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IFFICULTIES OF PROGNOSIS

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First of all I would like to thank Michael Burawoy for his interesting reflections on the current state of sociology. The way in which he makes public his experience of participating in, and observing, diverse sociological fields is useful in two ways. Firstly, Burawoy makes productive use of the work of Pierre Bourdieu, which allows him to create a fully operational typology that we can use to better understand the current state and specific features of our discipline. Secondly, Burawoy's text stimulates reflection by condensing the mosaic of national sociologies and enabling us to compare them. To me, the most valuable aspect of Burawoy's paper is his comparative analysis of regional differences and his attempt to understand their genesis, along with his use of this prism to examine the peculiarities of the sociological field in contemporary Russia.

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In my view, the types of sociologies enumerated by Michael Burawoy develop and correlate with each other through a combination of several components. Firstly, there is the level of maturity of the channels through which social interests are articulated. Secondly, there are the specific, historically evolved features of the institution of publicity in a given region. Thirdly, there are the peculiarities of the social and political situation at a macro- and meso-level. Burawoy mentions the predominance of a professionalized, academic sociology in America. This may be seen as resulting from the existence of stable channels of articulating social and group interests through political parties and well-developed churches, ethnic communities, labor unions, and various professional corporations. The availability of such institutions for the resolution of social problems may reduce the need for an active development of public sociology. America's highly differentiated labor market and tendency to professionalization contribute to the predominance of professional sociology.

Turning to Western Europe, where public sociology is more developed, there are two factors we should take into account. On the one hand, there is a history of public life that has become a habitus. On the other hand, there is the strong stimulus of experiencing and reflecting on the Nazi era, something that was most effectively done through public debate.

Compared to this, Russia is in a peculiar position. Looking at the historical record, we can see that there has been some measure of publicness. The lack of legitimate institutions that could have served to defend the interests of different social groups led to an active development of literary criticism, bypassing the social sciences. The articles of Radishchev, Herzen, Chernyshevskii, Belinskii, and others were discussed in intellectual circles. But unlike in Europe, the stratum of public agents was very thin, and the institutionalization of publicness was fragmentary and often exterritorial (as exemplified by the journal *Kolokol*, which was published in London).

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The public sphere briefly expanded in the era of the Russian revolutions, only to be channeled into Komsomol and party meetings and letters to newspapers and party organs. In the late socialist period, an alternative public sphere developed in the literary and artistic underground as well as the dissident human rights movement. By definition, this sphere could not be legitimately institutionalized or attract a broad membership. Publicness was expressed in metaphorical and allegorical artistic form as well as through documentation and a human rights literature, without being consolidated in social institutions, including the social sciences.

The effects of the second component—the social and political situation—on the development of public sociology are vividly illustrated by the case of South Africa that Michael Burawoy describes. A social transformation accompanied by regime transformation and a radical change of political direction gives a strong impulse for the intellectual elite to rethink the shape and future development of their society. In this case, the narrowness of the public sphere only reinforced that impulse: the smaller and more regulated it is, the more compressed are the springs that eventually propel public debate, and, by consequence, the stronger is the need for a public sociology. This is easy to explain: in times of stormy social movements, people have no time for professional investigation. In the ensuing period of relative social stabilization, there are clear exit options for sociologists, as Michael Burawoy shows in the South African case: they can either withdraw into their own community, or enter the ruling apparatus. The same scenario plays itself out in Russia today.

Nevertheless, so far it is difficult to say unambiguously how the Russian situation fits into this model. I disagree with Michael Burawoy when he writes that we must identify the “owners” of public sociology in Russia. The use of that term implies that these “owners” have a rigid, immutable identity. It also presupposes that certain types of sociologies are privatized by certain sociologists: academic sociology is “owned” by “anti-Western nationalist” sociologists, while public sociology is owned by the “liberal intelligentsia.” This polar opposition hides the intermediate spectrum of identities among Russian sociologists and precludes identity shifts, which may be stimulated by a multitude of factors.

One important factor concerns the motives behind the choice of a type of sociology. In a sense, this involves a reply to Michael Burawoy’s question “Knowledge for what?,” but taken in its subjective rather than objective dimension. Professional or career motives, economic motives, and idealistic motives (in this case, the values of civil society) are rarely found in pure form. More often they will be combined, and changes in the dominant type will determine which type of sociology a sociologist will drift toward. Experience shows that motivation is linked to professional status. The more vulnerable someone’s professional status, the more efforts that person makes to consolidate his or her official standing and cooperate with the authorities. However, such cooperation need not be a sign of unprofessionalism. Working within the Academy of Sciences is not always tantamount to selling out to the powers-that-be and adhering to their ideology. There are numerous examples of autonomous and independent researchers within the Academy.

