

# XXIII Kharchev readings

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## THE 23RD SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE “KHARCHEV’S READINGS”

### THEORETICAL SOCIOLOGY ABROAD AND IN RUSSIA TODAY: The Round Table

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**Abstract.** *The Round Table “Trajectories of Global and Russian Theoretical Sociology Evolution” has been held on June 2, 2021, under auspices of the Academic Council of the Social Sciences Section, Russian Academy of Sciences, RAS Institute of Sociology, Federal Center for Theoretical and Applied Sociology, Russian Society “Community of Professional Sociologists” with participation of the journals “Sociological Studies” and “Sociological Journal” in remote format. The topics suggested for the discussion were as follows:*

- 1. What principal changes are underway in the global and Russian theoretical sociology? How do Marxist, positivist, public, postmodern, global etc. sociologies fare?*
- 2. What processes are characteristic of Russian sociology today?*
- 3. Teaching theoretical sociology in the universities of the world and in Russia as an indicator of overall trends.*

*The Round Table was chaired by RAS corresponding member Zhan T. Toshchenko and Professor Nikita E. Pokrovsky. The materials of the Round Table are published above.*

**Keywords:** *trajectories of theoretical sociology evolution • global sociology • Russian sociology • changes in sociology • theoretical sociology • teaching sociology*

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### 1. The fundamental changes in the world theoretical sociology. Zh. T. Toshchenko

opened the discussion of the Round Table's problems. Among fundamental changes in theoretical sociology in Russia and abroad he put the growth of public knowledge of constructivist paradigm, sociological realism (society – people) and sociological nominalism (people – society) first. Constructivism overcomes the extremes of realists and nominalists, attempts to combine the analysis of objective conditions and subjective factors, macro-, mezzo- and micro-world, and activity nature of the human being.

Of the most active theoretical conceptions, Zh. Toshchenko highlighted the *globalization* concept. It contains many proper judgments and conclusions, but it is limited: a) globalization often has "Americanization" or "Westernization" character, declaring the development standards in American and/or West European society the only acceptable option for everybody without a single exception; b) globalization demands are being spread to spiritual life, culture and education fields, which runs counter to national, regional, and enclave peculiarities; c) the importance and the necessity to defend national culture are rejected as though they were the attempt upon democracy, human liberty and rights, obligatory for all. These positions are a source of confrontation to Western policy in many countries, which have chosen the way of independent development.

In series of current theoretical conceptions the author put the *sustainable development* conception which is recommended as the prospect of human civilization based on a kind of balance between the solution of social, economic problems and environmental conservation, when "the current needs satisfaction does not undermine the future generations' ability to satisfy their own needs". The formula "sustainable development" is widely used in academic literature. Though the author did not negate its positive side, he suggested some considerations: a) the meaning of *sustainable development* in Russian translation is not quite correct; b) positive qualities of this conception are absolutized; c) according to the World Bank, today 53 states in the world experience stagnation and recession, which permits to speak of such a modality of development as the trauma society; d) this conception is sometimes primitivized: sustainable development of a town, a village, a region is impossible in the country with no sustainable development.

*Modernization, innovative, digitalization conceptions* etc. reflect important, but separate aspects of social development. These conceptions costs in Russia are: a) the absence of comprehensiveness, coordination, and synchronization in the development programs and plans based on them; b) the state bureaucracy rejects to fulfil the resolution on introduction of strategic planning; c) ignoring the social and humane component.

Passion for *postmodernism* (and post-postmodernism) has not brought any results; moreover, it has produced the situation of uncertainty, of arbitrary interpretation of phenomena essence and the sense of the processes. In some degree such an approach is acceptable in art and literature; it cannot be applied to science with its requirement for a relative consensus, especially in the case of practical needs.

Russian society and Russian science have rejected a series of conceptions (the end of history, transitology, disappearance of classes, the end of ideology) or required for fundamental revision (nation-state, consumer society). In Russian sociology there appeared ideas with heuristic potential in theoretical comprehension of the changing reality. In the framework of world systems analysis, the relationships of "North-South" are relative, in the framework of systemic approach there is the humanistic turning-point in sociology, in the framework of constructivism these are problems of glocalization, fundamental changes in culture, the trauma society functioning, the emergence of new classes and social communities, increasing conflicts due to national and confessional relations, or in border areas.

