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*L. Granberg***PITIRIM SOROKIN BETWEEN EAST AND WEST:
RUSSIAN TRACES IN RURAL SOCIOLOGY**

Pitirim Sorokin (1889–1968) was a young social scientists, who worked for a short academic period in Petrograd (Saint Petersburg) before and during revolution. There he followed newest streams in western and eastern philosophy, made field research in Russia and worked for a new synthesis in sociology. Neo-positivism and empiricism characterized young Sorokin's own research but he had strong interest on theories, and he made a major effort to develop an own theoretical interpretation of society. During his first years in United States he contributed rural sociology by lectures and publications with Carle C. Zimmerman. *Principles of Rural-Urban Sociology* (1929), followed by *Systematic Source Book in Rural Sociology* (1930–32) became the synthesis of previous works in rural sociology. This article aims to bridge the two phases in Sorokin's life and to evaluate his contribution on rural sociology, as well as the reception of his works.

Keywords: Pitirim Sorokin, rural sociology, theories, Russian North, *Rurbanism*, new sociology of agriculture.

Introduction

In the early years of sociology, a lot of empirical studies were made on rural issues both in the United States and in Europe. One of those who constructed rural sociology as an own research branch in sociology was Pitirim Sorokin (1889–1968). He wrote in late 1920's, together with Carle C. Zimmerman the synthesis of previous research on rural – urban relationships and it became the cornerstone of academic rural sociology for several decades. Who was Pitirim Sorokin?

Sorokin came to United States from Russia, after having studied and written his doctoral thesis in Petrograd (earlier and again today Saint Petersburg) during the Russian revolution. He participated in the Revolution, at first on the side of Bolsheviks against Tsarist rule, and thereafter on the side of Social Revolutionaries and Prime Minister Alexander Kerensky (1881–1970) against Bolsheviks, and finally escaping to Berlin and Prague, from where he was later invited to United States. His experiences in Russia are shortly described in his self-biography [23] and in the fascinating diary from the years of revolution [24]. Sorokin is no more much referred to in western scientific literature, but in Russia he has become after socialism again an accepted and a well-known person [5; 20]. Some of those who remember Sorokin, decouple him to moral conservatism, but it would be wiser to look at his own texts before accepting this claim [28]. As to his rural research, much has been forgotten from Sorokin. His early works in Russia are hardly known and his legacy as a rural sociologist has not been a subject for special studies in Russian social science.

This article describes Sorokin's scientific career, and analyzes how his life experiences and early works in Russia impacted on and motivated his later works, above all in rural sociology. The main phases of Sorokin's life will be introduced. Sorokin's rural sociology and his collaboration with Zimmerman are presented and then his positive reception among rural sociologists in United States and later critical reflections in Europe and United States are discussed. We will also point out a weakness in the criticism on Sorokin.

Episodes of Sorokin's life*Russia*

Pitirim Sorokin was born in 1889 in a village called *Turyia* in Northern Russia. His mother was a Komi peasant's daughter, who died when he was only three years old. His father was a Russian 'master of gilding, silvering, and icon-making', who used to move from one village to another because of work, forming a working team with two of his three children. Pitirim got an opportunity to study in village schools, he was supported by teachers and advanced in studies step by step. For some periods he lived with his aunt on a peasant farm, in a peasant community, which was organized around the traditional Russian village administration, *MIR*¹. [23. P. 4-17]. This region was not only a source of memories from childhood, he also later returned to it as a student member of a research expedition. In these territories land property was owned by the state and peasants had more freedoms than in farms owned by aristocracy in central parts of Russia. According to Sorokin's memoirs:

The Komi and the Russian population of this region had never known slavery nor serfdom and democratically managed their local-political and economic-affairs by way of direct self-government of the village community similar to the German 'Gemeinschaft' [Community] or to the Russian 'mir,' obshchina [village community]. Village communities had their land in common possession, equitably distributed and redistributed among the individual peasant families (according to their size and increase or decrease in the course of time). A Gemeinschaft-spirit of mutual aid was still vigorous and manifested itself in many forms.... [23. P. 17].

The Russian revolution changed Sorokin's life, he met political activists of different political and ideological movements: social democrats, anarchists, monarchists, and social revolutionaries, and started to participate in political actions against the Tsar. For him the closest political group was the social revolutionary party, which declared to represent all groups in society – peasants, proletariat and intellectuals – and whose ideological position was against materialism [23. P. 21-22]. Political activity caused his first imprisonment. Five months in prison became a very important studying period for him because of the study circle in prison – which was able to hold meetings quite openly [9. P. 197-199].

Sorokin moved to Saint Petersburg (later Petrograd) in 1907, finished his school studies in two years and earned his living with manual work. He started to write articles in journals, study at the university and in 1914 he became a lecturer in the Psycho-Neurological Institute and Private Docent at the University. After two years he graduated as Master of Criminal and Administrative Law and in 1920 as Doctor of Sociology.

