorokin who analyzed Danilevsky's work "Russia and Europe" mentioned that it was "a brilliant treatise on the philosophy of history and cultural sociology" (ibid : 17).

Mikhailevsky and Plekhanov had the greatest impact on the development of Russian sociology in that period. The former was a non-Marxist sociologist identified himself with the populist movement, while the latter renounced Populism and came to be known as "the father of Russian Marxism"³ (Baron 1967: 56-68).

The sociological studies of the pioneers were related to their concern about social condition and social change in contemporary Russia. As A. Simirenko observed their main sociological problems were : relationship of an individual to a group ; formation and destruction of solidarity ; agents of social change ; problem of leadership, and problem of progress (1967 : 17).

Classical Period

The most prominent sociologists of the classical period were M. M. Kovalevsky (1851-1916) , N. I. Kareev (1850-1931), E. De Roberty (1843-1915), M. I. Tugan-Baranovsky (1865-1919), V. I. Lenin (1870-1924), P. Lilienfeld (1829-1903), L. I. Petrazycki (1867-1931).

Unlike the pioneers, the scholars in the classical period except Lenin were university professors. Lenin was a brilliant contributor to the theory of organization (Wolin : 1967), and was a revolutionary, while others were liberals in political and social considerations.

Kovalevsky, for some time a professor in Moscow University, was the best sociologist in this period. After dismissal from the Moscow University on political grounds in 1877,⁴ Kovalevsky widely travelled and worked in Europe and in America ; in 1900 he created the Paris School of Social Sciences. He became the Vice-President of the International Sociological Institute in 1895 and its President in 1907 ; wrote frequently to the "Revue Internationale de Sociologie" (Timasheff 1967:85). Kovalevsky's monumental works "The Economic Growth of Europe up to the Rise of Capitalism ; The Origin of Modern Democracy ; From Immediate to Representative Democracy ; Le Regime Economique de la Russie ; and Russian political Institutions" were written while he was in France.

Kovalevsky in his early works was in the line with A. Comte's ideas of sociology, e.g. sociology was a science of social order and social progress. But later, under the influence of American sociology, he believed that sociology was the science of social organization and social change (ibid : 87).

After the political changes in Russia in 1904-06, Kovalevsky returned to Russia, took an active part in Tsar's government and in academic works, became a professor at the University of St. Petersburg and also a professor in the Department of Economics of the Polytechnical Institute. He was the first in Russia to hold the chair of sociology in the Psycho-Neurological Institute created by prof. Bekhterev in St. Petersburg.

Kovalevsky in his book *Contemporary Sociologists* (1905) gave a comprehensive review of all sociological theories of that day. In volume I of sociology (1910) discussed the scope and methods of sociology ; in volume 2 (*Genetic Sociology or Social Embriology*)-the origin, evolution and development of society.

Unlike contemporary Russian sociologists, Kovalevsky built up his sociological system not on political considerations. But on a thorough study of history of social, political, legal and economic institutions (Timasheff 1967:84).

N. I. Kareev, on the same line with Kovalevsky, studied societies in Western Europe and his book *The Peasants and the Peasant Question in the French Revolution* was based on the same theme.

In 1897, the first text book on sociology in Russian language was published by Kareev, the bibliography of which numbered 880, including 260 of Russian publications (Chagin 1978 : 15).

Tugan-Baranovsky, endeavoured to study the industrial crisis in England, which study was highly valued by Maynard Keynes (Simirenko 1967 : 18).

As mentioned before, Paul Lilienfeld, being a recognized sociologist, became the President of the International Institute of Sociology in 1897.

Referring to the Russian sociology in the second half of the 19th century, P. Sorokin states that the Russian sociology of that period was scarcely behind that of in any other country and Russian sociologists played a prominent role in the development of world sociology (1967 : 45).

The early years of 20th century in Russian history have marked with turbulent situation, which had a great impact on science and technology too. The Russian sociology was not an exception.