**N.E. Pokrovsky** offered his own vision of the world sociology "landscape" having brought forward a hypothesis/supposition that the 2000s have been marked with the dissemination of the so called "left" sociology as the dominant of the socio-scientific paradigm changing as a whole.

Globalization made real the destruction of frontiers between countries and regions, intensive movement of capital across the world, labor migration, info-communicational transparency of the former isolated enclaves. At the same time, the process of social institutions corporatization and their submission to market profit-making logic is of primary importance. The main corporatization tool has become managerialism, directed to keeping a grip of power by corporations. "The managerial revolution", for a long time having been talked about by sociologists, has become the fact known to everybody. The abovesaid process has seized economic institutions of society, spheres of politics, culture, including universities, where the current sociological science is represented.

Sociology in its scientific version is becoming somewhat inconvenient and unclaimed due to its independence, criticism and objectivity. It does not coincide with managerialism on many ideological grounds. There has been originated the conflict and even the confrontation between them. In the US, recently the sociology citadel, sociology has shifted to the periphery of interests of university management and even of students' mass.

The situation of a kind of confrontation between the corps of social sciences and managerialism pressing is originating. Moreover, it is sociology that experiences the main blow, while this science due to its nature is "the Disenchantment of the World" (Max Weber's "die Entzauberung der Welt"); it discloses the sense and the content of the current situation, the distribution of powers and the game of public interest. There are few secrets for it in the current society, which is both dangerous and inconvenient. On the whole, the common consideration is that "it is better without sociology". Managerialism suggest that sociology should choose between the two versions of leaving the scene: either to imitate applied and instrumental disciplines or to transform into extraordinary and purely utopian construction of social reality with its subcultural isolation and group identity.

Such were the suggested terms of the agreement on self-liquidation of sociology. This agreement began "willy-nilly" to be put in life in both versions. But not all sociologists, including American universities, agreed to such a state of affairs. The grapes of wrath were rape against corporatist intrusion into the science, which pushed sociology to the brink of death. The means of confrontation to this pressing was found in Marxism with its basic thesis of the mission of social science to transform the world not only by investigating it, but chiefly by re-making it institutionally. Consequently, the 2000s have seen the process of politization of sociology, which defends its right to exist through the confrontation to the corporative world.

There has emerged the situation of a large-scale closed and open social conflict of the field of science. By and by Marxism and "the left turn" have become the mainstream of American and West European sociologists. To be a non-Marxist, to be a pure "scholar", "a positivist" in the sort of R. Merton or T. Parsons, was indecent and even dangerous, as it threatened with being misunderstood, stigmatized and even ostracized.

The condition of open confrontation entailed the change of the paradigm, the change of the language. There appeared the theory of so called "global sociology" which emphasized the politized agenda based on such concepts like "post-colonialism", "inequality", "global North", "global South", "dominance of Western sociology", "predominance of the English language" and so on. Summing up, somewhat conventionally, one can establish that sociology is being converted into the format of a softy political movement under the banner of Marxism. Virtually, it also reveals in the proclamation of all the regional ("indigenous") sociologies, irrespective of their contribution into the common corps of sociological knowledge, adjacent to the sociology being developed in the leading universities of "global North". The struggle for social justice has become the universal leitmotiv of the sociological discourse, and the participatory qualitative methods of participation in social movements prevailed over the rest. This trend is widely spread and institutionalized; it is notable for its radical political engagement, but its scientific content, objectivity and rationality of researches are overshadowed. Peter Sztompka was the first to concentrate on this trend (Sztompka P. Ten Theses on the Status of Sociology in an Unequal World. *Global Dialogue*, 2011, Vol. 2, No. 2. He was supported by

N. Ye. Pokrovsky (Pokrovsky N., 'Patient Denied Hospitalization', or 'In Defence of Sociology.' *Global Dialogue*, 2011, Vol. 2, No. 2.)

Of course, sociology was and still is multiparadigmatic. Here the topic is the dominant trend, *the mainstream*, the matter of our discussion. As examples N. Ye. Pokrovsky gave the agendas of the plenary sessions of the World Sociological Congress in Toronto (2019), programs and agendas of European sociological congresses, training course programs on classical and theoretical sociology in Western universities, journal articles arguing that "left" sociology needs neither explanations nor proofs. It is in the very air of universities; it is at least in fashion with all the consequences.