As political activist he learnt to know many of the leading revolutionaries and became the chief editor of the social revolutionary journals *Delo Naroda* and *Volia Naroda*. In 1917 he was nominated the secretary for A. F. Kerensky's Cabinet, the Prime Minister of the Russian Provincial Government. Sorokin was frustrated in this work². It left him time, anyway, to organize the all-Russian Peasant Soviet and to work as a professor in the University. These activities brought him to struggle against Vladimir Lenin and Bolsheviks, which culminated 1918 in an attempt to support the counter revolution in Vologda and Archangelsk Provinces. There the opponents for Bolsheviks together with Britain tried to create a military-political coalition against Bolsheviks. The attempt was totally unsuccessful – he did not even succeed to find the counter revolutionary troops – and lead him to hide in forests over the summer, and finally to be imprisoned and condemned to death. Exactly why he was saved is unclear, however, he may have got help from his earlier student friends in Bolshevik party. Lenin for his part released him as an example of a person who chose to move from enemy's side to collaboration with Bolsheviks – which Sorokin according to his own words did not really do.

Sorokin returned to his work in the University, giving lectures and starting to rewrite his doctoral dissertation. The manuscript of the dissertation had been almost ready in 1918, but it was confiscated and he had to restart it from scratch. Soon he was forbidden to give lectures and concentrated on his thesis. The outcome was *Sistema Soziologii* (System of Sociology). This work made him the leading sociologist in Russia, in its utmost contradictory circumstances. [24. P. 224-225].

To the West

Difficulties increased in Russia's academic life and Sorokin left the country with his wife. They succeeded to get passports and to move in September 1922, first to Berlin and soon to Czechoslovakia, thanks to the invitation by the first president of the country, sociologist Tomáš G. Masaryk (1850–1937).

Sorokin stayed for nine months in Prague, writing a booklet *The Ideology of Agrarianism* to be published in 1924 and *The Sociology of Revolution*, published 1925, and moved on to United States in November 1923. He was invited to give lectures on the Russian Revolution in the Universities of Illinois and Wisconsin. Soon he was offered a professorship at the University of Minnesota, which became the main institutional environment for him to study rural sociology. In that time Zimmerman [29] started his career in rural sociology as a graduate student and after first year of studies and some teaching he was asked to give a seminar together with Sorokin, who had just arrived:

With what I agreed because I thought I could learn something as well as get credit for teaching. Sorokin was an emigre. Then it was customary for the universities to give the emigres only sufficient money for living and put them to work which reduced the cost of the teaching load.

I believe it was the challenge of the best of European scholarship, which I met in Sorokin, which finally tipped the scales totally in favor of sociology for me. ... Evidently the Russian Universities where Sorokin studied were very good... Then or later many famous persons came to Minnesota to study in that atmosphere [29. P. 11].

This seminar became a turning point in Zimmerman's academic career, for before it he had rejected rural sociology as a profession. He tells of the warning of economic theorist F.B. Garver that rural sociology 'had little prestige and no future' [29. P. 12]. Now Zimmerman came fully into the rural research and teaching. Being appointed as the assistant professor at Minnesota he started working half time at the farm campus and a half at Minneapolis campus.

Then began some very fruitful years with writing, research on family budgets in Minnesota, studies of the changing structure of trading communities ...and a thousand other things. But the overriding consideration was a work which later became 4 volumes, 'the Principles of Rural – Urban Sociology' and 'the Systematic Source Book in Rural-Urban Sociology'. These works arose out of that seminar which Sorokin and I had joint responsibility. I had originally conceived these books late in 1924 or early 1925 after finding how rich and how controversial the field had been in Europe. I proposed to Sorokin in this seminar that we together examine this field. [29. P. 12].

The outcome of this seminar became a milestone in rural sociology. Sorokin had another book under work, he wanted to finish before starting another. Zimmerman (ibid.) remembers 40 years later to have told 'I would go ahead since I was sure he would be away ahead of me at the end.' And at some point Sorokin took the work and finished the theory book. Then they both worked on the Rural-Urban manuscript [29. P. 13]. By 1927 they had done three volumes of writing. They came in contact to Charles J. Galpin, when trying to find publisher for these manuscripts.

Galpin was one of the early American rural sociologists, who published already in 1915 the study of *The Social Anatomy of an Agricultural Community*. Now he was working in Washington for the Government as the chief of the Division of Farm Population and Rural Life. Galpin first denied to support but when they succeeded in getting financial help from Eduard C. Lindeman and his wife to process the manuscript, and Galpin saw the ready text book *Principles*, he changed his mind and was 'very enthusiastic' [29. P. 13]. Now Galpin's office came to support publishing of *Systematic Source Book* and University of Minnesota's Agricultural Experiment Station also subsidized the publication. First Galpin's plan was to publish it only under the names of Sorokin and Galpin, tells Zimmerman [29. P. 13]:

This hit me like a bolt of lightening but it was explained to me that I should not stand in the way of the progress of science. I went home that night completely devastated over the final and irretrievable loss of my idea.

