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## SUPPLEMENT

### IN MEMORIAM

# Pitirim Alexanderovich Sorokin

January 21, 1889 – February 10, 1968

We announce with great sorrow the passing away of Professor Pitirim A. Sorokin, a global sociologist par excellence, on February 10, 1968 at his home in Winchester. We are especially grieved at the loss of Professor Sorokin to the sociological world because he was one of the senior members on the Advisory Board of our journal. Only in December last we brought out a *Sorokin Number* in his honour, in which quite eminent scholars elaborated the contributions made by Professor Sorokin. Alas! by the time the *Sorokin Number* was ready to go to him the fateful news of his death reached us. Rightly then, Mrs. Sorokin observed, "I regret very much that he did not see the Sorokin issue of the *Indian Journal of Social Research*; during his illness he mentioned often about its scheduled appearance and was eager to see it."

We are bringing out this supplement "*In Memorium: Pitirim A. Sorokin*" to offer our tributes & that of others to this great sociologist of modern times.



Professor Sorokin was born in the village of Touria, Russia, in 1889. He received a doctorate in sociology from the University of St. Petersburg in 1922. In November, 1923, he was invited by the Universities of Illinois and Wisconsin to lecture on the Russian Revolution, came to the United States, and in 1924 was appointed Professor in the University of Minnesota. He became a citizen of the United States in 1930, when he was also appointed as the first professor and chairman of the Sociology department at the Harvard University. He retired from Harvard in 1959. In 1948, Mr. Ili Lilly and the Lilly Endowment offered him \$ 120,000 for his studies on how to make human beings less selfish and more creative; this offer led to the foundation of the Harvard Research Centre in Creative Altruism in 1949 (which Sorokin directed until his retirement, and which, thereafter, became affiliated with the American Academy of Arts and Sciences), aimed at studying love as a science and trying to find ways of conquering man's predatory instincts, thereby solving social problems.

About Sorokin's place in the sociological world, it may be observed that he has examined and dealt with a vast corpus of sociocultural and historical facts. He has analyzed them logically and scientifically, and has contributed richly to the development and exposition of sociological theories. For his gigantic intellectual achievement and output, as well as for his fearless stand in the teeth of opposition, this stalwart in the sociological world stands unequalled and his place among the immortals who have given their best to their fellowmen remains assured. There are few aspects of human life which Sorokin has not dealt with—and that too, in considerable detail. His unique merit lies in the fact that he is a historian, philosopher, sociologist, logician and a psychologist—all combined in one. There has been no other sociologist who has made such a profound impact on contemporary sociological thinking as Sorokin has done both in the East and the West.

For the Indian student of Sociology, Sorokin's contribution should be considered of paramount importance for various reasons. In his sociological works, Indian ideals and ideas occupy a prominent place. His outlook is synthetic as that of the Indian seers. Indian sociologists can gather from his works considerable material which will help them in building new sociological theories and in interpreting the existing body of thought. This is not to suggest that Sorokin's writings are not read widely in Indian circles, they are. It is evident from the fact that a creative and cognitive approach in sociology, as followed by Radhakamal Mukerjee, Kewal Motwani, P. H. Prabhu and others in their writings, goes to support the anticipations of Sorokin about the shape of Sociology to come. Of the two roads, one leading to a hackneyed, rubberstamped, greatly mechanized set of dogmas, devoid of creative growth, and the other leading to the new peak of great syntheses and more adequate systems of sociology, sociology will choose the latter. He feels first, that sociology will grow not only externally as it has done successfully in the past, but also internally, as a generalizing science of the superorganic or sociocultural reality; secondly, that to accomplish this growth it will increasingly pass from the present predominantly analytical

and fact-finding character to a predominantly integrating, synthesizing and generalizing one; thirdly, that there are already some signs of such a passage or transformation; fourthly, that this coming sociology, through its integration, reconciliation, and mutual complementation of the existing, largely discordant, analytical and fact-finding theories, will greatly increase the knowledge of the superorganic, human universe as well as of the basic empirical dimensions, relationships, and uniformities; fifthly, that it will investigate the positive, creative sociocultural phenomena no less than the negative, pathological, and destructive ones; sixthly, that after realizing all the syntheses, generalizations, and uniformities possible at this stage, sociology will pass into a new analytical and fact-finding phase to collect relevant new facts and to study analytically important new "specks" of sociocultural reality. All those interested in developing Sociology on sound lines will do a great service to the cause of the future growth of sociology in this country, India, if they bear in mind the above prognostications of Sorokin.

Sorokin has, undoubtedly, rendered a singular service to the science of sociology in particular, and to humanity in general, by providing us with a remarkable base by way of his original, speculative and creative sociological theories and perfect our own sociological generalizations, drawing inspiration from the already existing creative literature of centuries past. We owe a special debt to him for all his contributions to the enlargement of our knowledge of the vast domain of sociocultural phenomena, for his deep and penetrating analyses, and for his synoptic and synthesized views about every aspect of human affair.