On this regards some Soviet sociological researchers today are of the opinion that in the course of 1905 Russian Revolution, national bourgeois sociologists, who were hitherto productive scholars quickly transformed themselves almost to a liberal-moderate conservative power as they were afraid of revolutionary people rather than of Russian Ruling Authority. As a result, a crisis of Russian national bourgeois sociology took place (Chagin 1978 : 9).

However, continuation of sociological studies was not interrupted; and sociology began to be taught under its own name in colleges. In 1901, The Russian Higher School for Social Science, where sociology was one of compulsory subjects, was founded. In 1908, the first sociology department headed by Kovalevsky was opened in the Psycho-Neurological Institute, (Ibid : 23). Sociological studies appeared in different Publications ; Among them special sociological series were published under the title of New Ideas in Sociology (ed. by Kovalevsky, E. De Roberty, etc.) and Sorokin considered it as a sociological journal (Sorokin 1967 : 46-47).

There were number of formal as well as voluntary sociological associations (Chagin 1978 : 23). The section of sociology of the Historical Society was founded at the St. Petersburg University in 1912. The Russian Sociological Society was founded in 1916 and its first president was A. S. Lappo—Danilevsky, and P. Sorokin was the first secretary. The Society for an Objective Study of Human Behaviour was organized by I. Pavlov in 1921 (Sorokin 1967 : 47).

Pitirim A. Sorokin has paid due attention to the development of Russian and Soviet sociology. As the major sociological schools of thought in the early period of the 20th century he gave account of Marxian school, Russian subjective sociology, Petrazycki's psychological sociology, and Russian behaviouristic school. Further, he considered the latter two schools as the most important of them (Sorokin 1967 : 51). In fact, all of these schools formed and developed in the last decades of the 19th century.

1. Marxian School

Marxism, which did not take long time to spread in Russia, had significant impact on Russian society ; and Russian Marxian sociological school as mentioned before was formed at the end of the 19th century.

The founders of this school and their some of important works of sociological perspective were as follows ; G. V. Plekhanov—A Monistic Interpretation of History ; V. I. Lenin—The Development of Capitalism in Russia ; M. Tugan—Baranovsky—Periodical Industrial Crises ; P. Struve—the Destinies of Capitalism in Russia ; Prof. Solntzev—Social Classes.

2. Russian Subjective School

This school was founded, as commonly accepted, by Prof. Peter L. Lavrov-Mitrov. Being a Hegalian philosopher, he developed his dialectical triad of solidarity, individual and progress ; and was of the opinion that critical minded individuals are the agents of social progress (Timasheff 1967 : 122-123). He presented these ideas in major works *Sketches of Critical Philosophy* (1860) and *the Problems of Understanding History* (1898).

Other eminent scholars belonging to this school were M. N. Mikhalovsky, J. Delevsky and E. Kolosov.

Russian subjective sociological school was very close to the psychological sociology of L. Ward (Sorokin 1967 : 48).

The main problems concentrated by this school was the relationship between the individual and society. In contrast to ideas of Marx and Spencer, they emphasized the important function of the individual in social progress. The general ideal was a society where equality and freedom of self-expression prevails (Timasheff 1967 a : 125).

3. Petrazycki's Psychological Sociology

Prof. Petrazycki⁶ in his works such as *A Theory of Law and Ethics* (two volumes) revised fundamentally the existing Principles of logics, of scientific methodology and of psychology and created his own 'emotional psychology'. Petrazycki's sociology was quite different from Western psychological sociology and was based on interpretation of social phenomena, law, ethics, social organization and social progress (Sorokin 1967 : 49). Petrazycki's ideas have greatly influenced the contemporary social sciences.

4. Russian Behaviouristic School

The founders of this school, the well-known Russian behaviourists I. Pavlov and his followers developed their psychological methods to study complex psychological process of animals and people. Later they applied their methods to investigate social phenomena. (Sorokin 1967 : 49-51). Some of the important works of this tradition were Dr. Zeleny's *Sketch of Social Psychology* ; V. Bekhterev's *General Foundation of Reflexology* ; M. N. Lapinsky's *Development of Personality in a Woman* ; V. V. Savitch's *An Attempt of a Behaviouristic Interpretation of a Process of Mental Creative Activity* ; P. Sorokin's *A System of Behaviouristic Sociology* (two volumes); etc.