However, I had counted the chickens too early. Dean W. C. Coffey, later president of the University of Minnesota, was used to dealing with the federal bureaucracies and their strange ways. He simply said 'no books without Zimmerman'. So after a sleepless night I found my way back into the Source Book... since the work was all done by Sorokin and myself, I became the second author.

These works became the culmination of rural sociology in America. However, while it was the beginning of Zimmerman's remarkable career in rural sociology it was the last phase of Sorokin's work with that topic. After 'six years of happy work', as Sorokin describes the time in Minnesota, he was invited to Harvard.

He moved to Harvard in 1929 and stayed there until the end of his academic career 1959 [4. P. XLII; 11]. In Harvard Sorokin continued his studies on general sociology and on social and cultural dynamics of civilizations, moving to more theoretical work than earlier, as an aim to establish new kind of 'integral sociology'. Later, his interest turned to altruism and in 1948, he established the *Harvard Research Centre on Creative Altruism*³, and directed it until his retirement [20. P. 896; 28. P. 15].

Sorokin's science

Sociological Works

Sorokin wrote an exceptional amount of books. Philip J. Allen [2. P. 497-506] listed 35 books and 90 articles in 1963. In his own biography Sorokin describes that his motivation to write was borne from his own life experiences: having been imprisoned six times sparked his interest in the phenomena of crime, criminals and punishment; having participated in two revolutions prompted him to study and teach about the experiences and consequences of revolution and great famines. For our analysis, his most relevant point of view is that 'being born and reared among peasants and remaining in deep sympathy with rural people – with their way of life, culture, and values – largely accounts for my studying these problems'.

Sorokin became a sociologist both by learning to know society from inside, before and during Russian revolutions, and also by intensive studies in scientific literature. The wide scope of his studies is demonstrated by his own three works on sociological theories [27]. In these works he collected, listed and analyzed

different fragments of social sciences, often developed among other sciences, such as psychology, geography and biology. Later, he presented his own theoretical synthesis in two major works: *Social and Cultural Dynamics I-IV* and *Society, Culture and Personality*, which go beyond the focus in this article.

Scientific Orientation

Sorokin's interests were many-sided. He studied anything from philosophy to mathematics and biology, psychology and social sciences. He participated in politics but was also enthusiastic in following cultural life in Petrograd. Sorokin [23. P. 27] characterizes his own *Weltanschauung*, system of thinking, at that time as follows:

Philosophically, this system was a variation of an empirical neo-positivism or critical realism, based on logical and empirical scientific methods. Politically, it was a variety of socialistic ideology, founded upon the ethics of co-operation, mutual aid, and freedom. My sociological views represented a sort of synthesis of Comtean-Spencerian sociology of evolution-progress, corrected and supplemented by the theories of Russian ... and Western scholars...

From important scholars in Russia Sorokin mentions among others Mikhailovsky, Lavrov, De Roberty, Petrajitsky, Kovalevsky, Rostovtzeff, Pavlov, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky and Jakov and in Western Europe Durkheim, Simmel, Weber, Stammler, Pareto and Marx. Among the classical thinkers of sociology, Vilfredo Pareto had a special place for Sorokin, who paid much attention to System Theory [23. P. 28]. Connections between Russia and Western Europe were not only theoretical, because before the revolution many Russian thinkers had active connections to Western Europe and probably some influence on researchers abroad. For instance Pjotr Lavrov (1823–1900) was one of the leading theoreticians among Russian populists (*narodnichestvo*⁴), who emigrated to Paris and later to London. Also Sociologist Eugene De Roberty (1843–1915) lived in Paris.

Sorokin followed French and German sociology and published articles in both languages. He was able to use Latin, French and English, and, to a lesser extent, German and Slavic languages [23. P. 11]. Young Sorokin was among the first academic generation, which analyzed and synthesized sociology's special characteristics, and he made it to the bottom and in a systematic way. Sorokin had strong interest on sociological theories and even when he did not contribute in theories by himself, he brought a lot of theoretical material from general sociology into rural sociology. However, in Sorokin's own research empiricism was a strong feature, and while co-writing with Zimmerman they put much emphasis on empirical evidence.

Sorokin had also theoretical visions, which became his focus after rural sociological phase. His major scientific challenge was to integrate existing scientific knowledge in order to form a philosophical way of thinking, which he called an 'integralist philosophy'[6. P. 41; 20]. In *Society, Culture and Personality* (1947) Sorokin clarifies his idea on the distinction between culture, social structure and personality. They are all abstracted aspects of human action. Although Sorokin attends to all three aspects, he asserts the dominance of culture over the other two aspects of human action. 'Cultural mentality is regarded as fundamental; social structure and personality as producing, at most, minor variations on culturally embedded themes.' [15. P. 337].

