Pitirim A Sorokin: The interconnection between his life and scientific work

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Abstract
This article discusses the relationship between two periods of Pitirim A Sorokin’s life, career and scientific work: the Russian period (till 1922) and the American (1923–68). The main sociological problems of both periods are considered in the article, including: social behaviour, the positivistic system of sociology and famine (as the key problems of his Russian period) and revolution, social stratification, social mobility, social and cultural dynamics and altruistic love (as the key problems of his American period). The important point in the discussion is that the Russian period is a prototype of the American one rather than its polar opposite; and therefore that the concepts that characterize Sorokin’s American period are the development of his ideas that had emerged while he was still in Russia.

Keywords
altruistic love, famine, integral sociology, positivistic system of sociology, revolution, Russia, social behaviour, social and cultural dynamics, social mobility, social stratification, sociological theory, Sorokin

Introduction
This article focuses on the life and scientific work of a prominent Russian-American sociologist of the 20th century, Pitirim A Sorokin. Two periods of his scientific and creative work can be distinguished: the Russian period (till 1922) and the American period (1923–68). His involuntary transatlantic journey, resulting from his exile from Russia for his criticism of Communism, is the bridge between the two. These periods differ from each other in the range of problems investigated, the most prominent of which are outlined in this article, including: social behaviour, the positivistic system of sociology and
famine (as the key problems of his Russian period) and revolution, social stratification, social mobility, social and cultural dynamics and altruistic love (as the key problems of his American period). However, despite his having explored such a diversity of issues, Sorokin’s sociological outlook is integralist.

The important point in the discussion is that the Russian period is a prototype of the American period rather than its polar opposite and therefore that the sociological views that characterize Sorokin’s American period represent the development of the ideas that emerged during his Russian period. This conclusion derives from an analysis of the main stages of transformation of Sorokin’s sociological orientation (from neopositivism and behaviourism to integralism), which took place under the influence of life circumstances (i.e. events in Sorokin’s life in Russia and the USA), on the one hand, and which are described in the first two parts of this article, and under the influence of the leading intellectual trends of that time, on the other hand, which are described in the third part of this article. It is the purpose of this study to show that Sorokin’s encyclopaedism, characterizing both his earlier Russian and later American works, has its roots in the Russian context in which he was trained. To demonstrate this, I describe the history of Russian sociology’s formation as a whole, which is possibly insufficiently known among western audiences, and compare Sorokin’s ideas to the ideas of his Russian ‘spiritual and sociological mentors’ (LN Tolstoy, VS Solovyov, EV de Roberty, MM Kovalevsky, VM Bekhterev, IP Pavlov and LI Petrazhitsky).

The immediate aim of this article is to demonstrate and substantiate the interconnection between the two periods by defining the correlations between Sorokin’s life and work: in other words, between the historical and sociocultural context of life in Russia and in America and his sociological views, and also between these views as reflected in his earlier and later works and the ideas of his Russian mentors. The method of investigation which I am advocating in the article is an analogical approach based on review and content analysis of the literature by Sorokin and about him.

The Russian period (1889–1922)

Pitirim A Sorokin was born in 1889 in the village of Turya located in Vologda province. His father was a craftsman and his mother was a peasant. Pitirim was only three years old when his mother died. After her death his father ‘was given to long sprees of drunkenness’ (Sorokin, 1991: 14). Pitirim and his elder brother, Vasily, had to earn the means of subsistence from childhood (their youngest brother Prokopy lived in the family of a maternal aunt). Sorokin’s childhood, spent among the Komi, was complicated, but enriched by a religious and moral education. The moral qualities (such as piety, a firm belief in good and love) cultivated in him at that time would yield their fruits in his subsequent work (his amitology and call to overcome the crisis of modernity).

Sorokin received his elementary education at a two-form school in the village of Gum, then he continued his education at the Khrenovo Teachers School. In 1906 he was arrested for revolutionary activities and jailed in Kineshma prison, where he spent five months. In 1907 a thirst for knowledge led Sorokin to leave his native land and he hitched a ride on a train to St Petersburg. ‘Removal to the city and entering the urban world’ (Krotov, 2005: 161) was considered by Sorokin to be the first crisis of his world outlook, describing ‘the new mental currents and values, the new people, and the new environment,
the spirit of revolution’ (Sorokin, 1963: 4–36) that confronted him. In 1909 Sorokin entered the Department of Sociology at the Psycho-Neurological Institute, newly opened by EV de Roberty and MM Kovalevsky. But he soon transferred to the Law Faculty of St Petersburg University, where he specialized in law under the guidance of LI Petrazhitsky, whose ideas were later popularized by Sorokin among an English-speaking audience. During Sorokin’s study at these educational institutions his ‘simple Christianity was sociologically transformed’ (Johnston, 1998: 4) under the influence of his teachers, which I discuss in detail in the third part of the article.

In 1910 young Sorokin was shaken to the core by the death of the great Russian writer LN Tolstoy. In the article ‘LN Tolstoy as a philosopher’ (1912) he carried out a reconstruction of the religious and moral teaching of Tolstoy, which he regarded as the philosophical representation of a harmonious and logical system (Sorokin, 1912: 80–97). Tolstoy’s teaching exceeded the habitual bounds of traditional philosophy and flowered into a certain kind of moral philosophy, which attracted Sorokin immensely. He marked out the structure of Tolstoy’s teaching by grounding it in ‘the tradition of four great philosophical problems: the essence of the world; the nature of ego; the problem of cognition and the issue of values’ (Johnston et al., 1994: 31). According to Tolstoy, God is the basis of our existence and love is the way to God. Sorokin formulated the main principles forming the foundation of Tolstoy’s Christian ethics: the principle of love, the principle of non-violent resistance to evil and the principle of not doing evil. He adhered to these principles for the whole of his life, which is demonstrated in the course of this article.

The problem of social behaviour and social motivation

As a student at the Law Faculty, Sorokin became interested in the problems of social behaviour and wrote his first monograph, Crime and Punishment, Heroic Service and Reward (1913). The conversations he’d had with many of the criminals he had met during his imprisonment in 1906 were also a strong influence behind this book. It represents a systematic work on criminology, but with a historical and sociological orientation. The book is written in the spirit of a neopositivistic and behaviouristic synthesis. An enormous quantity of empirical material was amassed by Sorokin during the winter of 1912–13. The manuscript was defended as his diploma thesis and at the turn of 1913–14 it was published as a monograph.

In this work social phenomenon is understood as ‘social ties, having a psychic nature and realization in individuals’ consciousness, overstepping at the same time its limits’ (Sorokin, 1992b: 39). Any interaction which has a psychic character is a social phenomenon. Consequently, any social phenomenon is a psychic interaction between people.

As a whole, the work is devoted to two interconnected problems: (1) the problem of social behaviour, revealing itself in acts, and (2) the problem of social motivation, revealing itself in reactions to acts. The aggregate of human behaviour breaks down into a number of acts and reactions to them, correlating with each other as cause and effect. Human life represents an entire stream of acts and reactions to them. Sorokin singles out three main forms of acts and the reactions that correspond to them and occur spontaneously. Permitted (legal) proper acts, which refer to fulfilling one’s rights and duties and correspond to standard demands, are followed by proper reaction. Forbidden (unallowed) acts, which contradict and violate the demands of proper behaviour, are followed by
punishment. Recommended acts, representing desirable and voluntary actions, exceeding the necessary level of proper behaviour, are followed by reward.

If proper behaviour is accepted as a norm, forbidden and recommended behaviour should be considered as deviation from it. Forbidden acts in the form of crimes are deviations for the worse, and are followed by negative sanctions in the form of punishment. Recommended acts in the form of heroic deeds and services are deviations for the better, and are followed by positive sanctions in the form of rewards. Punishment and reward determine and transform the acts of human behaviour, showing a ‘training’ effect, to use Sorokin’s term.

In this work Sorokin also argues that historical tendencies do not follow in a straight line, in spite of their constancy. They have temporary rises and falls. Thus, we find here the precursor of the idea of fluctuation, which was worked through by Sorokin later within his concept of sociocultural dynamics.