The analysis of the programs on classical and theoretical sociology of many universities having sampled by the continents and regions of the world have showed that "left" sociology takes the lead, ironically, in the US and in Europe, while the universities in developing countries are drawn toward classical tradition. Developing countries seem to be the first to raise the flag of struggle for sociology liberation of global North's domination. But this does not happen. Global sociology with its appeal to humiliated and insulted in the world appears to be used no so much to defend interests of the humiliated and insulted in the far South, as the means to confront the corporatization of universities in the North. We see a kind of mobilization of the external forces of the South to address internal problems of the North. There are no signs of a universal reciprocal plot. This is a dynamic composition of current processes in the field of sociology.

As a result, one can state that the general condition of the field of sociology in the current world is as follows: it is thickly sowed with left politized ideas overshadowing proper scientific reasons and motivations of sociological researches. The tasks of the struggle for justice in the world are regarded as of paramount importance. *The struggle* must be emphasized, which is typical for the current sociology of the globalized world.

**A.B. Gofman** constructed his comprehension of the situation around the "internal" and "external" factors of the development of current sociological theory known as the dilemma of "internalism" and "externalism" theoretical and methodological positions. According to the former, the development of science is determined mostly with *the internal logic of scientific cognition*, with the factors rooted inside the cognitive process. According to the latter, the determinants of the development of science are *outside*, being "external" with regard to science, be it political power, political and moral movements, religion, economy, psychological characteristics and value orientation of creators of science etc.

Virtually, it is the question of a pseudodilemma. Obviously, there are combinations and interactions of the "internal" and "external" factors. Accordingly, the research of the development of science means to investigate these combinations and interactions, but not to reduce one group to the other, not to negate or underestimate one of them.

Recent decades have seen the tendency to *vital predominance of "externalism" over "internalism"* in the sociological theory, or rather, in social metaphysics, often posing to be the theory, the predominance both conscious, premeditated and unconscious, unpremeditated, both obvious and obscure. Obviously, "externalism" gains the upper hand, as far as fashionable, popular trends and tendencies are concerned. The importance attributed not only to the "external" factors increases, but attributed to the "internal" ones decreases. "The external" here concerns both sociology as a discipline (the role of nonsociological scientific models and interpretations increase) and sociology as one of sciences (different extra-scientific factors are considered still more important in its development). The former means the penetration in sociology of terms and approaches of such disciplines, as postmodern philosophy, linguistics, literary criticism, political philosophy etc.; the latter means art, fiction, political activism etc. The latter shows the reduction of the intrascientific aspect of sociological knowledge to different social, political, and other determinants, such as power, force etc.; the reductionism often reproduces the ideas, which used to be called "vulgar sociology".

Recently, sociology, probably, more than the rest social sciences and humanities has experienced powerful influence of such movements as postmodernism, feminism, postcolonialism, LGBT, BLM, "new ethics", "cancel culture", ecologism, anticapitalism, antiliberalism, antiglobalism etc. These movements integrate into old, more or less radical left- or right-wing movements.

Is this good or bad for sociological knowledge, for comprehension of social reality, for "improving" the latter? I am inclined to answer in the negative, while the essence of the above-said tendency is depreciation of scientific knowledge in general and of sociological knowledge in particular. This depreciation has programme implications in the works of a number of contemporary theorists. Constant, but not always just charges of science, sociology in particular, with many sins, the statement of its groundlessness, of its present or future "end" etc. are observed. Hence, constant turn to different forms of knowledge and disciplines, such as art, journalism, literary criticism etc., which generate numerous nonsenses, idle talks, open fantasies, posing them as the latest creative achievements to academic community and general public. Social metaphysics, political and moral philosophy are often posed as sociological theory. I mean, these fields are not less important than sociology, but to pose them as sociology is bad for everybody.

It is often stated that the gap between theoretical and empirical sociologies impedes the fruitful development of sociological knowledge. But taking into consideration the sad state of theoretical sociology, the abovesaid gap, I believe, can be rather concerned *a blessing* for this development, while theory in its present condition is useless, at best.