Sorokin's rural sociology

Research and Publications of Russian North

The early texts by Sorokin in 1909–1911 are largely devoted to ethnographic descriptions of Russian rural north, especially to his home region – *Zyryansky*⁵ *Kraj*. His ethnographic knowledge was based on his childhood in Zyryan, youth experiences there, and research expeditions as a student to the Russian North. The thematic repertoire of Sorokin's ethnographic publications was consisted of three thematic focuses. The first, and the most basic for him, was to provide a positivist description of the Komi-Zyryan people—the main subject of his study. The second focus was rather fiction and journalism than research. And the third thematic focus was in political criticism turning to sharp critical attack against the Russian state colonization policy :

Year after year the declining and decreasing colonization of Siberia, on one hand, and an unceasing land overcrowding, on the other hand, force the government to look for new land funds to resettle landless, hungry and restless people... This explains why the government so zealously appoints and sends all kinds of expeditions aimed at finding free lands suitable for colonization and allocates tens of thousands rubles for financing them...

Before the Synthesis

As said, Sorokin's strong motivation to study in the area of rural sociology was based on his own life experiences [23. P. 31]. His interest on farming and the life of peasantry was expressed in journalist works in Petrograd and in Prague 1922, where Sorokin started again scientific work, writing about the Russian revolution and agrarian questions in Russia. Lynn Smith, who has analyzed Sorokin's role in American rural sociology, points out that Sorokin kept this research question in mind already when he travelled to the United States for the first time. He wanted to learn about the cultural and economic system of organizing agriculture in America, above all in order to prepare Russian emigrants to reorganize agriculture in Russia after communism would be over. [21. P. 189-190]. In United States Sorokin met a research community, which had studied rural issues already for some decades.

At the turn of the 20th century, rural research in both Europe and America had been looking at the reasons for poverty, migration, land ownership questions, small farmer's characteristics and analyzed differences and interdependence between town and countryside. Much attention was paid to structural changes in agriculture both in political debates and in science. The governments, churches and universities had funded rural research with varying intensity in United States and in European countries. [3. P. 44-46; 14. P. 118-119].

In the United States emerged 'a humanitarian interest in rural life. ...burning desire to do something to improve life in the country'. It became widespread around 1900 and was especially strong among clergymen. [21. P. 8]. This atmosphere led President Roosevelt to appoint Commission on Country Life 1908. The commission's report promoted in many ways the development of rural sociological teaching and research. In a way rural sociology did not yet exist at that time; studies concerned with circumstances in the countryside had been done as an integrated part of sociology until 1920's. Even Annual meeting of the American Sociological Society held at Columbus, Ohio in 1916, had the theme 'The Sociology of Rural Life'. First rural sociology textbooks were published in these years. Rural sociology was progressing in the 1920's and became institutionalized when Purnell Act was accepted by U.S. Congress 1925. The Act promised funding for research on rural life, which would be driven in agricultural experiment stations. In practice, the funding was for a great part directed to rural sociology and the branch was strongly expanding just at the time Sorokin moved to America. Of course there was need to increase competency of scholars and the quality of research, as Smith expresses it. Teaching of rural sociology was organized and textbooks were written for this purpose. In the decade 1920-29 efforts at synthesis got under way. Books on Rural Sociology were written by Gillette, Taylor and Sim, and Galpin. However, 'The culmination came in 1929 with the publication of *The Principles of Rural-Urban Sociology* by Sorokin and Zimmerman, followed... by... *Systematic Source Book...*' [21. P. 12].

Sorokin's and Zimmerman's Synthesis of Rural Sociology

The main theme in both works was the relation between town and countryside. We have to start, however, from Sorokin's view on sociology, as it is presented in *Rural-Urban sociology*. According to him Sociology differs radically from economics or political science, sociology 'does not postulate any one-sided and simplified homo-economicus or homo-politicus. It deals with men and their relationships in all their real complexity.' [26. P. 5]. To study this complexity calls sociology to take into account the results of other social sciences and still keep on eye the whole. Not the whole in its details but 'the traits and relationships which are common, repeated, and constant to all concrete variations of this special class of social facts or relationships.' [26. P. 6]. This definition seems very relevant even today and means in practice that sociology has to be multi-disciplinary. One can say that European rural sociology has at least partly continued on this tradition, and the same can be said from the 'newcomer', rural studies, with the vision of being a multi-disciplinary branch of science.

As to the rural sociology, Sorokin sees its tasks to be first to describe the relatively constant and universal traits or relations of the rural social world as distinct from the non-rural or urban social universe, and secondly to explain these differences or the specific traits of rural social phenomena. It is worth underlining the difference of this formulation from the attempts to describe rural phenomena as an outcome of some abstract economic laws or other global tendencies, be it neo-marxist analysis of conflicts and dependencies or neo-liberalist theories based on rational choice as all explaining frame of behavior. It is also useful to consider the separation Sorokin makes between research and development work, which he takes up with the name 'an applied rural social technology'. Research is needed, it is an indispensable basis for development work (rural social technology), without it there can be only 'blind and often objectively harmful reforming' [26. P. 10].