Sorokin has left behind 30 volumes and about 500 papers based on original research. He taught graduate classes, conducted Seminars, attended Conferences & Congresses, travelled extensively, carried on correspondence with friends in various parts of the world, supervised translations of his various works in various languages, lectured at institutions of higher learning in the United States & abroad & still found time to raise flowers in his garden. A keen awareness of the tragedy of the human situation & the impending chaos occupied his working hours & he worked ceaselessly to emphasize its magnitude & show the path of salvation. The titles of some of his books bring home to us the depth of his concern : *The Crisis of Our Age*, *Man and Society in Calamity*, *S. O. S. : The Meaning of our Crisis*, *The American Sex Revolution* and *Reconstruction of Humanity*. He was not a mere theorist, given to the luxury of spending years on refining methods of study and research or concepts but vitally concerned with the tragedy of human life and with the urgency of finding a new way of life. He was not in search of personal safty, security of tenure, salary or status. These were toys with which immature minds entertained themselves. But he played with high stakes and that was the very existence of humanity on this planet. And he died in the saddle.

Professor Sorokin is survived by his widow, the former Elena Petrovna Baratynskaya, a cellular biologist, whom he married in Russia in 1917 and who is now a scholar of the Radcliffe Institute, and two sons, Dr. Sergei Sorokin and Dr. Peter Sorokin.

Editors.



retooled. At the various mounting chutes there were saddles, surcingles, hackamores, spurs, and so forth-variously called sensate, ideational (then Epicurean and Stoic adaptation) and idealistic cultures, vertical and horizontal mobility, social time and space, familistic, contractual and compulsory relationships, social bonds, immanent change, the principle of limits, the law-norms, vehicles, and so forth. These were only some of Sorokin's standard equipment at his spread in those times.

Of course Sorokin was not the only one at Harvard with a string of mean actors for which it took guts, savvy, and practice to stay with even a few jumps, and he was not the only master craftsman developing equipment to impose on greenhorns like myself. All these craftsmen had one thing in common as I have learned through the years. They were always changing the breeds of broncos they trotted out for the students and remodeling the equipment hopefully for the better. You might think you were pretty good, knowing that at a given time with the equipment you knew you could stay anything they had at least ten jumps, and then five years later you might return and be thrown the first jump. You had to remaster both the equipment and the antics of the new cayuses or you were branded as a has been. Through the years I seem to have learned something about this process that many of my colleagues have not learned. I have learned that every time I took a fall from one man's string with his equipment, I could stay longer in any arena with any other mount. For example, I now flatter myself by thinking that I can drop into the wake of a tornado to do a disaster study armed with Sorokin's sensate, ideational and idealistic, or his familistic, contractual and compulsory trilogies, and Parson's pattern variables and ride out on a fairly safe and sound product with fewer bruises than if I had not tried to use both. As I rein in I say to myself that if there had been no Sorokin, there might have been no pattern variables and visa versa. Who knows! In any case, I can ride better with both than with neither or only one. And this is not the occasion for honoring anyone other than Sorokin.

Prepared in Honor of Professor P. A. Sorokin of his Seventieth Birthday and Introducing him to the Annual Banquet & Initiation Ceremony of the Michigan State University Chapter of AKD, 1959.

In 1933, Sorokin's string had its special characteristics which added to the trauma I experienced. In ranch jargon, the mounts in the strings of the others lacked Sorokin's change of pace and unpredictability. As they put themselves to throwing their riders, their stops, whether sun fish (that is, from left to right) or fence-row (that is, continually from one side), or any other stop came only after 'middle range jumps.' Sorokin's mounts could deliver stops from any and all range of jumps. (To duck out now from range jargon for a few words: If you missed one of Sorokin's classes, you might miss several centuries or only Pareto's derivations.) It was impossible to predict the angle or length or type of jump from which the fall would come. This is still true. Thus, when Bill Form and I recently published on the subject of persistence and

emergence of social and cultural systems in disasters, Sorokin wrote saying that the contribution was puny and lacking in significance because it ignored important literature in Italian, Russian, and Chinese. Although he did not say so, I assume he meant that it was time for me to brush up on his new equipment and to try to fork some of his new mounts in his corral. You never know ; he might have a spinner, the kind of buckler no man can stick without mastering dizziness. In any case, I am sure that if I could stick his newest mounts, I would be close to the space age. But this is looking ahead, and this peace is supposed to give a glimpse backward.