Having graduated from St Petersburg University in 1914, Sorokin began his teaching career there. The period from 1914 to 1922 is characterized by Sorokin’s aspiration to ‘combin[e] intense academic work with gut-wrenching and dangerous political activities’ (Johnston, 1998: 6). Being not only a sociologist, but a political actor as well, Sorokin ‘was watching the social and political conflicts in Russian society, the mass movements, the behaviour of individuals, [and] taking part in them’ (Boronoev, 2000: 5). He had the opportunity to be a direct participant in the events that would be the turning point in Russian history, his opinions on which were being reflected in the columns he wrote for the political daily newspaper *Volya Naroda* (The People’s Will) under the heading ‘The notes of a sociologist’ (Sorokin, 2000b). These writings ‘provided commentary on the unfolding political process and may be understood as an effort to bridge the gap between science and moral activism, that is, to unify the true and the good’ (Nichols, 1999: 139–55; 2001: 14). In 1917 Sorokin greeted the February Revolution for its overthrow of Czarism, but he criticized the October Revolution because of its radical programmes and actions. Sorokin had scores to settle with the Russian Revolution as it ‘lost me my two brothers [one executed and the other dying in prison]’ (Sorokin, 1991: 22). The period of the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the Civil War was associated by Sorokin with his second ideological crisis – the explosion of his romantic illusions and hopes. These dark historical events with their forces of inhumanity and death forced Sorokin to re-examine his ‘sweet and cheerful views of man, society and culture’ (Sorokin, 1963: 4–36). As a result of this crisis Sorokin ‘felt sure in the rightness of his moral system, in which his long journey’ (Krotov, 2005: 164) and altruistic transformation began. This process would later develop into his integralism. In 1920 Sorokin founded the first Department of Sociology at Petrograd University. In 1922, he received the degree of doctor of sociology, the first in Russia’s history, as a result of the public debate on his work *System of Sociology*. (Though this fact has also been subject to some dispute and that Sorokin was actually awarded a master’s, not a doctorate [Krotov and Lipsky, 1991: 6].)

The problems developed in *System of Sociology*

The main work of Sorokin’s Russian period of creativity is his *System of Sociology* (1920), dedicated to social analytics and written from the viewpoint of neopositivism. It is remarkable that this work deals with practically all the problems which would be
worked through by Sorokin later – the problems of revolution, social stratification and mobility and sociocultural dynamics.

In System of Sociology Sorokin tries to define the subject and boundaries of sociology. The subject of sociology is treated in the following way: ‘Sociology studies the phenomena of human interactions, on the one hand, and the phenomena, which appear as a result of this process, on the other’ (Sorokin, 2002b: 106). Differentiating between the subject area of sociology and a number of other sciences (physics, chemistry, biology, ecology, individual and collective psychology, political economy, science on law, science on religion, science on art), Sorokin arrives at the conclusion that there are good reasons for sociology to exist as an autonomous branch of science, because it studies only the phenomena of human interactions, possessing such features that cannot be found in other types of interactions.

Sorokin’s conception of the understanding of the subject and tasks of sociology was formulated in five main principles: ‘First, sociology should be built as a pattern of natural sciences. Second, it should study only those phenomena which give way to observation, control and measurement. Third, it should be guided only by facts and in this sense it should refuse any philosophizing. Fourth, the idea of monism should be replaced by the idea of pluralism in sociology. Fifth, sociology should refuse any normativism in social cognition’ (Zborovsky, 2004: 303). These principles, used by Sorokin later during the American period of his creative work, had a significant influence on western sociology.

The structure of sociological knowledge includes theoretical and practical sociology.

I. Theoretical sociology. Theoretical sociology investigates the phenomena of human interaction from the perspective of their real state. It includes three sections: (1) social analytics, (2) social mechanics and (3) social genetics.

(1) Social analytics studies the structure of social phenomena in their static condition. Its tasks are: ‘defining society or social phenomena, describing its main features, analysing the interaction process, formulating main social laws’ (Sorokin, 1992a: 30). It is divided into social analytics of the simplest social phenomena and social analytics of complex ones, formed with the help of a combination of the simplest social phenomena. Sorokin calls interaction the simplest social phenomenon, but it can act as a collective unity in the capacity of a complex social phenomenon. ‘All social life and all social processes can be decomposed into phenomena and processes of interaction of two or more individuals; and vice versa, combining different processes of interaction, we can get any most complex social process and social event’ (Sorokin, 2002b: 139). There are three necessary elements of an interaction phenomenon: individuals, acts and conductors. Characteristic features of individuals are an advanced nervous system, the ability to react to stimuli, biological and social-psychic needs. Biological needs, typical of the human being as an organism, include the satisfaction of hunger and thirst, sexual need (reproduction), self-protection (individual and group), motion, breath, metabolism, sleep and rest. Social-psychic needs, typical of the human being as an organism having consciousness and psyche, include communication, emotional experience, intellectual and volitional activity. Acts express the inner experience of some individuals and, at the same time, stimulate experience and acts of other individuals. Conductors are material means...
used by individuals in their interaction. They guarantee transformation of reactions from one individual to another. Analysing each of the three above-mentioned elements of interaction, Sorokin suggests the following classification of interaction types. Depending on the number of individuals, interactions are divided into: (1) interaction of two individuals, (2) interaction of one individual with many individuals and (3) interaction of many individuals with many individuals. Depending on the character of the acts, interactions are divided into: (1) active, active-passive, passive-active and passive, (2) unilateral and bilateral, (3) continuous and temporal, (4) antagonistic and solidary, (5) stereotyped and non-stereotyped, (6) conscious and unconscious and (7) intellectual, emotional and volitional. Depending on the conductors, interactions are divided into: (1) sound, (2) light-colour, (3) motion-mimical, (4) chemical, (5) mechanical, (6) thermal, (7) subject and (8) electrical.

An important problem investigated by social analytics is the study of society’s structure. Comparing society with a piece of mica, which consists of separate layers, Sorokin says that society can have a lot of groups and structures not linked with each other, but there is a mutual attraction of individuals in every specific layer. Settled, reproduced systems of interaction serve as a basis of the formation of social groups. An individual is a member of many groups at the same time. According to their complexity, these groups are divided into: (1) elementary social groups, representing simple collective unity, formed on the basis of one main trait (as in the case, for example, of occupational, religious, sexual, age, party groups); (2) cumulative social groups, representing a cumulative collective unity, formed on the basis of two or more traits (as in the case of a social class, an estate, a nation, an elite); or (3) a complex social aggregate (as in the case of a society, a population as a whole). According to the degree of openness there are: (1) closed social groups, membership of which doesn’t depend on an individual (as in the case of race, sexual, age and nation groups, a caste, a primary family); (2) open social groups, membership of which is determined by the will and wish of an individual (as in the case of party, scientific, religious and occupational groups); and (3) intermediate social groups, combining the features of closed and open ones (as in the case of a class, an estate, a second family).

(2) Social mechanics (social physiology), which Sorokin considers the most important section of sociology, deals with the processes of human interaction and with the forces determining human behaviour in conditions of social regrouping. It faces such tasks as the study of regularities, displayed in social phenomena; the decomposition of complex social phenomena into the simplest elements; the study of peculiar features of these elements and their effects on human behaviour and social life; the classification of behavioural factors and the determination of individual or group behaviour. ‘Speaking figuratively, it wants to build a model, which would resemble society, and the laws of phenomena of which would explain the laws of social life’ (Sorokin, 1992a: 30).

(3) Social genetics (social dynamics), representing the evolutionary theory of social life, studies historical tendencies and explains deviation from them in different epochs of human history and spheres of social interaction. In contrast to many other scientists, Sorokin thinks that genetic sociology is ‘not a medley from the history of separate institutions (family, religion, forms of political organization and so on) – the study of which is the affair of historical disciplines – but the investigation of the origin and main lines of
development in the sphere of the structure of population and social processes’ (Sorokin, 1992d: 533). Social genetics deals with the problem of progress. In Sorokin’s view, a common tendency of progressive evolution lies in a lowering of the stimulating role of outer sanctions and in the strengthening of the inner regulation of human behaviour on the basis of the realization of one’s own duty. Social mechanics investigates and formulates static laws, manifesting themselves in social life constantly and at all times, whereas social genetics investigates historical laws discovered in the course of history.