The *Source book* summarizes research from the old and the new continent. It consists of three volumes, each of them divided to several topics, which are handled by ancient and contemporary writers, and

introduced with large essays by the editors. First volume contains 80 authors, such as Plato, Aristotle, Xenophon, Adam Smith, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Werner Sombart, Georg Simmel and Max Weber. On the whole, a global way of thinking as well as multi-disciplinarity was typical for Sorokin. The first chapters of the book cover ancient Mesopotamia, and then come in turn India, Japan, China, Latin America etc. Sorokin also took to this publications texts from more than 20 Russian researchers, one of them being V.I. Lenin. A most interesting scientist was Alexander Tsajanov (1888–1937), who became rediscovered in the West in 1960s as an important contributor to the question of agricultural production form. Sorokin and Tsajanov had been the most prominent rural researchers in Russia in the early 20th Century with different fates. Both of them were given the death penalty in Russia; Sorokin managed to survive and emigrated in 1922, whereas Tsajanov continued his research in socialist Moscow for ten years, working in a high position, before being sentenced in the beginning of the 1930s to a labor camp where his days end.

Sorokin's joint work with Zimmerman during his period in Minnesota contributed to rural research in many ways. According to Smith, Sorokin applied quite a few theories and concepts of general sociology into rural sociology and furthermore, he paid attention to special concerns of rural sociology [21. P. 195-203]. The preface of *Rural-urban Sociology* tells that it was Sorokin who wrote the above presented view on sociology and rural sociology. Migration related chapters were on Zimmerman's responsibility and the chapter on rural classes was an outcome of joint work even if Sorokin's important role is seen from citations to Sorokin's *Sistema Soziologii* (Russian version of later published *System of Sociology*). However, it is underlined in the preface that the authors collaborated very intensively and contributed both to all parts of the book.

Social class is for Sorokin 'the totality of individuals whose occupational, economic, and socio-political status are closely similar' [25]. With this definition Sorokin takes distance to three important but in his opinion insufficient definitions, based on economic, occupational and socio-political status of farmer-peasants. Apart from lacking non-farming rural population this approach is reflecting well modern sociology. It follows, in the book, an empirical analyses of these three dimensions of farmer-peasants demonstrating Sorokin's methodic program in sociology: theories have to be verified with empirical data.

Other very basic concepts for studying modernizing societies, which Sorokin adopted from general sociology, were the dual concepts 'community – society' (Gemeinschaft–Gesellschaft) by Ferdinand Tönnies and 'mechanic-organic solidarity' by Émile Durkheim [25. P. 516]. Among several other contributions worth mentioning here are studies of mobility between places and between social positions in society, mainly on Zimmerman's responsibility.

Contributions to rural sociology included the theory on the psychosocial status of farmers, which Sorokin found fundamentally different from one of the urban social classes. He added here the different 'experience world of farmers' which is 'direct' compared with the 'indirect' one, typical in urban environments. Just to mention some other features in the book, rural-urban incidence of crime, features of the city as the innovator and the country as the preserver of national culture, and the nature of rural radicalism. They all received some space in the book. There are also features which may surprise readers in our time. Quite much was used space to analyse the possible connection of migration from country to cities, and bodily differences between rural and urban populations. Are the average size of heads different in cities of countryside or are rural people shorter or longer than urban ones? Such questions were, however, wondered by many scientists around the turn of 19th Century. Sorokin was not a believer on such systematic differences nor on possible consequences on the intelligence of population in different social milieus. However, following his own research program, he tried to find evidence, whatever the result would be, and he studied even these questions empirically. He got just the result that 'the hypotheses has not been proved', and that in any case 'environmental influences are of secondary importance in this field' [25. P. 132].

It is not possible to say, what exactly was Zimmerman's and what Sorokin's role in each of these contributions. However, their collaboration and combining American and European scientific outcomes made a breakthrough in rural research. *Principles* contributed to rural sociology on its way becoming an independent scientific discipline in the United States, while in Europe rural research did not step out of the wide stream of sociology.

Reception of Sorokin's rural sociology

In America

Principles of Rural-Urban Sociology and the following three volumes of *Source Book* were greatly valued in United States. This was true among other rural sociologists of the time, like Smith and Lowry Nel-

son, but also among many general sociologists like Robert Merton. Citation indexes verify active use of their works. Smith, who belonged to the students of the authors, tells in his historical outlook of rural sociology that this work was the culmination in the development of rural sociology:

The work of preparing these books brought to bear upon the field of rural sociology, in a long concerted effort, the ingenuity of Sorokin and his vast knowledge of European society and sociology, and Zimmerman's genius, determination, drive and mastery of developments on the American scene.