Apart from the above-mentioned sociological schools, Sorokin highly appreciated the contribution by sociologists to the fields of jurisprudence, political science, economics, social philosophy, philosophy of history and sociological methodology. He also pointed out the major characteristics of Russian sociology of the 20th century in comparison with sociology of 19th century ; thus, sociology in the 20th century was less philosophical and less general ; methods of study were less speculative ; the popularity of the sociological school of "economic interpretation of history" and of the Russian subjective sociology began to decline ; the various currents of sociological thought increased ; and there appeared new sociological schools with new leaders (1967 : 46-54).

Soviet Sociology

The Soviet period of Russian history began after the 1917 Revolution and almost the first decade of Soviet period concludes the classical period of sociology. Further, the Soviet sociology is examined here under the periods of reorganization and revival.

The leading Soviet sociologists G. Osipov and M. Yovchuk stated that concrete sociological studies⁷ became possible in Russia only after the victory of the October Socialist Revolution in 1917 (Osipov and Yovchuk 1967 : 299). However, some western sociologists are very critical about this opinion (Simirenko 1967 ; Labeledz 1967 ; Ferur 1967 ; Fischer 1967).

The Soviet authorities immediately after the Revolution extended a favourable attitude toward contemporary sociology. They began to offer sociology in universities and even tried to introduce it to the secondary schools. But it seems that their attitude toward sociology became negative and they changed their action very drastically in about 1922. According to P. Sorokin the reason for this change was that the Soviet Government realized its previous misunderstanding that sociology and Marxian socialism was about the same. (Sorokin 1967 : 46).

Soviet sociologists are of the opinion that, after the Revolution and the Civil War, most of the sociologists who were against socialism and were interested in the revival of capitalism, took antagonistic position now on the ideological front. Only then the Soviet authorities decided to control bourgeois sociology and create new course of social sciences (Chagin 1978 : 27).

Consequently, sociology was removed from the context of academic life. As practised elsewhere, the chair of sociology established in 1919 at Moscow University, was abolished in 1924 (Labeledz 1967 : 210). Many scholars, emmigrated to the western countries and P. Sorokin who was among them organized and headed the Department of Sociology at Harward University.⁸

Period of Reorganization

Many sociologists, especially European and American, think that Soviet sociology after the mid-twenties, had undergone a severe hardship resulting in a period of decline⁹ (Simirenko 1967 : 19 : Lebedz 1967 : 210). Although we have little access to primary information concerning sociology of the period of reorganization, it is possible to state that sociological studies have continued, mainly with Marxist orientation. The massive social/economic and political reorganization of contemporary Soviet Union undoubtedly called for multifarious sociological studies. The publication of 1926 census of population and the first edition of the Great Soviet Encyclopedia stimulated such activities. According to Osipov and Yovchuk, during the first 20 years of the Soviet history, more than 300 books and pamphlets were published on new social processes (1967 : 299). Among them S. G. Stroumilyn's work on 'The Influence of culture and Education upon The Productive Capacity of Common Labour in the Soviet Union' ; A. I. Todorovsky's 'With A Rifle and Plow' ; S. M. Vasilevsky's 'Methods and Techniques of Social Studies' have constituted interesting studies. (ibid. : 299-300).