**L.G. Titarenko** mentioned that at the "global" level sociological approaches and dominant paradigms of the second half of the 20th century do not enjoy the support even in the countries of sociological mainstream, where they emerged long ago. It is true as far as structural functionalism, and integralist theories of the 1980s are concerned. Giving up these macrotheories contributed to the diminishing of prestige of sociology in the world. Its status as an important social science, able to give a well-grounded social prognosis, declined; the interest in sociology as a job decreased. At the same time, the interest in social movements (both at the cognitive and active levels) increases. Social activism is supplanting academic approaches in many countries of the world. An important feature of current sociology has become the decline of interest in universal macrotheories, giving up the search of the laws functioning and development of society. Sociology is disintegrating into special trends, which became fashionable outside sociology, like BLM movement in American sociology. Popular topics of citizenship, national minorities, migration have emerged due to the political fashion in sociology. Contemporary theorists work in the framework of private problems, separate social institutions, have some results in these fields (for example, in economic sociology, cultural sociology), but these works do not present the image of global sociology.

There is no common approach in the development of new sociological trends and theories. Some innovations (sociobiology, neurosociology) are assessed as naturalization of sociology, as the danger to lose its disciplinarity, as a positivist (on the whole) trend in its development by many authors, especially by Western ones. The interdisciplinarity is assessed ambiguously. Some sociologists welcome it, others consider it as "solution" of sociology in related disciplines.

As for national sociologies in the countries, which do not belong to the West (i.e., to global North), they are growing, but these *sociologies are not united even in regional clusters*, contributing to fragmentation of sociology in the world. Dividing lines of global sociology become intensified along the lines East – West, North – South. Postcolonialism is reflecting fragmentation of current society and deviation from globalization models, so popular at the end of the 20th century.

It is noteworthy that dislike structural and functional theories, neo-Marxism is noticeable until now. Critical Western authors work actively (the third generation of the Frankfurt School, other leftist critics of capitalism). They are seeking new ways to confront capitalism, most of them out of authentic Marxism. This can be explained, as nowadays nobody considers proletariat as the driver of radical reforms and changes of capitalism. Therefore, other Western

theorists express their opinions (known since D. Bell) that present-day "Marxists" are post-Marxists. They have only preserved criticism of capitalism, but not Marx's key ideas.

**N.V. Romanovsky** supported the idea that the term *crisis* is the most relevant sociology characteristic worldwide. In the West they apply it to sociology, social science and theory as a whole, to universities, journalism, and the spheres of social life.

The crisis evidences, what lies ahead for sociology: a new stage of its history, a scientific revolution, in the terms of Th. Kuhn. Turning-points in society are followed with serious shifts in scientific (in this case social and sociological) theory being the carcass of science. That's what is ahead for sociology.

**V.V. Shcherbina** agreed with those who spoke that a) sociology (first and foremost Western sociology) is suffering from a real crisis now; b) the crisis is connected with the loss of ideas of sociality as a special reality. In his opinion, this is what deprived sociology of its status of proper science, investigating objective social processes in social communities of different types. He expressed the conviction in the efficiency for sociology of those (only) explanatory schemes, which R. Merton (unlike so called general theories) named middle-range theories, and our home sociologists (Toshchenko, Babosov, etc) called them special sociological theories. Such theories: a) are always linked with a concrete type of social communities (teams, local groups etc.); b) are formed on the base of summing up the results of empiric research and observations of these social organizations; c) use the ideas of stable dependences, fixed in linking with a given situation; d) are convincing while explaining the logic of ongoing processes; e) allow to prognose the logic of ongoing social processes; f) make possible to apply regulations of sociology to social practice. In his opinion, the development of sociological theory is a long and step-by-step process, which is not being built on the giving up former theoretical schemes. At the same time, sociological theory focuses on the tasks of social practice (if it really exists) and puts the question of seeking objective criteria of ongoing social changes positivity to sociologists. Today such a criterion is still the question, how the content, value and rates of social changes influence the ability of social organizations to survive and be competitive in dynamic environment. The attempts to find the exit out of these contradictions without social science assistance are doomed to failure.