II. Practical or applied sociology. Practical or applied sociology investigates the phenomena of interaction from the viewpoint of their proper state. It includes social policy. This discipline of scientific management of society is called on to help in the realization of rational social reforms and give humankind the ability to manage social forces. Sorokin says that ‘otherwise, social politics can be called social medicine or learning about happiness’ (Sorokin, 1992a: 30).

To the two volumes of System of Sociology, which mainly deal with the problems of social analytics, Sorokin planned to add six more volumes, which were to have dealt with the problems of social mechanics and social genetics, such as social stratification and mobility during normal and crisis periods in the development of society.

The problem of famine

Having published two volumes of System of Sociology, Sorokin postponed the writing of the third volume in order to study the phenomenon typical of revolutions, mass starvation. But many chapters of his book Influence of Hunger upon Human Relations and Sociocultural Processes were mutilated and cut out by Soviet censors. After Sorokin’s deportation the whole edition was destroyed.

In September 1922 Sorokin was exiled from the Soviet Union together with other outstanding scientists and cultural workers. He left Russia on board the euphemistically named ‘philosophical steamer’, hoping to return some day. Thus, in 1922 the Russian period of Sorokin’s life and creative work came to a close.

The American period (1923–68)

In 1923, after a short stay in Germany and Czechoslovakia, Sorokin was invited to the USA to deliver a series of lectures on the Russian Revolution. He left the European continent for the USA, not imagining that he would stay there for good. It took him about a year to adapt to the new language and culture.

First, Sorokin gave a series of guest lectures at the universities of Illinois and Wisconsin. He experienced hostility from American colleagues who saw in him a ‘disgruntled political émigré who had forgotten nothing and learned nothing’ (Coser, 1977: 486–8; 2006: 405). Regard for him changed when a number of eminent American sociologists (such as Cooley, Ross and Giddings) began to support him.

From 1924 to 1930 he worked at the University of Minnesota. It was during the Minnesota years that Sorokin published many of his great works, which brought him to the forefront of American sociology. Among these works were The Sociology of
Revolution (1925), Social Mobility (1927) and Contemporary Sociological Theories (1928), rough copies of which had been written in Russia. Though they didn’t have ‘a common title “System of Sociology”, they were detailing and developing the main behaviouristic programmes and functional ideas of the first two volumes’ (Golosenko and Kozlovsky, 1995: 252). These works allowed Sorokin to rise ‘from the rank of émigré scholar to one of the most respected positions in the discipline’ (Johnston, 1998: 13). These works, being evidence of his rich scientific and cultural potential, demonstrated that Sorokin was ‘Nabokov from sociology in his way, writing with no lesser talent in a foreign language’ (Sogomonov, 1992b: 13). He became a ‘mover and shaker in sociology’ (Johnston, 1995: 52).

The problem of revolution

The causes and features of revolutions are analysed in the book The Sociology of Revolution (1925), written, as Sorokin admits, ‘with great behaviouristic inspiration’ (Sogomonov, 1992a: 537).

Thus, in the cycle of all great revolutions there are three typical phases. The first – primary – phase is characterized by the joy of becoming free from the tyranny of the former regime and the expectation of promised reforms. This is the so-called ‘prelude’. During this stage the government is humane and gracious, its policy is gentle, indecisive and often helpless. The second – destructive – phase, representing reaction, is characterized by the eradication of not only obsolete, but also viable institutions and values of society. This is the so-called ‘flood’. During this stage the government is merciless, tyrannical and sometimes blood-thirsty. Its policy is destructive and violent. The third – constructive – phase is characterized by the efforts to create a new social and cultural regime, based, however, not only on new revolutionary ideals, but on reanimated pre-revolutionary institutions and values, temporarily destroyed during the second phase of revolution. ‘Only after the weakening of reaction, when society enters the phase of its normal evolution, can it be considered that revolution is over’ (Sorokin, 1992c: 268).

Sorokin witnessed all three phases of the Russian Revolution of 1905–7. With regard to the Russian Revolution of 1917, he experienced only the first and second phases.

The main causes of revolution are, according to Sorokin: (1) universal suppression of the basic instincts of the majority of population, the impossibility of satisfying them, and (2) the disorganization of power and social control. Suppressed instincts during the revolution include: alimentary instinct, instinct of property, instinct of self-preservation, sexual instinct, instinct of freedom and instinct of self-expression. Disorganization of power and social control is understood by Sorokin as the power base’s ineffective resistance to the revolutionary rise of repressed masses and its incapacity: ‘1) to develop sufficient counter-measures against the pressure of repressed instincts, in order to reach a state of social balance; 2) to remove or at least weaken the circumstances that produce “repressions”; 3) to divide the repressed mass into groups, setting them against each other, with the aim of weakening them; 4) to redirect repressed impulses towards another, non-revolutionary channel’ (Sorokin, 1992c: 278–88).

The continuous suppression of instincts leads to the endless fatigue of the population, as a result of which the demand for boundless freedom is changed by the thirst for order.
If society realizes that the only correct way of development is not through mortal hostility, but through the return to the roots of society, former institutions and customs, creative work, cooperation, mutual help and unity of its members and social groups, then revolution comes to its logical end.

Characterizing revolutions, Sorokin calls them the great tragedy and ‘the worst way of improving material and spiritual conditions of masses’ lives’ (Sorokin, 1992c: 270), because they are followed by violence and cruelty, the reduction of freedom, deformation of the social structure, the worsening of the economic and cultural situation of the working class, the disintegration of society as a whole. The law of ‘social illusionism’, formulated by Sorokin, says that values and ideals reproduced in the revolutionary period are often illusive. ‘Social illusions directly promote extremist behaviour, because they give rise to views that complicated social, economic and political problems can be solved quite quickly by radical methods’ (Krasikov, 2005: 184). Despite the possible good intentions of revolutionaries themselves, revolutions do not change the behaviour of people for the better, they cultivate hostility, hatred, anger, lies, destruction. ‘Revolutions rather biologize people than socialize them’ (Sorokin, 1992c: 270) and sometimes they criminalize human behaviour. There is one more law of the crisis period. This is the law of ‘positive and negative polarization’, maintaining that people during crises behave differently: one part of society becomes more inclined to social anomie (negative polarization), another part to moral improvement and religiousness (positive polarization). In society one can observe the growth of cruelty, criminal deeds, selfishness, suicide, stupid resignation to one’s fate, as well as a stirring up of creative altruism, aspiration to a moral and religious life.

Sorokin thinks that reforms, not revolutions, can be the only right way to improve and reconstruct social life. ‘The history of social evolution teaches us that fundamental and really progressive processes result from the development of knowledge, peace, solidarity, cooperation and love, but not from the development of hatred, brutality, mad struggle, inevitably accompanying any great revolution’ (Sorokin, 1992c: 271).

Sorokin works out a number of canons, which are ignored by revolutions, that nonetheless must accompany reforms. These canons are: (1) reforms should not violate human nature and come into conflict with its basic instincts, i.e. they should come from an integral human nature; (2) thorough scientific investigation of concrete social conditions should precede any practical realization of their reformation; (3) each reconstructive experiment should, first of all, be tested on a small social scale and if it demonstrates positive results, the scale of reforms can be increased; (4) reforms should be carried out by legal and constitutional means.

The problem of social stratification and social mobility

Sorokin’s book *Social Mobility*, innovatory in its genre, was published in 1927. It still remains the classical work on the problem of social stratification and mobility. The terminology introduced by Sorokin is universally recognized.

Sorokin describes the world as social space, filled with social ties and relations. In this space, representing a system of multiple coordinates, there are two main axes – axis X, i.e. horizontal measurements, and axis Y, i.e. vertical measurements. The stratification principle lies in the basis of the inner organization of social space.
Sorokin suggests the following definition of social stratification: ‘Social stratification means the differentiation of a certain given totality of population into hierarchically superposed classes. It is displayed in the presence of the highest and lowest layers. Its basis and essence consist in uneven distribution of rights and privileges, duties and responsibilities, social welfare and hardship, social power and influence among the members of this or that society’ (Sorokin, 2005: 9). There are three main systems of social stratification, as a rule, closely connected to one another: the economic, the political and the occupational. These three systems of stratification represent the three subspaces of social space: economic, political and occupational. Sorokin analyses economic stratification at greater length. If the rate of social inequality in a society is too high, then it faces social revolution. In this case two outcomes are possible: ‘either society immediately returns to a normal phase of stratification or it moves towards it through a great catastrophe. The first way is closer to reforms, the second one – to revolution’ (Dobren’kov and Kravchenko, 2000: 5). Sorokin states that social stratification is a constant characteristic of any organized society. Albeit changing in form, social stratification exists in all societies that declare the equality of people. Indeed, history proves that a non-stratified society, gradually pursuing the principle of equality, is a myth, never realized in practice.