In Sociology 5, *Social Dynamics*, Sorokin made me pull more leather than I have ever pulled in my life. In that class you had to be at home with various societies in various centuries. You should be able to read in a few of the dozen or so languages which Sorokin himself read. After I decided to write on the peasant revolts for this class, I became more than ever aware of my inadequacies. Sorokin handed me his *Sociology of Revolution* saying that I would have to use more up-to-date equipment than he had used on this if I hoped to come through with the paper. From the class lectures, it was obvious that I was in the wrong corral. To try to ride it through I had to read world history and various interpretations day and night, week in and week out. The paper brought an "A", but I mention it here for other reasons. With Sorokin's "stiff" letter of recommendation, plus those of others, the SSRC granted me a postdoctorate fellowship, which in the third year took me to Germany for the purpose of studying the typological method of Max Weber and others, as this would be applied to peasants revolts and a host of other things. As I look back on this paper on the peasants revolts now, I think I can more adequately answer a question that has plagued me for a long time. Why do Sorokin's students not follow him ? Returning to ranch jargon, why don't the boys go in for mounts as long as centuries and as wide as the largest society ? As I lay the paper on peasants revolts beside the volume entitled *Fluctuations of Social Relationships, War, and Revolution*, I can answer the question for myself at least. The answer is not the one usually given, namely, that the "middle range" is more applicable. I answer simply, I am not a good enough rider for his string of mounts.

It is now time that I try in a few words to show how Sorokin and his colleagues are related to those mounts I am trying to master. It all focuses on the concept of system which was an important item of equipment needed in all Harvard corrals. I began to develop my own paraphernalia and equipment two decades ago.

As I equipped my spread I took stock of the accusations being thrown at the structural-functionalists as worshippers of the static or equilibrium model. I remembered how Sorokin never spoiled riders (as did some others) making them ride hobbled or imaginary stand-still broncos. Each greenhorn had to rope, saddle and ride live twisters. He also had to tell how he did it and why the equipment he used, Sorokin's of course, was best. You were not only learning how to wrangle. You had to be able to teach it.



Taking a lesson from Sorokin and others who ride live mounts, I attempted to build into my systemic model to be used in the study of boundary maintenance and systemic linkage features which would permit me to ride through and understand change. This schema is presented elsewhere, but I want here to indicate a few ways in which Sorokin contributed to it. Although he never separated the cognitive elements and processes from those of feeling and sentiment as I am attempting to do, he provided the underpinning for the model. Basic to the model of the social system is Sorokin's "meaningful interaction of two or more human individuals," and his requirement that interaction be an element and event "by which one party tangibly influences the overt actions or the state of mind of the other." In developing the components of social system, some of Sorokin's equipment became powerful aids. His concept 'social position' was taken over and first called status and later rank. His conceptualization of stratification was taken over literally as indicated: "Sorokin poses the question as to whether or not there is a 'specific multi-bonded group different from the family, tribe, caste, order or nation, that in modern times has exerted a powerful influence.' His answer is yes, and he suggests that we may have to call it 'X' to avoid confusion. There has been and is such a group. Its formula is as follow: It is (1) legally open, but actually semiclosed; (2) 'normal'; (3) solidary; (4) antagonistic to certain groups (social classes) of the same general nature, X; (5) partly organized but mainly quasi organized; (6) partly aware of its own unity and existence and partly not; (7) characteristic of western society of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries; (8) a multi-bond group bound together by two unbonded ties, occupational and economic (both taken in their broad sense), and by one bond of social stratification in the sense of the totality of its essential rights and duties as contrasted with essential different rights and duties of other groups (social classes) of the same general nature, X."

It is impossible to state here the extent of indebtedness to Sorokin resulting from his understanding and conceptualization of demographic processes, including both horizontal and vertical mobility. In the classroom he hammered home the anti-Marxian theses that the processes of vertical mobility in the industrialized countries had drained off very much more of the talent from the proletariat than was removed from the poorer peasantry of what later came to be called the underdeveloped areas in which more than two-thirds of the world's population lived.

In a piece such as this, in which one tries to see how many conventions can be violated without arousing too much moral indignation, it may not be too much out of place to state an indebtedness which has nothing to do with the professional use of the equipment provided by Sorokin. The logic of Sorokin's anti-Marxian doctrine concerning the abilities which lie in the peasantry and poorer classes of the underdeveloped areas had a very personal application when we adopted three babies, not from the industrial proletariat, but from an underdeveloped country. So far, we have no

reason from our small sample to doubt Sorokin's claim.