The result was an outcome of collaboration, synergy between these researchers:

Rarely have such extraordinarily able representatives of two such diverse currents of thought been brought together to work intensively side by side for a period of five or six years. The result was the finest synthesis of the field of rural sociology achieved to date.

Nelson [17. P. 553-558], who was Galpin's Student in 1923, writes in 1948 his textbook *Rural Sociology*. The citations give evidence of this domination still 20 years after publishing. In the index of authors one finds 23 separate references to Galpin, 18 to Sorokin and 32 to Zimmerman. In addition to them only Smith (26 references) and Dwight Sanderson (23) reach similar amounts. Much later Jess Gilbert [8] discusses the grounding of rural theory and takes for granted 'the theoretical domination of Sorokin and Zimmerman'. One of general sociologists, Robert Merton [15. P. 309] writes:

It is almost half a century ago since Carle C. Zimmerman and Pitirim A. Sorokin began the collaboration that did so much to enlarge the scope and deepen the significance of rural sociology the world over. Their... works of codification soon gave rise to a continuing flow of studies in rural sociology, a specialty much advanced by the new theoretical underpinning.

A short analysis of research index in the mid-1970s show their impact still continued. The number of search results were collected from American journal *Rural Sociology*. All the names Zimmerman, Galpin and Sorokin gave still high figures, and only few others had higher ones (Among others Charles P. Loomis) but because of the weaknesses of the method⁷ the exact results are not reported here.

Worldwide reception

The *Source Book* contained rich material, both descriptive and analytic articles from rural aspects in different countries and continents. This knowledge was needed when rural sociologists in United States developed international contacts. In his *Trend Report* Smith lists the period 1930–45 as the final development stage of rural sociology.

Now a substantial professional work began abroad on the part of some of the more experienced rural sociologists. Zimmerman himself was in Siam (now Thailand) in 1932, in Cuba in 1934 and then, accompanied with Smith in Mexico, who continued work also in South America with other researchers. Such activity continued after 1945, Smith reports that in 1950–56 not fewer than 75 rural sociologists from the United States had assignments in other countries, having been worked in 46 countries, including all the countries of Latin America, nearly all of Europe except socialist Europe, and most of Asian countries. In spite of substantial contributions from other researchers, the publications by Sorokin et al. were at that time the only synthetic works in the field [21. P. 18].

The impact by American rural sociology in Europe was strong as in so many sciences. Dutch Professor Ewert W. Hofstee was the professor in the Agricultural University of Wageningen and the first President of the European Society for Rural Sociology (1957–70). He valued greatly American rural sociology, stating that 'European rural sociology is heavily indebted to American rural sociology' [10; 13]. Hofstee's argument is supported by the rapid development of research methods in United States after the Second World War as well as the professionalization of rural sociology in the country.

By careful gathering of data by means of fieldwork and by an equally careful processing of these data by statistical methods, the Americans introduced a new type of research which changed the face of sociology drastically [10].

Hofstee continues to the so-called Marshall Aid programs after the Second World War, which were directed from America to European countries, one part of these programs being addressed to scientific cooperation. This facilitated visits over the Atlantic and the import of these new methodical innovations into European academic institutes. 'Perhaps in the end this mental Marshall Aid will be as effective as the material one has been'. In the following 20 years, European mainstream rural sociology was growing as an empirical science [10].

The strong impact of American rural sociology in Europe and elsewhere was an outcome of both the substance and institutions of rural sociology as well as of general scientific progress of the research methods. Sorokin and Zimmerman had contributed this remarkably with their work on rural – urban dimension, and their students had strong role when rural sociology was distributed to foreign countries. Their work was not seriously challenged before 1960s.

Critical streams after 1970's

In the United States and in Europe a serious of challenges emerged to the dominant empiricist epistemology, as expressed by Howard Newby [18; 13]. In the 1960s rural sociologists returned to ask what rurality is, and what the theoretical merits of the field are. Both the two main journals of the field, *Rural Sociology* and *Sociologia Ruralis* published debating articles around urban and rural sociology [8. P. 613]. Rural – urban continuum, the explicit concept by Sorokin and Zimmerman, was taken up. According to many writers it seemed to be valued still as the most relevant or previous contributions to rural sociological theory. The challengers for Sorokinian rural sociology called the new stream ‘new sociology of agriculture’. It was developed in the 1970s in interaction with neomarxist political economy. For example William Friedland stated 1979 ‘that rural sociology switched from its original concern with social problems to follow the dictates of USDA’s ‘productionist influences.’ ... that the political economic interests of the land-grant complex narrowed the scope of rural sociology until it no longer broached many critical questions about rural society.’ (ibid.) This explanation sees the problem more in the way of institutionalization of the rural sociology than in the substance of research work.