Social mobility is also a normal and natural state of society. It is understood by Sorokin as ‘any transition of an individual or social object or value from one social position to another’ (Sorokin, 2005: 119). In Sorokin’s view, there are two different types of social mobility – horizontal and vertical. Horizontal mobility concerns ‘transition from one social position to another, situated on the same level’ (Sorokin, 2005: 119). Vertical mobility refers to ‘transitions of people from one social stratum to one higher or lower in the social scale’ (Sorokin, 2005: 120). According to the direction of the transition, two types of vertical mobility can be spoken about: ascending and descending. They imply social rise and social fall. Vertical mobility is considered by Sorokin to correspond to the three forms of social stratification: economic, political and occupational. The most important channels of vertical mobility are such social institutions as the army, church, school, economic, political and occupational organizations, family and matrimony. These are peculiar ‘social lifts’, as a rule, working like ‘sieves’, which sift individuals, allowing some of them to go up, keeping others in the lower strata. ‘If the “lifts” are full, overloaded or out of order, revolution takes place’ (Boyko, 2001: 136). Progressive mobility and its controlled character are essentially violated in periods of social shock and catastrophe. But even in periods of chaos, different obstacles remain in the way of unlimited social mobility in the form of the remnants of the ‘sieves’ of the previous regime, as well as a rapid growth of new ‘sieves’.

Social stratification and mobility in society are predetermined by the fact that people are not equal physically and mentally. Moreover, joint activity of individuals requires hierarchical organization.

The problem of sociological theories

In the work Contemporary Sociological Theories (1928), which set Sorokin apart from his colleagues with its encyclopaedic sweep, he takes a review walk through ‘the forest of sociological theory’, where we can find beautiful and healthy plants and flowers (which should be used in our work) alongside their barren counterparts (which should be
avoided). A number of sociological schools (mechanistic, geographical, demographical, biopsychological, sociologism) are outlined in the book. Some of them have disappeared under modern conditions (for example, socio-Darwinism) and some of them have been transformed by reconsidering their main principles (for example, the mechanistic and biopsychological schools).

Sorokin offered an operational definition of sociology, with different aspects of which all of the general schools concern themselves: ‘Sociology is a study, first, of the relationship and correlations between various classes of social phenomena (correlations between economic and religious; family and moral; juridical and economic; mobility and political phenomena and so on); second, that between the social and the non-social (geographic, biological, etc.) phenomena; third, the study of the general characteristics, common to all classes of social phenomena’ (Sorokin, 1928). *Contemporary Sociological Theories* is the work which ‘served as a textbook in many American universities for a long time, got laudatory reviews, was cited abundantly in professional publications and influenced the academic prestige of a Russian scientist very much’ (Golosenko, 2000: 6). It is precisely this work that was cited by Harvard president A Lawrence Lowell at the time of his offer of a professorship to Sorokin.

From 1930 to 1959 Sorokin worked at Harvard University. In 1930 he founded the first Harvard Department of Sociology, which he headed until 1942. His Harvard period of creativity is characterized by a revision of his previous views, by the shift from behaviourism and empiricism to the problems of culture, spiritual life, altruism and love.

**The problem of sociocultural dynamics and integralism**

Sorokin’s ideas finally took the shape of his integral model, presented in the four-volume *Social and Cultural Dynamics* (1937–41). In Sorokin’s opinion, this work was ‘more important than any of his previous publications’ (Johnston, 1995: 54–83). In the fourth volume of *Dynamics* the term ‘integral’ made its first appearance.

According to the integral model, any society can only be understood by studying its culture, i.e. a system of meanings, norms and values, emerging under the influence of the dual biosocial nature of the individual and integrating into a united mental style. This style is characterized by the following key features: ideas about the nature of reality and the way of knowledge, by which they are obtained; the character of individuals’ main goals and needs, the degree and manner of their satisfaction. There are three main sociocultural types: ideational, sensate and idealistic. Each of them is characterized by its own forms of art, literature, truth and knowledge, legal consciousness, ethical and social relations.

The ideational sociocultural type is characterized by the following features: reality is represented as spiritual and eternal essence; the rational way of knowledge predominates; goals and needs are spiritual, and their satisfaction is the highest possible achievement; the manner of their satisfaction is characterized by curbing carnal and material needs up to the complete refusal of sensual temptation. Thus, the ideational sociocultural type is characterized by ‘the beyond’ orientation, revealing itself in the predominance of transcendental values and the acknowledgement of the earthly life as but a temporary refuge.

The sensate sociocultural type is characterized by opposite features: reality is represented as material and changeable essence; the sensual way of knowledge predominates;
goals and needs are carnal and material, and to satisfy these is the highest possible achievement; the manner of their satisfaction ‘doesn’t consist in the transformation or exploitation of individuals’ spiritual world, but it consists in the transformation or exploration of the outer world’ (Sorokin, 2000a: 49). Thus, the sensate sociocultural type is characterized by an ‘earthy’ orientation, revealing itself in the predominance of hedonistic values and the acknowledgement of earthly life as the highest reality.

If there is an organic balance between spiritual and sensual elements, the intermediate sociocultural type, i.e. the idealistic, appears. Reality is represented as both spiritual and material essence; the intuitive way of knowledge predominates; material needs and goals are subordinated to spiritual ones, the way of their satisfaction consists ‘both in self-improvement and in transformation of the outer sensually perceived world’ (Sorokin, 2000a: 50).

Historical development is a cyclic fluctuation of these three sociocultural types. Sociocultural fluctuations are the processes recurring from time to time in the history of social and cultural life. ‘Gnoseological relativity of each of the three ways of knowledge’ (Golosenko and Kozlovsky, 1995: 255), i.e. rational, sensual and intuitive, lies at the basis of fluctuation. Essential transformations within each sociocultural type and the shift of sociocultural types occur as a result of crises, revolutions and wars. Sorokin states that ‘sociology and other social sciences of the 20th century came to a conclusion that the study of rhythms, cycles, rates and periodicities is very productive and can give great results’ (Sorokin, 1994: 371).

Senses, reason and intuition, used integrally, supplement and control each other. ‘The truth, received with the help of the usage of all three elements – senses, reason and intuition – is fuller and more valuable than that received from only one of these sources’ (Sorokin, 1992b: 134). Thus, according to the integral theory of knowledge we have at least three different channels of cognition: the empirical-sensory, the rational-meaningful and the supersensory-superrational. Integralism joins these three sources into a single three-dimensional source. The ultimate end of integral sociology is ‘the reconstruction of personality, society and culture’ (Jeffries, 1999: 13–17; 2006: 43–58). The roots of integralism are found in Christianity, Russian religious philosophy and the literature of the 19th and early 20th centuries, especially in the tradition of intuitivism, what is shown in the third part of the article.

After the publication of Dynamics Sorokin turned to social prophecy and his thought ‘became increasingly rigid, dogmatic and eccentric’ (Coser, 1977: 488–92; 2006: 437). Having come to the analysis of social crisis and reconstruction, Sorokin became a prophetic sociologist, which resulted in his professional isolation. In the 1940s the attention surrounding Sorokin was mostly characterized by the drop in invitations, the loss of postgraduate students and the discord at the department, in particular the conflict and ‘frigid competitive coexistence’ with Talcott Parsons (Coser, 1977: 488–92; 2006: 408–9; Johnston, 1995: 150–4; 1998: 18; 1999c: 107–27; 2002; Nichols, 1989: 335–55; Tiryakian, 1999: 22–3; Zafirovski, 2001: 227–56). In 1944 Sorokin’s resignation from chair of the Department of Sociology was accepted. In 1946 the department was reorganized by Parsons into the Department of Social Relations. Unfortunately, there was no worthy place for Sorokin with his whimsical ideas. Basic American optimism being at the decaying sensate stage found itself in an awkward situation because of Sorokin’s
estimation of late modernity (Tiryakian, 2001: 286). Thus, his career was ‘largely out of step with the sociological community’ (Johnston, 1996: 229). ‘The rigoristic tendency of Sorokin’s thought becomes stronger in the 1950s’ (Sogomonov, 1992b: 15) and a sermon on crisis and altruistic love becomes the central theme, running through practically all his later scientific work.