Public sociology attracted many new recruits during perestroika. In addition to the general reorganization and democratization of society, this was fueled by Western foundations’ research programs. Russian scholars survived the difficult 1990s thanks to collective and individual grants by Western foundations, which thus helped preserve Russia’s scholarly potential. By making their grants competitive, the foundations also contributed to professionalism and scholarly integrity. Grantees had an incentive to perform grant-funded research in a professional manner.

(Trying to identify the different sociological types with specific individuals in the Russian field inevitably constructs a simplified vision of the division of sociological labor, given the highly ideologized nature of that field. It is tempting to divide scholars following established ideological stereotypes. According to those stereotypes, researchers at the Academy of Sciences cannot, by definition, be independent. Given an institutional home by the authorities, they serve them and strive to gain an official position by climbing the career ladder. The public sociologist, by contrast, is an independent, socially oriented scholar who fights for human rights. The

policy sociologist is one who earns money by serving the authorities and business. And only the critical sociologist resists ideological clichés, since he mostly works within the professional field.

I believe that this typology works well on the macro- and meso-levels, when we study the tendencies of sociology's development as a whole or the peculiarities of certain regions. However, I find it difficult to identify types with persons, and not because I am trying to be politically correct. Such identification is akin to distillation. The main difficulty is in trying to determine which trait to take as essential: someone's place of work, or the topic they work on? It is easy to identify people by institution, but it is more difficult to identify them by type of research: some may fall within the boundaries of one type, others may work within different types of sociologies simultaneously. Most well-known sociologists are versatile. Where would we put, for example, the Levada Center? The sociologists who work there perform high-quality policy studies that require great professional skill, but they also choose publicly relevant topics and espouse a strong civic position. They thus belong to three types of sociology: professional, policy, and public.

A greater tendency toward professionalization does not reduce the social significance of a sociologist's research. Highly professional work may contribute to the advancement of society just as much as public sociologists' involvement in public life. A different matter is the effectiveness of the political habitus and of the institutions that are responsible for using social knowledge to improve society. The studies of post-Soviet nationalism and ethnicity carried out by Leokadia Drobizheva's team are professional social science. She is also well-known as a consultant to the State Duma on nationalities issues. Are these activities public sociology? From the point of view of ideological clichés, they are not, because she is engaged in a dialogue with the authorities. From the point of view of using existing means and channels to solve politically and socially relevant problems, using the knowledge obtained—yes, those activities may be considered part of public sociology.

Viktor Shnirelman's articles are methodologically revisionist and at the same time publicly oriented. For example, he shows how the lack of reflection in the methodology used by Russian scholars contributes to justifications of racism in science, political decision-making, and everyday life. He may be viewed as a professional, critical, and public sociologist. But note that by affiliation he is not a sociologist, but an anthropologist working at the Academy of Sciences.

Even the clear ideology associated with the Center for Independent Social Research, which has a good reputation among sociologists, does not place it squarely in one of the model's categories. Its staff perform both socially relevant and policy research; professionalism is the main hiring requirement. Nevertheless, public sociology is also an important part of the Center's work, as personified by its director, Viktor Voronkov. At the same time, the center is no stranger to critical sociology.

Trying to use Burawoy's typology at a micro-level raises several questions: is sociology as practiced at the Academy of Sciences limited to the pursuit of career growth? Does career growth exclude professionalism? Does Academy of Sciences sociology always amount to intra-disciplinary parochialism and self-sufficiency? What kind of relationship do sociologists who work within the Academy of Sciences have with the authorities? What does independence mean in this case? Does it have to be tantamount to publicly-expressed opposition to the authorities? How and by what standard do we measure sociologists' independence?)

There is another aspect of grant-funded research that is important from the point of view of public sociology: the requirement that grantees' research yield a practical result that would help the local community develop civic values and solve pressing social problems.

Another important factor are training and fellowship programs funded by the Ford Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, and others. In my own experience and that of my colleagues¹, these provide an invaluable op-

¹ Doctoral students, young professors and researchers from provincial Russia who have taken courses at the Russian Academy of Sciences' Institute of Sociology co-organized by the Center for Independent Social Research (CISR) or at the Center for the Sociology of Culture at Kazan State University, have held a fellowship at the CISR or taken part in a research program at the Smolny College.

portunity to work with leading Russian and foreign social scientists, allowing us not only to understand the standards of global sociology, but also to feel its pulse. Such programs contribute to a synthesis between the professional and the public in Russian sociology.

For obvious reasons, public sociology could not develop in the Soviet Union; it is a Western product. Its attractiveness to Russian social scientists has to do with the peculiar features of their scholarly socialization. Part of the older generation of scholars, who were trained in the old dogmatic system of Soviet science, are predisposed to professional (career) sociology by their established worldview. They are to be found both inside and outside the Academy of Sciences; many of them work at universities. The small part of that generation that had an opportunity to learn about Western social science and use it in their professional activities are active in academic, policy, and public sociology.