**2. Current theoretical sociology in Russia.** In his opening speech Zh.T. Toshchenko formulated a series of important theses. 1. In the 2000s in our sociology a quantity of research works and publications of applied character has increased, but the quantity of attempts to theorize on the base of the data received by researchers has somewhat decreased. In the framework of economic, political sociologies, those of culture, youth, etc. there are developed substantive provisions applying them to the research subject, but they have a limited range, interpreting but one aspect of people's activity and life; general theoretical questions are being analyzed by the way and partially. 2. Theoretical thought has mostly been fed with empirical researches, giving summary conclusions for theoretical interpretation of social conditions and the prospects of social development. We possess great data array having been investigated at the first approximation, so far; usually they are kept in the low-income storage. 3. The prospects are as follows: our theoretical thought must concentrate on the problems of priority virtually worldwide, on the problems which excite and worry people. These problems determine stability and successful progressive development, i.e., social justice, socioeconomic and sociopolitical equality, social concord and mutual understanding. Like ideas root in historical cultural contexts of Russia. Once they penetrated into the world sociology in the form of amitology, P.A. Sorokin's altruism (having emerged simultaneously with modernization of T. Parsons and R. Merton). Zh.G. Toshchenko believes, that for Russian contemporaneity such an understanding is significant, as the data of a series of researches shows justice to be the priority, the vital need of Russian population, being the token of their relation to social changes, their (un)willingness to trust social institutions. Therefore, a number of researchers proceeding from the fact that aspiration to justice has acquired stability, suggest that it should be made the ideological guide of a new Russia.



**V.V. Kozlovsky** attracted attention to the “catching-up model” development of current Russian sociology. Our society has moved from the post-Soviet stage of transformation on the model of catching-up modernization up to the stage of planning a new configuration of socioeconomic base, social stratification, cultural space. Current world order evidences a new civilizational dynamic of the world, including Russian society. The world is changing swiftly (climate, new technologies, virtualization, militarization, epidemics etc.). Russian society is no exclusion. Everything demands for the relative timely response. Today social sciences are not ready to respond.

Indeed, there have emerged authors’ conceptions (life sociology, service-home civilization etc.) in Russia, but their heuristic potential has not been revealed yet. It is worth to note that Russian sociology for a long time coped with the achievements of Western social theoretical thought, when foreign works were translated and published, their methodological and theoretical resources were used. The import of foreign sociological theories was packed in the Marxist tradition dominating in the Soviet period and was argued with the advantages of multiparadigmality, with the experience of methodology of empirical researches. The originality of Russian society disappeared from such constructions and found poor conceptual reflection.

The wide network of empirical research of Russian society of various topics in state and private scientific centers provided for the inflow of a large data array, reflecting sociostructural changes, public opinion dynamic, features of regional development, changes in daily life etc. But there is lag in theoretical conceptualizations of these data, in understanding tendencies of changes and formation of current social figuration in Russia. One of the prospects of sociology development in current Russia is the sociologically oriented civilizational analysis of the development of Russian society in the world’s context<sup>1</sup>. Civilizational development<sup>2</sup> of current Russian society in sociological studies remains at the periphery of interests, as it is considered that in this way the focus is being shifted toward the trajectories of disciplines outside sociology. In the last resort this topic can be set in the framework of interdisciplinary researches. In foreign literature civilizational approach is being developed in several directions (Johann Arnaon, S. Eisenstadt etc.). The advocates of promoting civilizational analysis in Russian sociology may be accused of following the foreign tradition. However, the development and application of civilizational approach in sociology means the creation of native conceptual apparatus for fixation, designation, explanation, interpretation of a large array of linkages of social structure and culture, institutions and agent structures (individuals, groups, communities), different capitals in the changeable sociocultural space of Russian territories. The optics of this approach can assist sociology to comprehend changes developing in Russia.

**S.G. Kirdina-Chandler** showed two facets of comprehension processes in Russian theoretic sociology. The first of them is connected with globalization effects, i.e., any national sociology cannot help being global, taking into account the role of links of national and global, regional and global, right up to individual and global in the analysis of social processes. This link is present and it runs through the national social cloth, irrespective whether it’s being overt or not. Global conditionality generates a series of effects linked with the adaptation of national sociologies, including sociology in Russia, to the global world. 1. There is “positive adaptation” contributing to the development of sociology: mastering new, advanced and strict, in comparison with Russian ones, standards of organization and conduct of sociological researches, a deeper scientific reflection of national and universal tendencies in the course of comparisons. 2. The aspiration to become part of the world (often understood as Western) sociology urges researchers to the themes interesting for such a sociology, as to be included in the world sociology means publication in foreign journals, too.

<sup>1</sup> Czech sociologist I. Šubr paid attention to this fact in one of his recently published articles (see: *Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya*. # 1, 2021).

<sup>2</sup> In this discussion an important conception of multiple modernities is linked with it.