The problem of the crisis of our age and the way out of it

Despite the fact that immigration brought Sorokin peace and harmony, it didn’t save him from the sensation of the surrounding world’s imperfection. Sorokin’s interest in the problems of sociocultural dynamics is connected with the crisis of modern culture. It is investigated in such works as Crisis of Our Age (1941), Man and Society in Calamity (1942), Society, Culture and Personality (1947), S.O.S. The Meaning of Our Crisis (1951). The themes of these works were partly determined by the Second World War. It caused Sorokin to worry about his motherland. ‘Having become a member of the executive committee of the organization “Help to Russia in War” in 1942–1943 he took an active part in organizing humanitarian help for the USSR and in the campaign for the opening of the second front in Western Europe’ (Vasilenko, 2005: 147).

According to Sorokin, there are the three important trends of the modern epoch.

The first trend consists of the shift of humankind’s centre of creative leadership from Europe to the wider sphere of the Pacific and Atlantic coasts, especially to America, Asia and Africa.

The second trend consists of the disintegration and decline of the modern sensate sociocultural type. In Sorokin’s opinion, the 20th century is ‘the most bloody of all the previous 25 centuries of Greek-Roman and Western history’ (Sorokin, 1997: 29). In connection with the domination of sensual values and the absence of a clear differentiating line between positive and negative phenomena, the number of inter-individual and inter-group conflicts grows, the state of social anomie, which causes wars, revolutions, crime and violence, emerges. This, in its turn, accelerates the disintegration of the sensate order. But disintegration often causes the mobilization of oppositional forces, capable of building a new sociocultural order. Sorokin states that within the limits of our modern culture ‘we have come to the point in which rational forces are almost ready to act. They can form a new sociocultural framework. . . . When this goal is achieved, the Utopia of a lasting world peace will become a reality’ (Sorokin, 1999b: 11).

Hence, the third trend consists of the emergence and development of a new integral sociocultural type. Sorokin opposes the fruitless and destructive forces of the dying sensate formation, the main function of which is natural exploration, to the creative forces of the emerging integral formation, the main function of which is ennoblement and humanization of individual. The transition ‘from natural exploration by the individual and the control over it to the control of the individual over himself’ (Sorokin, 2000a: 727) is necessary.

Today one can safely say that these prognoses of Sorokin proved to be true. Sorokin’s criticism of modern society and his foresight of its value crisis were justified (Tiryakian, 1999: 18). It is as if he diagnosed ‘sick’ society and wrote a prescription for its recovery from its main diseases (moral, sexual and political corruption) which consisted of
altruism. The basic trends of our times as formulated by Sorokin have come true, which is confirmed by the renaissance of the great cultures of India, China, Japan, the Islamic countries side by side with the destruction of western sensate culture. These opposing tendencies – the renaissance of the East and the decline of the West – find their unity in the origin of a new integral order on a world scale, absorbing the positive features of both eastern and western cultures.

Sorokin also foresaw the basic trends of the development of Russian–American relations. In the comparative research piece *Russia and the United States* (1944) he noted numerous sociocultural similarities between these two countries. They are both characterized by unity in diversity as ‘melting pots of diverse racial, ethnic, national and cultural groups and peoples’ (Sorokin, 2007: 33). Their mentalities, moral standards and the democratic structure of the main sociocultural institutions (family, legal and judicial systems, government, religious institutions) are very much alike. That is why Russia and America can mutually influence each other. Russia can enrich American culture and the United States in turn can help Russia to put an end to violations of human rights. The book *Russia and the United States* was republished in 2007 with the new introduction by Edward A Tiryakian. He states that this work has cardinal meaning for the international order of the 21st century (Tiryakian, 2007: xi). Tiryakian produces the following proof in confirmation of Sorokin’s prophetic abilities: he was right in the conclusion about the possibility of a firm peace between the two countries in spite of the ideological statements of the Cold War era. Fortunately, that war did not develop into the ‘hot’ war. In Tiryakian’s opinion, the non-violent dissolution of the bipolar world of the Cold War, the triumph of political democracy and the free market system have made Russia the mirror image of the US (Tiryakian, 2007: xxvii).

In 1949 Sorokin established the Harvard Research Centre in Creative Altruism, which he continued to direct until his full retirement in 1959. The founding of the Centre was a product of Sorokin’s professional beliefs, the roots of which are found in Christianity and intuitivism, as we have shown earlier. In his latest works, connected with the work of the Centre – *Altruistic Love* (1950), *S.O.S. The Meaning of Our Crisis* (1951), *The Ways and Power of Love* (1954), *American Sex Revolution* (1956), *Power and Morality: Who Shall Guard the Guardians?* (1959) – Sorokin states that the most important way to overcome the crisis and immorality of modern civilization is the moral reconstruction of humankind, in which altruistic love plays the most significant part. Sorokin’s prophetic abilities are also clearly traced in these works. As Tiryakian states, ‘the radical weakening of sexual morals and the growth of rulers’ criminality are the best examples of the decline of sensate culture’ (Tiryakian, 1999: 28). The problems of sexual and political corruption considered by Sorokin in the works *American Sex Revolution* and *Power and Morality* are extremely urgent today, because Sorokin’s worst fears, concerning the growth of sexual anarchy and political degradation, unfortunately, have come true. They reveal themselves in the early sexual activity of youth, the plurality of sexual partners, late marriages, the frequency of divorce, the spread of pornography (especially involving children), the growth in the number of illegitimate children, the spread of sexual infections, the corruption and moral decay of political power, the use of weapons of mass destruction as in the case of the American bombardments of Sudan and Iraq (Tiryakian, 1999: 30–1).

Thus, in his declining years Sorokin ‘clearly understood and tried to prove that there was only one way to build a desirable integral formation and it was Love’ (Sapov, 2005:
206). He writes that ‘the energy of altruistic love potentially represents a gigantic creative renovating and recovering force’ (Sorokin, 1997: 259) and ‘it can help humankind to free itself from wars, crimes, madness, poverty and vices’ (Sorokin, 1997: 260). Only the power of love ‘can defeat the forces of interhuman strife, and can prevent the pending extermination of man by man on this planet’ (Sorokin, 2002a: xii). Sorokin thinks that mutual help, cooperation and altruistic love are the main factors of biological evolution. He puts emphasis on their greater role in the progress of humankind compared to the role of hostile rivalry, struggle for existence and violent compulsion.

Despite the fact that Sorokin’s activity in the sphere of creative altruism didn’t take its proper place in the American academic environment (for instance, Coser regards it as Sorokin’s ‘later retreatism’ [Coser, 2006: 411]), he himself appraised it highly (as some American sociologists would also come to do later [Johnston, 1991: 96–108; Nichols, 1999: 139–55]). The sociology of creative altruism became ‘a deserved completion of the integralist philosopher’s long journey’ (Boyko, 2001: 141).

Calling on humankind to give up aggression, Sorokin states that ‘every time when in the relations of one or more countries or social groups, the system of corresponding social relations and cultural values reveals the tendency for break down, disorder or uncertainty, such change increases the chances of war and, on the contrary, when the net of relations and cultural values moves towards more certainty, stability and clear integration, such change contributes to peace in their relations’ (Sorokin, 1999c: 10). Sorokin spoke against the Cold War between the USSR and the United States and against the Vietnam and the Korean Wars. He considered it to be his duty to ‘warn against political actions, which provoke international tension’ (SP Sorokin, 2009).