Newby joined Friedland’s institutional criticism and, furthermore, attacked directly the works of Sorokin and Zimmerman and the tradition following them. He criticized empirical research tradition in rural sociology in general, for endlessly repeating similar research projects without being able to draw theoretical conclusions, and also paid attention to the concept ‘Rural-urban continuum’. In his mind it was out of date, reflecting a general understanding of life in the countryside in the 19th century, with such pastoralist characteristics normally only found in literature or the fine arts. Newby described this tradition as atheoretical, even as antitheoretical [18. P. 6, 22-23].

Newby, Friedland and Frederick Buttel spoke for a new rural sociology, which should focus on agrarian structures in developed capitalism, political economy of governmental actions, social circumstances of agrarian workers, uneven regional development and environmental connections of agriculture, among others. A core concept for their research program was ‘mode of production’. Gilbert went not far from this, when he proposed that primary production and uneven regional development should be taken to the focus of rural sociology [8. P. 628]. It is clear that their program was very different from Sorokin’s one, trying to construct rural sociology on the bases of theory taken from political economy further than combining theories and outcomes of different disciplines to study rural people in their social relationships.

Ilkka Alanen [1; 9] has identified serious methodological problems in both Sorokinian research and in the works of his critics. The space here does not allow to go further in his arguments. However, the critical school contributed rural research by bringing agricultural sociology and political regulation on its agenda, as well as the research of agricultural structures and the whole issue of ecology. Returning to Sorokin, all aspects of criticism against him did not hit the target. It seems to the writer that some of his thoughts could have opened theoretically stronger research than what proponents of new agricultural sociologists reached. Among others his class analyses involving the psychosocial status of farmers had been worth revisiting. Also, one can remark that he had indirect influence on new agricultural sociology. For instance Tsajanov was presented to the western researchers in the *Systematic source* book. Tsajanov paid attention to special features of Russian small peasantry, and was found 50 years later by new agricultural sociology -school as an important classical scholar, useful for analyses of the small production form in agriculture.

As to the new agricultural sociology, the program was one-sidedly oriented on agriculture and food system. Research of local society had been a crucial topic for Sorokin and the first generation of rural sociologists. Local society, its actors, and the meaning they give to countryside, became again in the 1990s increasingly actual issues for rural researchers, when agricultural, productionist countryside gave way to post-agrarian features.

Rurbanism – Sorokin returns to rural sociology?

Sorokin had noticed the danger of rural – urban conflicts already before the Russian revolution and warned about it in March 1917 in his article *Possible conflicts and necessary conclusions*⁶. For Sorokin rural – urban dimension was not mainly a theoretical construction, it was a part of Sorokin's life experiences. Galpin, who joined the work with *Source Book* in the late phase, had earlier taken into use the concept 'rurban community', to describe a community of separate holdings within a trade area [7. P. 18; 17. P. 72-73]. This concept, rurban, which seems to originate from him, becomes an important summarizing term for the whole work of Sorokin, Zimmerman and Galpin. The writers conclude in the last pages of the *Source book III* to a vision of the future society. They see the future to be in 'rurbanism', instead of ruralism or urbanism.

Our general conclusion must be that all the principal differences between rural and urban societies – differences in means of communication, in mobility, occupation, total population, and density – are tending to diminish. Rural and urban societies... are approaching a type of rurban society... Under the influence of steam-power civilization, the two societies became radically different. The use of electricity, however, and such recent inventions as the radio and the automobile have begun to produce a rapprochement that in all probability will develop [7. P. 642].

It is fascinating how similar these results are to the information society research half a century later. The writers understood cars and radios to be new, revolutionary technology. Theoreticians of the information society added mobile phones and computers to the list. For Sorokin et al. rurbanism characterized a changing society, in which the modern way of life was spreading to the deepest pockets of the countryside, levelling out permanent differences between workers and peasants, and town and countryside in general.

This prognosis can be commented both from methodological and from empirical point of view. Methodologically the determinism behind the prognosis seems to run counter to methodological empiricism in Sorokin's early years in research. Empirical results can be, of course, discussed better now than over 80 years ago when his rural texts were written. We can here take up one recent research project, which used the same, quite rare concept 'rurban'. A large project by Greet Overbeek and Ida Terluin [19] analyzed the interaction between rural and urban actors in European rural areas near urban centers. Their results did not support the idea of general convergence of rural and urban environments. Their results, instead, verify the existence of differences between rural and urban in the early 21st Century, even in the places close to urban centers. Furthermore, they illustrate new forms of rural – urban interaction emerging.

One can also discuss what rural means. Sorokin's team had their focus on objective criteria. Overbeek [19. P. 28] and others seems to choose a more promising methodological alternative, by separating objective and subjective (constructionist) criteria and by taking both into concern. Rural is composed of farms, animals and nature in their material forms, but furthermore (and in the same time) also of mental conceptions. Such conceptions vary between different individuals according to their personal experiences and views, which are related to the circumstances where they live. It seems to the writer of this article that Overbeek's team is more Sorokian than Sorokin (or his team) himself. They take socio-psychological factors, which Sorokin underlined in his class analyses, into account but Sorokin's team is trying to derive future from some general technological tendencies, forgetting the multi-disciplinary nature of rural sociology.