In current conditions, when Western countries oppose Russia, it means interest in our research works, which are enrolled in the conception of western ideas of Russia. The topics developed in the framework of such ideas of Russian problems as nepotism, population's distrust in power, national conflicts etc. in all probability will be accepted for publication. The analysis of the cited English articles by Russian authors confirms the interest in such problems. The works on mechanisms of the development of Russian society are of less interest. Globalization consequence in this case is the deformation of the field of research in favor of the works reinforcing the negative image of Russia in the eyes of world actors, including those in science. "The negative adaptation" is supported, ironically, with the appreciation of scientific labor, introduced in Russia: publications in the journals indexed in international bases with dominance of Western approaches. Hardly ever we will "catch up and overtake" Western sociology in this way. In the conditions of global context activation of our interaction with the countries outside the Western mainstream seems perspective, and this is typical of the foreign policy agenda of our country. Sociologists can follow this way, why not? Here it is possible to find the balance between "positive" and "negative" adaptation, contributing to the development of Russian sociology.

The second topic, connected with the first one, is, possibly, more important in practice. It is marking and presentation of our researches' results, writing sociological texts. The presentation of our texts, their language, their lexis is not less significant as their content. The digital reality reinforces the importance of this work. In particular, social networks culture shows the role of *HOW* articulated is this or that statement, how expressive, convincing and laconic it is. Here also, the global context must be taken into account, because we still more often write English, though not articles, but abstracts to them.

**V.A. Shilova** believes that it is important not to tear problems of our theoretical sociology off Russian society development and its social disease, which reflected on domestic sociology and will influence its development. *Current administrative state elites*, she emphasized, *have no demand for a theoretical fundamental sociological knowledge* due to many reasons, the key one being the habit to use sociology as "serving" practice of legitimation of power and adopted resolutions. Hence the underfunding of fundamental researches. The crisis of Russian society in the 1990s was very harmful for domestic sociology. There occurred a failure in reproduction of specialists; there is no scientific cohort which could succeed the leaving generation of theorists of the 1950s and 1960s. Mechanisms of scientific, especially theoretical, knowledge and of development of scientific schools were broken. Scientific work is becoming fragmentary, losing the outline of senses. The reform of the Russian Academy of Sciences and universities had the negative effect; the true principles of scientific work are being lost due to the feverish pursuit for publications.

**N.V. Romanovsky** mentioned that Russian sociologists mostly did not surrender to promises of science adventurers of public sociology, postmodernism, series of Fashionable trends. But "modern" as a reference point according "The System of Modern Societies" by Parsons in Soros' interpretation remains. The acknowledgement of their failure in the West has had no consequences. The influence of such well-known theorists of sociology like U. Beck, P. Bourdieu, A. Giddens, M. Castels etc. is underestimated (see N. Pokrovsky above), with their support on Marxism; the achievements of phenomenology have not been interiorized; the positions of postcolonialism are not comprehended etc.

Since the Soviet period and now a number of Russian sociologists-theorists have implemented the ideas relevant to those of current theoretical global sociology. It is the breakthrough ideas marketing necessary in science that is not realized; these technologies are to be mastered. The extreme poverty of the empirical research base performs poorly at the background of immense data array having been collected by our leaders in sociology, such as Russian Public Opinion Research Center (VTsIOM), the "Public Opinion" Foundation (FOM), the Levada Center, RAS institutes, regional sociological centers across the country, commercial



information centers. They have been collected, but analyzed at the first approximation only. These data bases have not been theoretically comprehended.

The situation is ambiguous, but it seems not to be insuperable. Russian sociologists should see the prospect of changes in sociology as the guide point. Their chief task is to convince society that science will not only provide technologies for the country, but also will be the guide toward the future for society.

Sociological theory, its challenges and solutions, search for the way toward the future are important for Russia. The suggestions touching general and particular aspects of these searches are well-known. Such a situation not only promise the novation, but obliges to advance it. The realization of raw, industrial and infrastructural projects, with following changes in the space of Russian East are urging for the analysis of relevant civilizational, social, cultural transformations and problems. Sociology foresees general outlines of forthcoming searches now. Such works as "The Atlas of Modernization of Russia and its Regions" by N.I. Lapin will inevitably form the basis of sociocultural provision of "the turn to the East" and "social turn" in the country.

Is current Russian sociology up to this task? There are no reasons to answer in the negative. One must not wait for answers from some "advanced" social thought of the "civilized" world. Social thought experiences crisis there. We are in a special position, because we are not taking practical steps toward the exit out of the poor situation. We are late to acknowledge this fact and to undertake relevant actions. And they are possible, if current generations of Russian sociologists make certain efforts.