Connecting the future of world civilization with the formation of the integral sociocultural type and the realization of the idea of convergence, Sorokin comes to the conclusion that humankind, eventually, will overcome the crisis. In his report made at the 19th International Sociological Congress in Mexico, Sorokin predicts the possibility of a mutual convergence of the USSR and the US to the mixed sociocultural type, combining the best cultural achievements of each country. Sorokin actively called for cooperation between the two countries in the creation of the new world order without wars, and really hoped for it. He kept a careful eye on the transformations occurring in the USSR, where ‘after the utter defeat of Hitlerite Nazism and disappearance of bloody Stalinism, the period of the Khrushchev thaw began’ (Bichuch, 2005: 202). The fact that both countries, the USSR and the US, had a great nuclear potential, guaranteeing mutual destruction in the result of war, led to Sorokin stating that socialism and capitalism had ‘come to a draw’. Sorokin was the predecessor of AD Sakharov and AI Solzhenitsin in the denial of totalitarianism and the founder of the idea of convergence (Doykov, 2008: 3).

Sorokin, who paid too high a price for his ‘eccentricity, intellectual haughtiness and self sufficiency’ (Coser, 2006: 438), nevertheless, won the recognition of the American scientific community at the end of his life, when he was elected President of the American Sociological Association in 1965. For ‘a populist at heart’, his grassroots election to the ASA presidency was ‘an important reunification of Sorokin and the sociological profession’ (Tiryakian, 1996: 18). In his presidential address, ‘Sociology of yesterday, today and tomorrow’, he forecasts the outlines of a future integral sociology. He considers that sociology will grow not only outwardly, but inwardly too as the general science of
sociocultural reality. It will have an integral, synthesizing and generalizing character and will study positive creative phenomena (Sorokin, 1965: 833–43; 1999a: 115–24).

In 1968, after two years of serious illness, Sorokin’s long life journey came to an end. His forced emigration from Russia had lasted the whole of his life.

The interconnection between the Russian and American periods and the transformation of Sorokin’s sociological orientation

Having described the two periods of Sorokin’s life and creative work divided by the transatlantic journey, which was a result of historical events as he was forced into exile, we can draw definite conclusions and substantiate the interconnection between these two periods. To achieve this goal, we must turn to an analysis of the main stages of transformation of Sorokin’s sociological orientation, which took place under the influence of the life circumstances described in the previous sections, on the one hand, and under the influence of the leading intellectual trends of that time, on the other hand, which we now consider in this section.

Sorokin’s encyclopaedism, characterizing both his earlier and later works, is a part of the Russian context in which he was trained. To seek proof of this and find the roots of this encyclopaedism or the sources of Sorokin’s sociology, in other words, we need to look at the formation of Russian sociology as a whole. It will allow us to draw some parallels between Sorokin’s ideas and those of his predecessors and teachers.

At the first, intuitive stage (1830–1880s), the sociology that was emerging in Russia was determined by intuitions of the Christian understanding of society. It is exactly the intuitive understanding of society which underlies the basis of Russian sociological thought. The works of the Russian intuitivists (PY Chaadaev; Slavophils AS Khomyakov, IV Kireevsky, KS Aksakov, NY Danilevsky and KN Leontyev; writers LN Tolstoy, NV Gogol and FM Dostoevsky) state the Christian world outlook. In the Christian intuition of the ‘integrality of the spirit’ it is understood that personality and society form a living organic unity. Society is an integral organism, the life of which presents a system of spiritual being, in which every element is integrally interconnected with others. Consequently, society is a living spiritual organism, at the heart of which there is a definite idea. Russian culture is considered in the tradition of intuitivism from the position of a dialectic between the universal and the particular. The prophetic and messianic direction of Russian history, the dominance of Christianity and Orthodoxy and the special role that Russia might play as the ‘third Rome’ are emphasized.

The second, analytical (or reflective) stage (1890s to the beginning of the 1920s) is connected with the formation of a number of sociological schools and trends, transforming the theories of classical sociology of Western Europe. The scientific work of Sorokin’s three great teachers (EV de Roberty and MM Kovalevsky, both proponents of neopositivism, and LI Petrazhitsky, representing neo-Kantianism) is related to this period.

Neopositivists De Roberty and Kovalevsky attempt to overcome the main disadvantage of classical positivism, consisting in the excessive naturalization of social life. De Roberty considers sociology to be an objective natural science about laws of social life. Its subject is the investigation of facts of psychological interaction between people. This
interaction, representing some superorganic being, lies at the basis of society. Continuous interpersonal interaction has a spiritual nature and is born of the common experience of human life. Kovalevsky states that sociology is a science about the organization and evolution of human society. The main method of Kovalevsky’s ‘genetic’ sociology is a comparative-historical one, leaning on the principle of humankind’s unity and able to discover the objective laws of social development and outline the basic directions of social evolution. Kovalevsky advocates the pluralistic understanding of social life as an integral system, including the great number of diverse connections and factors. The essence of social progress consists in the following: all these factors are balanced in the system of social evolution despite the domination of one factor (economic, geographic or demographic) in different historical epochs. The inner side of social progress consists in the growth of social solidarity.

Kant’s idea of the active and creative role of the human mind in the construction of social reality lies at the heart of Russian neo-Kantianism, one of the brightest representatives of which is LI Petrazhitsky. Society is understood, first of all, as a cultural sphere, in which the main role is played by spiritual values. Petrazhitsky’s views are notable for their ethic-normative trend. Social being is based on principles of the universal moral obligation. Moral-legal norms determine the spiritual peculiarity of a separate individual as an element of the social system in general. Thus, society is an integral system of people’s spiritual interaction.

The third, synthetical stage of Russian sociology (1920–1960s) is characterized by attempts to combine paradigms of the world sociology. Spontaneity of intuition and conditionality of reflection united integrally in the Christian sociology of the ‘Silver Century’, one of the founders of which is VS Solovyov, and the sociology of Russian thinkers abroad, especially in ‘late’ Sorokin’s integralist sociology, representing the systematization of the fundamental ideas of Russian and western sociological thought in the frameworks of the integral knowledge of society.

Developing the teaching of the ‘integrality of spirit’ (intuitions of which were represented during the first stage of Russian sociology’s formation), Solovyov states that the East and the West express the extreme opposite principles of unity and plurality accordingly. In the East unity is complete. It absorbs any plurality, including freedom. The idea of ‘non-human God’ prevails here. In the West, vice versa, plurality dominates over unity. As a result, the idea of ‘God in Human’ or ‘human God’ leads western culture to godlessness. Individualism and material needs predominate in the western society of a godless human being. Solovyov talks about the possibility of synthesis of these opposites in the culture of ‘God-Mankind’, i.e. in the church, representing the common unity of individualities, i.e. unity of plurality. Solovyov’s Christian teaching of the ‘integrality of spirit’ represents the integral synthesis of philosophy, art and religion and is based on the Christian understanding of human and social life.

Peculiarities of the ‘Silver Century’ inherent to many Russian thinkers, including the main ‘confessors’ of Sorokin, were reflected spontaneously in his scientific work too. These peculiarities, running throughout the scientific work of the famous ‘Russian-American’, are: utopianism (the idea of an ideal social structure), universalism and encyclopaedism (the diversity of talents of a concrete thinker and attempts to formulate universal sociological images of societal development) and eschatology (the idea of the world crisis) (Kultygin, 2003: 678–81; Sapov, 2000: 1028–42).
Three main stages of transformation of Sorokin’s sociological orientation can be delineated. The first stage coincides chronologically with Sorokin’s life in Russia, the last two with his life in the US.

Thus, the first stage (till 1922) is positivistic-progressive. This is the early period of Sorokin’s scientific work, which is characterized by the synthesis of neopositivism and behaviourism. In the main, the works written by Sorokin during this period are based on the truth of science, perhaps with the exception of his article ‘LN Tolstoy as a philosopher’ (1912) based on the truth of faith.

Sorokin’s teachers and colleagues, exerting a profound influence on him during the first stage of his scientific work, are: neopositivists EV de Roberty and MM Kovalevsky; behaviourists VM Bekhterev and IP Pavlov during Sorokin’s studies at the Psycho-Neurological Institute; and neo-Kantianist LI Petrazhitsky at St Petersburg University. Sorokin follows De Roberty’s idea of interaction as the main unit of social behaviour and sociological investigation; Kovalevsky’s idea of social order and dynamics of social change and also his idea of the duality of sociology as a theoretical and practical discipline simultaneously; Bekhterev and Pavlov’s idea of human behaviour’s conditionality; and Petrazhitsky’s idea of law, prescribing and prohibiting definite kinds of human behaviour, as the basis of social organization. Following his teachers, Sorokin also considers that ‘the place of single-factor theories (economic materialism, geographic and demographic determinism) is in the museum of pathological theories in sociology’ (Golosenko and Kozlovsky, 1995: 251) and speaks in support of sociological pluralism.