However, for about three decades after 1920s, Soviet academic studies suffered from lack of intellectual freedom. On this regards, Osipov and Yovchuk mentioned : "The personality cult of Joseph Stalin slowed down the progressive advancement of concrete social research in some measure" (1967 : 300). It is common belief that this period of Soviet history was a period of isolation not only from the other countries, but also from its own past. This was very pertinent to Soviet social sciences ; and sociology, identified as 'vulgar sociology' was the one to suffer most¹⁰ (Simirenko 1967 : 19). In terms of sociological perspective, the important personalities of this period were J. V. Stalin (1897-1953), L. D. Trotsky (1879-1940), N. I. Bukharin (1888-1938). A number of books and articles written by them bear theoretical significance in terms of Marxian sociology (Simirenko 1967 ; Marcuse 1967 : Heitman 1967 ; Deutsher 1967 ; Morgan 1967). N. I. Bukharin's *Historical Materialism : A System of Sociology* is considered as one of best introductory books on Marxist sociology (Simirenko 1967 : 19).

Period of Revival

The period of revival began in Soviet society at the beginning of 1950s. An appreciable development has taken place also in Soviet sociology. The major task faced by the sociologists in the beginning of this period was the gaining of favour of Government authorities to sociology once regarded as 'vulgar sociology'. This objective was achieved by tying sociology to the programmes and directives of the Soviet Government. As a way of convincing the usefulness of sociology, they described it as a science resting on Marxian

principles, and studying social problems and also recommending practical solutions to such problems (Simirenko 1967 : 21-22). R. Merton and W. Recken in their report on contemporary Soviet sociology in 1962 have paid attention to practical aspects of Soviet sociology : They mentioned, "The Soviet orientation towards empirical social research might be described as 'practical empiricism' : as an effort to obtain just enough systematic information on which to base recommendations for policy and action, with little interest in pursuing, through empirical research, the more theoretical implications of what has been observed" (in Simirenko 1967 : 22).

Soviet sociologists in this period were also concerned about sociological theories and pure researches. In the Fourth World Congress of Sociologists, Academician P. N. Fedoseev stated : "For our sociologists the problem of law of the changes in socio-economic formation in the process of historical development are of foremost importance" (ibid.).

One of the significant events in sociological activities of this period was the creation of Soviet Sociological Association in 1958. Its objectives were :

1. Representation in the International Sociological Association and other organizations of sociologists.
2. Strengthening of ties of Soviet scientists working in the area of sociology and also co-operation with foreign sociologists working in the interest of sociology.
3. Spreading of information in foreign countries on the development of sociology in the U. S. S. R.
4. Facilitate publication of scientific works.
5. Facilitate the development of scientific researches in the area of sociology in the U. S. S. R.
6. Facilitate the exchange of books and bibliographical information between Soviet and foreign scientists working in the area of sociology (Simirenko 1967 : 23).

Soviet sociologists paid attention to Western sociological research methods and techniques ; also widely employed the methods and techniques of mathematics, statistics, and cybernetics. In the Fifth World Congress of Sociologists in Washinton D. C. Soviet sociologists stated : "The scientific determination of the methods and the techniques of research is an important part of social study in Soviet society" (Osipov and Yovchuk 1967 : 302).

Thus, in the course of first decade of this period Soviet sociology acquired its identification in the backdrop of social sciences, and it was necessary for further development.

The directives of the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences in 1963 to its scientists about methodological problems of sciences was an important land mark in Soviet sociology (Simirenko 1967 : 25). As a result of that, the section of social sciences of the Academy of Sciences organized a conference in 1964. The participants of the conference were not only sociologists, but also historians, philosophers, economists, archaeologists, and ethnographers. The paper presented by leading sociologists P. N. Fedoseev and Yu P. Frantsev 'on the Methodological problems' was at the centre of the discussion, because it guided apparently all the scholars on methodological problems. Accordingly, at the end of the conference a seven-points conclusion was made with the emphasis on methodological aspects¹¹ (ibid. : 25-29).

The conference has paved the way to some qualitative and quantitative improvement in Soviet sociology. In 1964, G. Fischer mentioned that there had been some clarification in scholar and official image of Soviet sociology : growth in the number of scholars and institutes actively involved in new sociology, and more publications (Fischer 1967 : 276).