**L.G. Titarenko** mentioned the recent occurrence of Russophobia in Western sociology. For many years after the collapse of the U.S.S.R. a number of sociologists in the Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus' attempted to develop the scheme of Postcolonialism as the leading one for their sociologies (having got grants from the West). Now it is known, where it has led. And what has this added to theory? Nothing. Also, a number of Russian sociologists wished to consider post-Soviet Russian sociology as Postcolonialism. One should investigate: whose sociological colony was the Soviet sociology? Probably, those who believe that everything noteworthy in Soviet and Russian sociology has been done under the influence of the West, consider Soviet sociology derivative from Western sociology, dependent on it. It is hard to accept this opinion. Some authors, who negated such an appreciation in the Soviet time, openly express it now, thereby cancelling Soviet sociological legacy as a "survival" of intellectual colonialism. Maybe, Russian theorists must reconsider both their own legacy and the ways of the development of Russia to find the alternative, which having not been acknowledged by global sociology to be "legacy of the world", yet can be quite functional to interpret and explain Russian civilization?

As far as Postcolonialism is concerned, **N.V. Pomanovsky** mentioned that the aspiration of some domestic sociologists to link the U.S.S.R. with imperialism and colonialism was unexpected to him. Foreign advocates of this theory, whose works were of sight and in the "Sociological Studies" journal, consider colonialism being generated by capitalism and imperialism. Exploitation, violent expropriation, slavery and racism cannot be applied to Russian history realities, moreover to the U.S.S.R. J. Go, influential in the "left" neo-Marxist Postcolonialism, whose articles have been published in "Sociological Studies" (see № 6, 2021; № 4, 2019), insists on reconsidering the former ideas of modern, globalization, basic features of the most influential sociological theories. The content of L.G. Titarenko speech is rather the result of actions in the framework of hybrid warfare (realized through Soros' channels and Turkey universities with their plans of the expansion of the Turkic-speaking world).

**3. Teaching theoretical sociology as the indicator** of the general trend of the development of sociology reflects some difficulties in this sphere of our science. **N.E. Pokrovsky** mentioned, in particular, that in the 2000s sociological departments of the US universities began to "merge and be absorbed" due formally to being unclaimed by the students. Pure sociology *per se* is merging and losing independence. It is not of interest either for the management of universities, or for most students. Such is, in his opinion, social background of current sociology of the US, Western Europe and, partially, of Russia.

A group of N.E. Pokrovsky's colleagues have analyzed syllabi on sociology of a number of universities sampled by continents and regions of the world. It has been found out that public sociology takes its leading stand in the US and in Europe. Universities of the third countries are drawn to classical tradition. Developing countries seem to raise the flag of struggle for sociology liberation of global North's domination. But this does not happen. Global sociology with its appeal to the interests of the humiliated and insulted in the world is used not so much to defend the interests of the humiliated and insulted, as to confront the corporatization of universities in "the North".

**N.V. Romanovsky** mentioned that since the early 2000s we have established decrease of the academic level and of requirements for scientific production in Russia, from research and training works to dissertations. Current sociological theory is not compatible with competency-building and marketing approach. Its value in training courses is minimum. In reality professors and teachers should convince society and our students that science will not only provide the country for technologies, resources etc., but will be the guide to the future for its society. It is possible to form public opinion, convincing our audiences in the importance of social theory. The country, which recently has attempted to progress dynamically, ought to do it with the support on the advanced social science (the science of society); and this science must be relevantly organized and oriented.

**V.I. Zalunin** gave two examples of theorizing in the training process in his speech. The first concerns the definition of sociology subject. At the lesson several definitions (1–3) of sociology subject are given: 1) society in its subjective measurement, social life, social relationships as relations between subjects concerning reproduction of themselves and their living conditions from the standpoint of their position, status, equality, justice, solidarity; 2) forms of joint life and activity, social phenomena and processes from the standpoint of their place and role in integration (solidarity) and disintegration of society as the integral system; 3) general forms and principles of social interactions in their concrete revelation on the ground of broad application of empirical data.

Then, summing them up, the teacher gives the author's (leading the students up to its (non-)acceptance) *definition of sociology subject*: 4) *science of regularities of making, development and interaction of social systems (from an individual to society on the whole) in their objective and subjective measurement, research methods and technologies of optimization and their control*. Proposed (doubtful) vision of sociology subject permits to propose new approaches to structuring sociological knowledge.