The works written by Sorokin on the basis of a neopositivistic and behaviouristic methodology are Crime and Punishment, Heroic Service and Reward (1913), System of Sociology (1920) and Influence of Hunger upon Human Relations and Sociocultural Processes (1922). Let us dwell at length on System of Sociology, considered to be the ‘manifesto of Russian sociological behaviourism’ (Golosenko and Kozlovsky, 1995: 257). It demonstrates the gradual evolution of Sorokin’s earlier positivism, because evolutionism is replaced by system analysis, functionalism and behaviourism. The statement that sociology as an experimental science must be built, following the example of natural sciences, and must study only acts of behaviour available for observation and measurement, is postulated in this work. Sorokin would keep his triple vision of a system of sociology (social analytics, social mechanics and social genetics) for many years, the evidence of which is reflected in his later American work Society, Culture and Personality (1947).

The second stage of Sorokin’s sociological transformation (1922–1930s) is intermediate and is characterized by the creative evolution of his teachings of the first period. A neopositivistic-behaviouristic orientation is still inherent in Sorokin’s sociology. He works out his conception of social stratification and social mobility in the books Sociology of Revolution (1925) and Social Mobility (1927), continuing the main ideas of System of Sociology. Living and working in America, Sorokin remained the true Russian patriot. He propagated his biased relation to behaviourism and neo-Kantianism in the article ‘Russian sociology in the 20th century’ (1927) devoted to the scientific achievements of Russian sociology at its zenith – in the first quarter of the 20th century (Golosenko, 2000: 12–14). Towards the end of this stage, Sorokin became disappointed in scientism and empiricism under the influence of neo-Kantianism and phenomenology, he criticized them in Contemporary Sociological Theories (1928) and turned to the problems of culture.
The third stage of Sorokin’s scientific work (1930–1960s) can safely be called integralist. It is characterized by the definite reconsideration of previous views and a breaking with sociological behaviourism and empiricism. Sorokin tries to combine the powerful features of positivism, neopositivism and antipositivism into one unity of integral sociology. Integralism includes positive features of any particular scientific, philosophical, religious truth; that is why it allows to open up some absolute truth. Sorokin turns to social philosophy, placing values as the basis of his new understanding of personality, society and culture. Sorokin comes to the conclusion that principles of behaviourism used by him earlier are practically inapplicable for the study of the value world. Sociology based on such principles is considered to be ‘pseudobehaviouristic’, because they hide their introspective essence under the plaster of behaviouristic terminology (Sorokin, 1966: 526–8).

Integralism, combining the truth of science and the truth of faith, is the deserved logical end of Sorokin’s scientific and creative evolution. ‘Late’ Sorokin realized the spiritual return to the Christian intellectual tradition of the ‘all-unity’ (or vseedinstvo in Russian terminology) in the understanding of society. VV Sapov, a famous Russian researcher of Sorokin’s scientific work, states that Sorokin’s integralism is an attempt to realize the idea of Solovyov’s ‘philosophy of the all-unity’ and that it is the ‘idea of Russian sobornost’, misinterpreted ‘in the American manner’ (Sapov, 1997: 438–47). ‘Late’ Sorokin develops Solovyov’s teaching of the ‘integrality of spirit’. Hence, the thought of ‘late’ Sorokin is characterized with the intuitions of Orthodox Christian sociology. Integralism is also connected with Catholicism. The teachings of Sorokin and St Thomas Aquinas coincide in the recognition of ‘the importance of benevolent love both in human life and society and as a subject of systematic scientific investigation’ (Jeffries, 2001: 32).

The foundation of the Harvard Research Centre in Creative Altruism (1949) became the real confirmation of ‘late’ Sorokin’s turn to intuitivism and Christian sociology. Their essence, consisting in the promotion of love to the forefront of social being, is reflected in the works on altruism and spiritual-religious life written by Sorokin during the functioning of this Centre.

Thus, the roots of integralism are found in Christianity, Russian religious philosophy and literature of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, especially in the tradition of intuitivism. Despite the generally accepted view that integralism occurred with the publication of Dynamics, it is right to say that it was being developed by him even in Russia. This fact is confirmed by a number of American scientists, who consider that Sorokin developed integralist views from his earliest Russian writings, in particular, in the aforementioned article ‘LN Tolstoy as a philosopher’ and the newspaper column ‘The notes of a sociologist’, and that the integral philosophy and method (i.e. the ‘triple reality’ studied by sociology: personality, society and culture; and the ‘triple epistemology’: rational, empirical and intuitional sources of knowledge) go back to the Russian tradition of intuitivism (Jeffries, 2009; Johnston, 1995: 2–4; 1998: 18–20; 1999a: 25–41; 1999b: 13–24; 2001: 46–50; 2006: 150–6; Johnston et al., 1994: 28–42; Nichols, 1999: 139–55; 2001: 14–15). They emphasize that Sorokin and Tolstoy’s views on the universe, humanity and life are very similar because of their common ethnicity, Russian world-outlook and philosophy, propagating the superiority of senses over rationality and science, assigning the main part to soul, God, love and altruism.
In his later years, Sorokin actively propagated Tolstoy’s value priorities. Tolstoy’s ethic of non-violence and his anarchistic views are clearly echoed in Sorokin’s writings on amitology. They both experienced the spiritual evolution and their ‘late’ views are very similar.

Later writings of Tolstoy, written in the 1880–1890s (Confession, What is my Faith?, Kholstomer (or Strider), The Death of Ivan Ilich, The Devil, Father Sergius), contain the rejection of modern life and have an autobiographical nuance, because Tolstoy describes his own soul revolution: ‘I am not only fed up with the life of our circle – rich people and scientists, but this life has lost any meaning for me. I have renounced the life of our circle, recognized that it was not life, but was only its likeness’ (Tolstoy, 1991: 86). In his moralizing writings Tolstoy appears in the role of a prophet, criticizing the existing vices of state and society and proclaiming the dogma of universal brotherly love and labour. Being an opponent of revolution, he considers that the way to human happiness lies not in socioeconomic reforms, but in moral self-perfection of every individual, opening perspectives for moral recovery of the whole society. God is the embodiment of the moral principle and underpins the human soul. Tolstoy did not accept the official church dogma and reproached the church for its justification of violence, for which he was excommunicated in 1901.

The writings of ‘late’ Tolstoy are united by the problem of a search for the meaning of life. The writer places his protagonists in crisis situations of closeness to death, when the irregularity of their life, views and relations, the truth of which they did not doubt earlier in their humdrum and measured life, is opened to them (Lomakina, 2004: 66–79). In such situations the spiritually lucid moment comes to an individual, i.e. realization that the meaning of life consists in its spirituality and that material life with its debauchery is nothing. Sometimes the spiritually lucid moment leads Tolstoy’s heroes to death (as in The Death of Ivan Ilich) and sometimes, to a great change in their life (as in The Devil and Father Sergius).

‘Late’ Sorokin as well as Tolstoy was a prophet, in his works indefatigably repeating over and over again, the crisis of modern society, consisting in moral, sexual and political corruption, and seeing the way out of it not in revolution, but in everyone’s moral self-perfection and altruism (Altruistic Love, 1950; S.O.S. The Meaning of Our Crisis, 1951; The Ways and Power of Love, 1954; American Sex Revolution, 1956; Power and Morality: Who Shall Guard the Guardians?, 1959).

The analogy can also be observed between Sorokin’s idea of the crisis of modern western culture and Solovyov’s idea of its godlessness.

We can also take note of the interconnection between Sorokin’s idea of altruism as the only possible way out of crisis and Kovalevsky’s idea of the growth of solidarity as the inner content of social progress.