The concern for "practical empiricism" which was a major tendency in previous years has now been reduced, and sociology was no longer associated to that extent with its "visibly useful ends",¹² and sociologists were greatly encouraged to do theoretically oriented studies. Sociology was began to be considered as a serious academic discipline. Osipov and Yovchuk identified the subject matter of sociology as "the perception of social life in its integrity, in its internal integrity and the reciprocity of its phases, relations, and process" (1967 : 298).

A number of significant empirical studies had also been done during the early period of revival, and they were worthy of admiration by western sociologists (Simirenko 1967 : 327). Some of these studies were on the, 'vocational plans and other related problems of secondary school graduates' by the sociologists of Novosibirsk University; 'the new form of labour and daily life of workers' by the Institute of Philosophy of Academy of Sciences ; 'the abolition of difference between mental and manual labour' by the Laboratory of Sociological Studies in Moscow University ; 'the workers attitudes and the effects on them of technological change' by the Laboratory of Sociological Studies of Leningrad University ; 'the rise in the cultural and technical level of the working class' by the Ural University; 'problems related to the youth' by the Institute of Public Opinion of the paper Young Communist League : 'the condition of work and automation' by The Institute of Labour Research in Moscow, etc. The two-volume edition of Sociology in the USSR. (ed. by Osipov 1965) where 16 articles deal with methodological and theoretical problems and 28 - practical (empirical) studies, reveal the state of contemporary sociology in the Soviet Union (Simirenko 1967 : 29-30).

One of the factors that Soviet sociologists point out is the unity of theory and practice and the interdisciplinary approach of Soviet sociology : Sociological research is more concerned with actual life situations rather than with studies under laboratory conditions ; and also it is based on co-operation of scientists and officials of Government, economic, trade-union, co-operative and other organizations. Soviet sociologists also emphasize the joint efforts of sociologists, philosophers, economists, lawyers, statisticians, ethnographers, demographers, psychologists and specialists from other fields, such as mathematics, electronic computation, town planning, physiology, medicine, education and so on (Osipov and Yovchuk 1967 : 303).

The macro problem areas of sociological research were :

1. The alteration of the social structure of society in the process of building Communism.
2. Modification in the character of work.
3. The transfer of socialist state functions to public self-governing organizations.
4. Soviet family life and functions in relation to living space and material and social conditions.
5. The spiritual life of people and the maximum development of personality (ibid. : 304-305).

Researchers find three possible meanings of the terms "sociology" and "sociologists" in the Soviet sociological literature as follows. (Fischer 1967 : 285-288).

1. Marxist-Leninist philosophy or as sometimes it is called, Historical Materialism:¹³ "Marxist sociology employs the theory and method of scientific sociology, *i.e.*, historical materialism, in specific sociological research in order to understand the inner mechanism of social events and the laws of their development, and to analyze specific social situation that arise in the process of social life" (Osipov and Yovchuk 1967: 298). Moreover, for some decades sociology had been included in the field of philosophy and many sociologists have come from philosophical background.¹⁴
2. This is sociological investigation of empirical social research in broad areas of social sciences. This type of studies goes back to 1920s, and was revived after 1950s. For many decades concrete sociological investigation referred to a wide range of social research and not any particular discipline. Soviet sociologists have written that concrete social research provide the foundation for scientific sociology, and not every empirical study can be called sociological (Osipov and Yovchuk 1967: 300).

3. In the third dimension, sociology referred to the work of a separate group of scholars with a distinctive set of sociological theories and methods, this is the meaning which comes closer to the term "sociology" commonly accepted in the West. Osipov has elaborated this dimension as "the subject matter of sociology is only one sphere of human social activity—civic—the subject matter of historical materialism is society as a whole, the interdependence of its various aspects in historical development" (Osipov 1969 : 9). He also mentioned": sociologists study the social structure of society (interclass and intraclass relationships, the social institutions that regulate these relationships), the development and interaction of the system and organizations within society" (ibid. : 20). This kind of sociological research has been growing rapidly in the Soviet Union.