Conclusions

Pitirim Sorokin was one of central sociologists of his time, establishing two sociological chairs on two continents, one in Petrograd and the other one in the University of Harvard. He made a long and productive career in research. He introduced the classical roots of sociology first to the Russian and then to the English-speaking academic world. He made research in United States on social stratification, social mobility and rural sociology, continuing then to social and cultural dynamics and altruism.

Sorokin's world-view was a variety of socialistic ideology, founded upon the ethics of co-operation, mutual aid, and freedom [23. P. 27]. All these values reflect, according to him, the values and the way of life among peasantry in his northern home districts during his childhood. His sympathy towards peasants and his interests on the organization of agriculture continued when he moved from Russia to Prague and to United States after revolution. Sorokin's intensive period in rural research was during his six years in Minnesota, even if he had a lot of other duties and efforts in the same time. He could not do much field research in this time, therefore his personal experience from countryside must have been based on his childhood and youth in Northern Russia and field expeditions he made as a student and young researcher in Petrograd. All the better

for him was to find a colleague, who knew American countryside. Sorokin's keen collaboration with Zimmerman cannot be overestimated when assessing the reason for his scientific success. As to Galpin, he in that time no more in active research but as a publisher, and had only secondary role in writing, the work was already mainly done when he joined in it.

Their two publications, in four volumes, were highly important for the maturation of rural sociology as a scientific discipline. Above all the first work, Sorokin's and Zimmerman's *Principles of Rural-Urban Sociology* [26], became the synthesis of previous works in rural sociology. Zimmerman new the American countryside and Sorokin worked as a mediator of European sociological theories and knowledge about countryside in Europe.

Institutional development and governmental funding In United States opened possibility for increasing research in rural sociology. This all had impact on other countries and continents too. As a whole, the development of rural research was an outcome of interaction between east and west. Sorokin belonged to those, who collected eastern European research outcomes and moved them to United States, contributed to new empirically based methods to collect and analyze data, which again were moved to Europe and other continents, quite much by Sorokin's own colleagues and students in America.

List of endnotes

¹ Peasant community, responsible for keeping village order and representing village in relation to the land owner, which was, depending on the region, an aristocrat, the Tsar, Orthodox Church, or the State.

² Sorokin described the situation critically: 'Everything I do does not make sense, whereas Kerensky is hardly engaged in constructive affairs and rather immersed in writing resolutions that are of no use for the government. Thus, the wheels of the state machine spin in vain' (Sorokin, 1992:97).

³ The establishment was made possible by a considerable funding for studies 'on how to make human beings less selfish and more creative.'

⁴ Direct translation: friends of the people.

⁵ An old expression of Komi; northern region in Russian empire were people belonged to a Finno-Ugric language group. Sorokin is Komi from his mother's side, farther was ethnic Russian.

⁶ 'The conflict between the city and the village, the workers and the peasants... is inevitable... it will occur if for some reasons a peasant forgets about the city, delaying the delivery of his bread, or a worker forgets about the village... in the name of further conquests of socio-economic acquisitions... If we do not want this conflict, we must make every effort so that a peasant gives bread to the army and the city, and the city gives the village all necessary products' (Sorokin 2000:16).

⁷ These results are based on a search with the name from full text of Rural Sociology since the beginning to April 2014. There are other potentially much refereed scientists, but because of common names (Smith) this method is too grave for exact comparisons.

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ПИТИРИМ СОРОКИН МЕЖДУ ВОСТОКОМ И ЗАПАДОМ – РУССКИЕ СЛЕДЫ В СЕЛЬСКОЙ СОЦИОЛОГИИ

Питирим Сорокин (1889–1968) до и во время революции, еще будучи молодым социологом, короткий период времени работал в Петрограде (Санкт-Петербург). Там он следил за новейшими течениями в западной и восточной философии, проводил полевые исследования в регионах России и работал над новым синтезом в социологии. В своих исследованиях Сорокин опирался на неопозитивизм и эмпиризм, но он также проявлял большой интерес к теоретическим аспектам. В этот период он уделяет особое внимание разработке собственной теоретической основы для интерпретации общества. В начале своей научной карьеры в Соединенных Штатах – совместно с Карлом Циммерманом – Сорокин преподавал сельскую социологию, читал лекции и публиковался по данной теме. *Принципы сельско-городской социологии (1929)*, а затем *Книга системных источников по сельской социологии (1930-32)* стали своего рода обобщением (синтезом) предыдущих исследований Сорокина

в области сельской социологии. Цель данного исследования – показать связь между двумя этапами его академической жизни, влияние его идей, оценить его вклад в сельскую социологию.

Ключевые слова: Питирим Сорокин, сельская социология, теории, русский север, рурбанизм, новая социология сельского хозяйства.

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