We see the great impact of Petrazhitsky’s ideas in Sorokin’s promotion of cultural problems to the forefront of his sociology. For both thinkers, laws and norms are the basis of sociocultural integration. The main idea of Sorokin’s Social and Cultural Dynamics (1937–41) consists in the following: the superorganic system of values is the determinant of social life. Sorokin is also very indebted for his interest in altruism to Petrazhitsky, who studied the interconnection between justice and charity and tried to reconcile them with the help of law.
Having described the evolution of Sorokin’s sociological orientation, we come to the conclusion, that Sorokin’s ideas of integralism and the determination of the trends of his future scientific work were formed in the ‘incubative’ (Sapov, 1994: 541) Russian period, while the realization of all his thoughts is characteristic of his American period. The Russian period, which specified many themes of Sorokin’s work in the US, is the basis of the integrity of his scientific work. It is remarkable that Sorokin always considered himself ‘a pupil and follower of the Russian sociological tradition’ (Golosenko, 2000: 5). It is not incidental that Sorokin’s obituary written by his American colleagues and students (R Bales, T Parsons, G Homans, R White and others) notes that many of Sorokin’s views on altruistic love can obviously be ascribed to the impact of Tolstoy and that he felt love for Russia during his whole life (Bales et al., 1968: 105–6). Thus, we come to the conclusion that the Russian roots of Sorokin’s encyclopaedism are the basis of what connects the Russian and American periods of his scientific work.

Despite the fact that the Russian period was three times shorter than American one, it was precisely in that period of severe existential experience (wars, revolutions, poverty and starvation) that Sorokin ‘worked out his system of integralist sociology’ (Kultygin, 2003: 679) and formulated his moral and ethical credo, which he was to follow his entire life: ‘Whatever happens in the future, now I know three things, which I will bear in mind forever. Life, even the hardest one, is the best treasure in the world. Following one’s duty is another treasure, making life happy and giving one’s soul strength not to change its ideals. The third thing which I got to know is that cruelty, hatred and injustice cannot and will never be able to create anything everlasting in an intellectual, moral and eternal aspect’ (Sorokin, 1991: 161). This credo was first expressed in his diary on the eve of his emigration from Russia (in 1924 on the basis of this diary his first book in the US, *Leaves from a Russian Diary*, was published). Later, at the ebb of his life, Sorokin expressed it for the second time in his autobiographical novel, *A Long Journey*.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, the following facts are worth mentioning. In 1969 hundreds of people gathering at the meeting of the ASA in San Francisco wore ‘Sorokin lives’ buttons. Actually, the real action took place not in the main convention centre but in a nearby church, where ‘an electrifying session in honor of Pitirim Sorokin’ (Tiryakian, 1996: 17–18) was organized by radical Berkeley students adopting him as their role model for being anti-war and anti-establishment. As for the present situation, the new section of the ASA on altruism and social integration has been organized by Vincent Jeffries. Its tasks include the study, critical assessment and advancement of ideas developed by Sorokin at the Harvard Research Centre in Creative Altruism in the 1950s and 1960s. American sociologists state that the study of altruism and social solidarity as an area of specialization in sociology could make a great contribution to the discipline and to society as a whole (Jeffries et al., 2006: 67–83). They express amazement that sociologists still do not take the road of integralism and call for its re-examination (Johnston, 1999b: 23; 2001: 51–3; Tiryakian, 2006: 38). In addition to the renewed interest in Sorokin’s later work on altruism, his writings on civilization have become also a focus of social science studies and current rethinking and reinvigoration of the sociological tradition of
civilizational analysis (Weber, Durkheim, Mauss, Sorokin, Elias, Nelson, Huntington, Eisenstadt), in Samuel P Huntington’s *Clash of Civilisations?* (1993) and the research indicated in Said A Arjomand and Edward A Tiryakian’s *Rethinking Civilizational Analysis* (2004). Such interest results from the changing demographic, political and economic reality of the world, as it enters a new phase. And ‘if mainstream American sociology did not pick up the Sorokin trail to civilizational analysis’ (Tiryakian, 2004: 44) and his ‘monumental empirical study of the dynamics of civilization’ (Tiryakian, 2004: 37) was not truly recognized by the sensate western audience, this may happen now. Huntington’s hypothesis that ‘the great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural’ (Huntington, 1993: 22) confirms the main idea of Sorokin’s *Social and Cultural Dynamics*.

In 1999 the international scientific conference ‘Pitirim Sorokin and sociocultural trends of our times’ took place in Russia (Moscow, St Petersburg and Syktyvkar). It was dedicated to the 110th anniversary of the scientist’s birth and symbolized the official return of Sorokin’s name and creative legacy to his native land. In Russia the year 2009 was proclaimed as Sorokin’s year and was marked by series of important scientific and cultural events, devoted to the 120th anniversary of Sorokin’s birth. These events included the international scientific conference ‘Pitirim Sorokin in the history, science and culture of the 20th century’ (February 2009, Syktyvkar); the founding of the Sorokin Research Centre (March 2009, Syktyvkar); the international scientific conference ‘Pitirim A Sorokin and the current problems of sociology’ (April 2009, St Petersburg); the premiere of the documentary film *The Antithesis of Pitirim Sorokin*, in which unique documents, photographic and film materials of the 1930–1950s from the Sorokin family archive were shown for the first time in Russia (April 2009, Culture Channel); the fifth all-Russian scientific conference, ‘Sorokinian readings: Social and cultural dynamics of Russia under the conditions of global crisis’ (December 2009, Moscow). These events are evidence of the continuing renaissance of Sorokin in his historical homeland. Pitirim Sorokin is widely studied by Russian students within the framework of such lecture courses as ‘History of Russian sociology’, ‘History of classical sociology’ and ‘Current sociological theory’. The numerous articles by Sorokin and about him are constantly published in the prestigious Russian sociology journals *Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya* [Sociological Research] and *Sotsiologiya* [Sociology].

Sorokin is a ‘sociologist for the twenty first century’ (Tiryakian, 2006: 33). He lives nowadays because he remains our interlocutor on problems of social science and social life. Both his countries, Russia and the US, separated by the Atlantic Ocean, remember and love him. His sociological heritage belongs not only to these two countries, but to the whole world. Sorokin’s ideas and research methods are required by the present scientific community due to the current realities, namely, the fight against the global financial crisis, international terrorism and the spread of nuclear weapon. Russia, the US, the EU, China and India are very dependent on each other and it will be easier to solve common problems together by joint efforts.

I would like to believe that modern Russian and American sociologists will come to the realization of the essence of integralism as a powerful methodological tool aimed at the solution of social problems.
Acknowledgements and dedication

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With the reader’s kind permission, I would also like to devote this article to my little beloved daughter, Mila, as I want her and other children all over the world to grow up in an atmosphere of love, altruism and non-violence.

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**Résumé**

Le présent article s’intéresse à la relation entre deux périodes distinctes de la vie, carrière et œuvre scientifique de Pitirim A. Sorokin : la période russe (jusqu’en 1922) et la période américaine (1923–1968). L’article tient compte des principaux problèmes sociologiques de ces deux périodes : le comportement social, le systême positiviste de la sociologie, la famine (comme problème clé de la période russe), la révolution, la stratification sociale, la mobilité sociale, les dynamiques sociales et culturelles et l’amour altruiste (comme problème clé de la période américaine). Le principal résultat consiste à monter que la période russe représente une forme prototypique de la période américaine et non pas son opposition. Autrement dit, les idées sociologiques de Sorokin qui caractérisent la période américaine représentent un développement de celles qui ont émergées de la période russe.

Mots clés: Période américaine, période russe, sociologie intégrale, théorie sociologique

**Resumen**

Este artículo analiza la discusión sobre la relación entre las dos etapas de la vida, la carrera y el trabajo científico de Pitirim A. Sorokin: la etapa rusa (hasta 1922) y la etapa americana (1923–1968). Específicamente, en este trabajo se tratan los principales problemas sociológicos de ambos periodos, incluyendo el comportamiento social, el sistema positivo de Sociología y la hambruna (como temas principales del periodo ruso) y la revolución, la estratificación social, la movilidad social, las dinámicas sociales y culturales y el amor altruista (como temas principales del periodo americano). El argumento central de este trabajo es que el periodo ruso es un prototipo del periodo americano más que un polo opuesto y, por tanto, que las perspectivas típicas del periodo americano de Sorokin representan el desarrollo de sus ideas nacidas durante el periodo ruso.

Palabras clave: Etapa americana, etapa rusa, sociología integral, teoría sociológica