Modern Trends in Soviet Sociology

A remarkable landmark in the development of modern Soviet sociology was the creation of the Institute of Concrete Sociological Research of the Academy of Sciences in 1968.¹⁵ The Institute became the academic and co-ordinating centre of sociologists and was transformed into the Institute of Sociological Research in 1972. Today, this institute has various departments and sections corresponding to numerous research orientations (see appendix).

The Institute of Sociological Research had been assigned the following tasks :

1. Act as the major sociological centre in the USSR.
2. Unite all Soviet sociologists.
3. Improve their professional qualifications
4. Develop relationships with foreign sociologists.
5. Create the branches of the Soviet Sociological Association in the cities of the Soviet Union (Sociological Researches, 1974, No. 1: 6—7).

The journal of The Institute, 'The Sociological Researches' plays a significant role in promoting Soviet sociology. The sections of the first number of the Journal may help understand the nature of it : Theoretical Problems of Sociology: To Meet the Eight World Congress of Sociologists ; Sociological Science and Practice ; Sociological Concepts in Foreign Countries ; Critique of Modern Bourgeois Sociology ; Methods and Techniques of Sociological Research ; Scientific Life and Critique and Bibliography.

There are over forty sociological centres in the system of Academy of Sciences in the USSR. According to the Soviet Sociological Association, there were 293 sociological centres (excluding university centres) in 1971 (Soviet Sociological Association 1976). These sociological centres are attached not only to the academic institutions, but also to various plants, factories, service organizations and political and social organizations of all over the country. Some of them are: Institute of Africa; Institute of World Economy and International Relations ; Institute of System Research ; Institute of U.S.A. and Canada ; Institute of Physical Culture : Higher School of Trade Union Movement; Ministry of Trade ; Ministry of Justice; Ministry of Culture; Television and Radio Centres ; Petroleum Firm in Taskient, etc.

The Soviet Sociological Association, which has a membership in International Sociological Association from 1958, been conducting various activities in relevant spheres. The membership of the Association has been extended to more than 795 collective bodies and 4,750 individuals in the U.S.S.R. (Ryabushkin *et. al* 1982. 1:7). Soviet sociologists take part in many international organizations. They have taken part in World Congress of Sociology from 1958. In 1960s they were involved in the project of International Comparative Investigation of Time Budget with the participation of other sociologists from the countries of Belgium, Bulgaria, Hungary, U.S.A., France, FGR, Czechoslovakia, Jugoslavia, etc. In 1970s a same kind of research on 'automation and working class' has been done with the participation of sociologists from eight capitalist and six socialist countries (Ryabushkin *et. al.* 1982, 2:8). Moreover, Soviet sociologists intensively study, analyse and criticize Western and American sociology.¹⁶

However, the major subject of Soviet sociology has been various aspects of Soviet society ; For example, there have been published more than 1,700 sociological works between 1966-1973 on the problems of social structure of Soviet society (Guide book for Sociologist, ed. Osipov *et al.* 1976:4). There are not any vital aspects of Soviet society which had not been touched upon by Soviet sociologists (*ibid.*:5).

It is worthwhile to pay attention to academic activities of Soviet sociologists today, and in this regard the two-volume work "Soviet Sociology" (ed. by Ryabushkin *et. al.* in 1982) is very informative.

Soviet sociologists continue to work with specialists from different spheres, *eg.* philosophers, economists, historians, anthropologists, mathematicians and staticians, computer personnel, government administrators, social workers, etc. Sociologists are working out theories and methods for social management and social planning, preparing socio-economic index, which would be useful in nation building. They maintain central data-bank of social information and results of multifarious sociological researches. Con-

sequently, they contribute with other specialists very positively to resolution of complexed socio-economic problems. One of such tasks is the study of the futurological aspects of mode of peasant life until year 2000, and they have made some practical recommendations (Ryabushkin et. al. 1982, 1:11).

One of the main aspects of researches is the disappearance of differences between State and cooperative properties. Connected with this point, the other issues are the impact of scientific-technological revolution ; further socialization of labour; mode of living; improvement of material and cultural life of workers, the problems of social cohesion; motivation of workers in terms of material incentives and moral obligations; transformation of work into the foremost demand of life.