**U.G. Nikolayeva** paid attention to a significant complication of the ideas of sociohistorical dynamic of society in current sociology, at the necessity of reflecting new approaches in training students. Linear schemes are giving up their place to multifactorial models of social evolution. The problem of the unevenness in development, of social and economic lag is conceptualized in a new way. There is emphasized the importance not only of progressive factors, but also of disfunctional ones, of contradictory combination of the newest tendencies and "archaic" layers of sociohistorical memory.

The past is not annihilated by history, but transits to a kind of historical "unconsciousness", moves into a "depository", and from time to time according to a certain social logic it is extracted out of there and implanted into the relevant present. We are dealing with turbulent dynamic of sociocultural and economic systems, when the past is present not only as separate traditions and rituals, but as entire complexes. However, even specialists are hardly ever aware of it. This leads us up to the topic of archaic and its presence, functioning and development nowadays. Centuries-old archaic is presenting itself here and now.

Originally, the concepts "archaic", "archaism", "archaization" were used in art criticism and meant the use of obsolete art elements, linguistic forms, motives. Recently (including the author's efforts) these concepts have begun to be used to characterize retrogressive trends in the development of societies. However, unexpected popularity of the term "archaization" made it exceed the limits of scientific usage, appear a great many everyday meanings. Corruption,

interest in magic, fear of vaccination in pandemic conditions, negation of science, and Soviet celebrations etc. have been called "archaic". These different phenomena and processes show different "retrodistance" and reciprocating trends of social development, creating a complicated image of society. We need scientific conceptualization, theoretical comprehension of these phenomena, connected, it seems, first and foremost with the reanimation of "pre-modern" (pre-marketing, pre-capitalist) socioeconomic relationships, sociocultural institutions and scientific world-conception. At the same time "pre-modernity" is utmost different historically and typologically. Therefore, to unite pre-marketing (pre-modern) societies in the common concept for "traditional societies" seems to be unproductive (L. Morgan, K. Marx, B. Malinowski, K. Polanyi, Yu.I. Semenov and many other social scientists, historians and anthropologists wrote about it). The deepest scientific analysis of early history of mankind (including anthroposociogenesis) is given in the works by Yu.I. Semenov, an outstanding Russian historian, which must serve the base of the analysis of current processes of social archaization.

"The archaization" in current society appears to be found in the following forms: reanimation of pre-capitalist socioeconomic relationships (racket, raiding, extraeconomic coercion, corruption, pull, nepotism, bureaucratization, neopolitarianism elements etc.); spread of "power" practices of social interaction and social conflicts' solutions, the extension of the zone of extralegal regulation, the decrease of the importance of formal law and the extension of the influence of "non-formal" law; "corporatization" of society, the decline of social mobility, the emergence of half-feudal stratification elements, the revival of pre-rational forms of social consciousness, de-scientization and re-mythologization of culture. The explanation of "archaic" phenomena must be founded on historical sociology, economic anthropology, theories of premarketing economy, world-system analysis, "peripheral" capitalism conceptions, theories of "multiple" modernization.

Socio-historical analysis through the magnifying glass of the abovesaid approaches allows to form much deeper and multifaceted vision of social reality, where ultramodern forms of life (digitalization, technologization, robotization, virtualization) coexist and engage in symbioses, in hybrid combinations with pre-modern, archaic social models, passed long ago.

**A.A. Ovsyannikov** put the question of the importance to fill the teaching of sociology with Russian social practices and problems. Domestic practice in Russian sociology textbooks takes no more than 7%–8% of their volume. The textbooks have been written for Russian universities, but there is no place for Russia in them. They can concentrate on retelling Western sociology, having nothing to do with Russian practices. Like in the U.S.S.R. of the period of historical materialism, we have got into the cognitive loop: theoretic sociology with no empirism has become nonsense, and empirical sociology without distinct theoretical reflection is blind speculative activity. Interpretation of foreign sociological theories is to some degree justified and correct. But there are limitations. These limitations are determined with scientific criticism, which seems to be absolutely absent in our sociology. As a result, the Russian student readily speaks on the problems of Texas or on the condition of Arabs in France, on the American soldier and Polish emigree, on current anomie and "complex society" discussing the American black world. But he cannot say anything sensible about the situation in Buryatia or Altai, or on the Russian Army. And to add: Russian sociology must not ignore Russophobia, propagated by Western establishment wherever it is possible.

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