Public sociology is mostly represented by middle-aged researchers whose scholarly socialization took place in the late 20th century—in a “transitional society,” to use Burawoy’s term. Through visiting fellowships at Western institutions, interaction with Western colleagues, and participation in joint research projects and conferences, they gained a new level of professionalism and, in general, a new vision of social science that differed strongly from the Soviet tradition. The professional motivation of many scholars of that generation was no longer shaped by the need to justify the decisions of the party, but by opportunities to study what is happening in a society in transformation and attempts to engage in social engineering.

But as Russian society and politics became less animated in the new century, the consequences were felt in sociology. Sociologists lost their illusions about Russia’s chances of quickly becoming a Western-style market economy, the “vertical of power” was reinforced, and the scope for independent civic activity narrowed. The result was a situation that is similar to the South African model.

Society’s need for practical sociological knowledge plays an important role in the development of public sociology. In contemporary Russia, the political elite chiefly turn to sociologists during electoral campaigns or in order to legitimate political decisions (with the “results” of sociological research acting as expert or socially relevant justification). The fact that civil society is so fragmented and underdeveloped deprives public sociology of its social soil.

The decrease in social demand for public sociology in Russia over the past decade went hand in hand with the triumph of consumerist values. The need to develop the market has led to a growth in the share of applied sociologists. The vast asymmetry between salaries in state institutions and sociological companies attracts sociologists to the latter. Looking at age distribution, we see that recruitment into the academic sphere is drying up. Policy sociology remains stable and is even growing, albeit slowly. Public and critical sociology are mixed in terms of age, but they are concentrated in Moscow and Saint Petersburg.

Moving on to what is specific about Tatarstan, we may note that applied sociology is especially developed here. It is distant from politics and offers decent pay, thereby attracting new talent. Policy, professional, and public sociology are combined in non-governmental organizations, such as Alexander Salagaev’s Center for Analytical Studies and Research, or my own Institute for Social Research and Civic Initiatives.

“Academic” sociology in the narrow sense disappeared when the Institute for Social and Economic Research of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tatarstan was disbanded a few years ago. A small group of sociologists, including myself, are working at the Academy’s Institute for History. There are research centers at universities that carry out policy and educational research. To compensate for the absence of academic sociology, there are regional sections of the Russian Union of Sociologists and the Russian Sociological Association. Their “public” activities consist in the annual Kazan Sociological Readings and various other conferences.

The underdeveloped and fragmented state of the sociological infrastructure in Tatarstan means that professional communication lacks depth and intensity—one of the conditions of public sociology. For a while, the Center for the Sociology of Culture at Kazan State University played a consolidating role. The enthusiasm of its director, Sergei Erofeev, was sustained by Tempus funding and the Ford Foundation’s support for a training

program for social scientists. In a sense, the Center was engaged not only in professional, but also in public sociology.

The attempt to characterize the state of contemporary Russian sociology through the prism of Michael Burawoy's survey of national sociologies raises new questions and stimulates a search for answers. Burawoy observes that the turn from public to policy sociology is not directly determined by the state's social, political, and economic model, and at the same time stresses the specific features of national sociologies. What are the reasons for the differences he enumerates? Based on his list of examples, I would like to single out two aspects.

The first has to do with his account of the situation in the former Soviet bloc. There is a striking difference between Bulgarian sociology, which was dominated by cooperation with the party-state apparatus, and the Hungarian and Polish varieties, which were characteristically autonomous and professionalized. The second lies in the comparison between post-socialist Russia and China. Michael Burawoy's question: "Why should sociology have assumed a much more vibrant form in China than in Russia?" prompts me to look for the etymology of difference in these countries' civilizational features, and more specifically in their religion. The similarities between Bulgarian and Russian sociology are probably determined by Orthodoxy; the closeness between the Polish and Hungarian models is based on Catholicism², whereas the Chinese model is rooted in Confucianism. I am not aware of any studies that test this hypothesis. But the influence of the religious matrix on worldviews, stereotypes of behavior, and consequently on political and intellectual culture is beyond doubt. The format of my essay does not allow me to examine this topic any more deeply, but further research into it may prove productive.

Authorized translation from the Russian by Mischa Gabowitsch

2 Here I would like to quote Andrei Amalrik's famous essay *Will the Soviet Union Survive Until 1984?*: "...it is worth mentioning that Russia received her Christianity from Byzantium, which was rigid and moribund, and not from the developing and dynamic young Western civilization. This could not but deeply influence subsequent Russian history".