In the sphere of social structure, the optimal way of achieving social harmony among various groups, strata, classes and nationalities is the most important issue for the Soviet sociologists (*ibid.*).

In the field of political sociology, Soviet sociologists are interested in socialist democracy, social self-government, nature of international relations and their utilization and ; ways of relaxing international tension.

Significant sociological investigations are also being conducted on mass media, public opinion poll and social problems.

On the basic of successful researches, the important practical recommendations have been made in relations to the problems of family and marriage (*ibid.*).

Soviet sociologists maintain closer contacts with sociologists from the socialist countries and conduct joint studies. One such project is the study of evolution of social structure in socialist countries; social planning and forecasting. (Ryabuskin et. al 1982, 1:15). Moreover, some international research projects, in which Soviet sociologists take part along with sociologists from socialist and capitalist countries are being, conducted on the comparative study of family and marriage, time budget, social development of peasantry, industrial workers, youths and so on (Ryabushkin et. al. 1982, 2:8). Very frequently, sociological seminars, conferences, etc., are being organized in regional, national and international levels in the USSR.

To summarise, as a developing academic discipline, sociology needs to pay attention to its various types and paradigms, one of which is represented by Soviet sociology with features which distinguish it from other traditions of sociology.

In Russia the Period of Proto-Sociology which began at the end of 18th century was followed by the Pioneering Period (1870-1885), the classical Period (1885-1924), the Period of Reorganization (1924-1956), and the Period of Revival (1956-up to now).

In the Russian Empire, sociology held a prominent position in the western academic world. A distinctive contribution has been made to sociology by such scholars as A. S. Khomiakov, A. I. Petrazycki and P. A. Sarokin.

Shortly after the 1917 Revolution, a decline in traditional academic sociology and a reorganization of it took place, although this point has not been commonly accepted.

The revival of Soviet sociology begun in 1950s continues with renewed strength today. The important landmarks of this process has been the creation of the Soviet Sociological Association in 1958 and the Institute of Concrete Sociological Researches of the Academy of Sciences in 1968 (later to become the Institute of Sociological Researches).

The activities of the Institute are well-reflected in its journal "Sociological Researches". The Institute has been assigned the tasks of acting as the major sociological centre in the U.S.S.R.; unite all Soviet sociologists; improve their professional qualifications; and develop relationships with foreign scholars.

Soviet sociologists take part actively in regional and international organizations. The Soviet Sociological Association, being a member of International Sociological Association has actively taken part in the world Congress of Sociologists from 1958.

Sociologists in the U.S.S.R. are involved in researches in almost all the recognized problem areas and their participation has been extended to regional and international research projects.

As a general conclusion it may be stated that sociology is a rapidly, developing discipline in the Soviet Union, and its future depends mostly on the extent of its objectivity and dynamism as well as the scientific methodology, which it pursues.

Appendix.—The Departments and the Sections of the Institute of Sociological Researches of Academy of Sciences in Moscow.

The Departments and the Sections of the Institute :

1. Department of Social Structure of Soviet Society.
 - 1.1. Section of Social Structure of Working Class.
 - 1.2. Section of Social Problems of Youths and Education.
 - 1.3. Section of Rural Social Development.
 - 1.4. Problem Committee of Sociological Aspects of Ethnic Relations.
2. Department of Social Problems of Labour Collectives.
 - 2.1. Section of Social Problems of Labour and Workers Competition.
 - 2.2. Section of Social Planning and Social Development of Industrial Collectives.
 - 2.3. Section of Planning of Social Development of Scientific Collectives.
3. Department of Forecast of Social Problems
 - 3.1. Section of Forecast of Mode of Life.
 - 3.2. Section of Social Problems of Migration.
 - 3.3. Section of Problems of Non-Working Time.
 - 3.4. Section of Social Problems of Family and Mode of Life.
4. Department of Sociological Investigation in Ideological Process.
 - 4.1. Section of Sociological Investigation of Problems in Culture and Upbringing.
 - 4.2. Section of Sociological Investigation in Work of Social Organizations.
5. Department of Marxist-Leninist Sociology and Critique of Bourgeois Sociology.
 - 5.1. Section of Critique of Bourgeois Sociology
 - 5.2. Committee of History of Marxist-Leninist Sociology.
6. Department of Mathematical Methods and Computer Application.
 - 6.1. Section of Application of Mathematical Methods in Sociology.
 - 6.2. Laboratory of Technology and Data Processing.
 - 6.3. Section of Methods and Techniques of Sociological Investigation.
7. Department of Sociological Information.
8. National Centre for the Study of Public Opinion.

NOTES

1. A. Simirenko identified this stage as the Period of Decline. (Simirenko 1967).
2. The upper level of Russian society during the second half of the 19th century was consisted of (1) the ruling bureaucracy supported by landed gentry and (2) the intelligentsia (academics and professionals, liberal bureaucrats and social workers). While the first group mainly expressed conservative ideas of Slavophiles, the second-adhered to western thoughts of liberalism and socialism. Both of the groups played an important role in the field of sociology (Timasheff 1967a:122).
3. The Russian Populist were 'socialists' who followed the Westernizers traditional opposition to the introduction of capitalism into Russia (Simirenko 1967:17).
4. M. M. Kovalevsky was not a revolutionary, but his assumption that "constitutional reform were unavoidable in Russia" was the reason for his dismissal (Timasheff 1967: 85).
5. P. Sorokin has noticed an improvement of Soviet sociology in the first two decades of 20th century in comparison with that of 19th century (Sorokin 1967: 47).
6. Until 1917, L. Petrazycki was a professor at St. Petersburg University, after that a professor at the University of Warsaw and a Vice-President of the International Institute of Sociology (Sorokin 1967: 48).
7. "To conduct concrete social investigations is to study social facts of phenomena under concrete conditions of life ; examine and analyse all the constituent elements of the given social situations; reveal the most important factors of the given social situation generalise the results obtained and workout concrete theoretical and practical solutions of the problems concerned." (Osipov 1969: 26).
8. "Sorokin in 1917 acted as secretary to Alexander Kerensky, head of Russia's provisional government, and after the latter's fall, actively participated in the struggle against Communism. He was arrested, tried, sentenced to death; but the penalty was commuted to exile" (Timasheff 1967a : 231).
9. Even Soviet sociologist B. Grushin states : "It is true, however, that after Lenin's death sociology was downgraded in this country" (New Times, No. 30, July, 1988: 26).
10. It is not without interesting that the opinion that Ethnography was perhaps the Soviet academic discipline closest to the non-existent empirical sociology. (Labeledz 1967 : 211).
11. According to Simirenko, the methodological consciousness was the typical ideological concern in this phase of Soviet sociology (Simirenko 1967: 25—29).
12. This new trend was identified by Simirenko as "cautious empiricism" (Simirenko 1967: 29—33).
13. "Historical materialism as a science concerns general laws governing the emergence, development and changes of socio-economic formations" (Osipov 1969 :9).
14. A similar situation had noticed American researcher Broderson: "... sociology is still quite unevenly and inadequately represented in many countries of the West, and since in Soviet social science as often in our own, it may be present more or less incognito, included in or subsumed under kindred disciplines like economics, philosophy, ethnology, or even geography" (1967: 238)
15. This Institute was founded on the basis of the Resolution 'on some measures for further development of social sciences' by the Central Committee of the CPSU on August, 1967 (Ryabushkin et. al. 1982,1: 5—6).
16. Some recent publications (Russian) on this aspect are: History of Bourgeois Sociology 19th - Beginning of 20th Century, M. 1979; History of Bourgeois Sociology First Half of 20th Century, M. 1979; Critics of Modern Bourgeois Theoretical Sociology, M. 1977; Bourgeois Sociology Toward the End of 20th Century, M. 1986.

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