It would extend a piece such as this too much to continue to elaborate the contributions Sorokin has made to the equipment used in my own corral. To attempt to go into an analysis of the relation of the element, belief, to the process which articulates it, namely, cognitive mapping and validation, or attempt to discuss the element, norm, and the process which articulates it, namely, evaluation, without the *Social and Cultural Dynamics*, would be futile. The same holds for most of the other pairs in the model I am trying to use, and the comprehensive or master processes including communication, boundary maintenance, systemic linkage, institutionalization, socialization, and social control, by which I hope to better understand change. Not all of the items of equipment in the model meet with his approval. Sometimes he condemns an item of equipment which he has proved to be useful himself elsewhere. This is to be expected from a master craftsman with so many items of equipment at his disposal and such a wide range of mounts. Then, too, the competitors must be made to know the weaknesses of their best equipment.

Many who only read Sorokin and some of his classroom students who choose to forget do not have sufficient respect for his emphasis upon objectivity and disinterestedness as qualities to be cultivated in the producing of scientists. He was continually charging us—do as I say, not as I do. Sorokin, the scientists, has no use for Marxism or any other “ism” of this order. If he professes, reifies, and attempts to further familism and the ideational, if he advises his students to learn the Ten Commandments, and also how to shoot to kill, this was Sorokin the man, not the scientist talking, and he was talking from experience, not alone from this or a few previous generations, but from one who had ridden through many and was preparing himself and those near for the jolts ahead.

In closing, let me say that if I had to do it over again, I would ride past the middle ranges and any others with fenced-off pastures until I arrived at Sorokin's full spread. Then if he would take me into his apprenticeship, I would take the falls and make the most of the training and equipment, he and the craftsman he would have about (as friend or foe) and hope that I could keep up with the changes that both the universe and they unloosed.





## TRIBUTES by Carle C. Zimmerman

Sorokin, (Honorary Editor of *Sociologia Internationalis*), was born in Yarensky County of Volgoda Province in Russia—an extremely northern place near the Arctic Circle. His native people were called Komi or Syrian and they belong to the Ugro-Finnish branches of the family of man. They speak one of those types of languages coming out of Asia to which Turkish, Hungarian and Finnish belong so that, as Sorokin relates himself, Russian was for him a second language. He became an orphan at an early age and made his living by travelling, first with his father and later with an older brother mainly as a decorator of churches and repairing of religious objects, such as Russian Ikons. He told the writer in 1967 that he could no longer speak his native language. Friends of Sorokin, more recently from Russia, said in 1967 that his Russian (of fifty years ago) was now quaint and difficult.

He studied largely by himself and, according to his own words, went on to advanced secondary school rather because of an accidental opportunity than a plan. This means that he never attended any regular elementary school. His father was an alcoholic Ikon maker and wandered constantly from place to place. During more than 40 years of associating closely, I never heard him mention his mother, but he did speak of his two brothers. Sorokin was reared by an aunt in some northern village. His mother died about 1892. (See *Long Journey*, Ch. I). The two brothers both died in the Communist revolution, one shot by the Communists and the other from imprisonment. At the age of 14 he started his upper education at a Teacher's College or seminary under the jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church. There he became not only a leading student but a liberal revolutionary agitator against the Czarist government. For his political activities he was imprisoned first in 1906. He was paroled in 1907 but to complete his education he had to go away from Komi, since he was expelled from college there. He went to St. Petersburg (Leningrad) where he secured work as a tutor and supported himself for two years while he prepared for his university entrance examinations.

During the year 1909-1910 he matriculated in the Psycho-Neurological Institute, a private university in St. Petersburg. No sociology at that time was taught in the University of St. Petersburg, but Maxim Kovalevsky and E. de Roberty gave such courses in the Institute. Further, as he says in his autobiography, "The student body of the Institute unlike that of the University, for the most part impressed me as being more alive, revolutionary, and like myself, recruited from the lower, peasant-labor classes" (*Long Journey*, p. 67).

At the end of the year 1910, Sorokin transferred to the University of St. Petersburg for the completion of his under-graduate work. The reason he himself gives for the change was to avoid being drafted into the armed services since state university students were exempt (*Ibid*, 72). Here he continued his social science studies to prepare himself as a sociologist specializing in the sociology of law under Leon

1964. A single title may consist of one small volume or four large volumes such as *Social and Cultural Dynamics*, New York, American Book Company, 1937-41; Petrajitzky. Graduating in 1914 he was left at the university with a financial grant or scholarship aid to prepare himself for a teacher. During this time he kept up his revolutionary activity and was arrested once or twice. At one time he had to flee from Russia and hide in South-western Europe to escape arrest and imprisonment.

From 1914-1916 he was doing graduate work in St. Petersburg and this takes his career up to the revolution of 1917. The holocaust of Revolution and killings of 1917 put Sorokin on the other side—against Communist bloodshed. His previous arrests were by Czarist agents; now it was the revolutionary forces which considered him an enemy. At last he was arrested January 2, 1918, and put into prison by the Bolshevik government. After 57 days a release was made and he moved to Moscow where the government became then located. For some time he had been associated with Kerensky, the premier, as secretary to the moderate constitutional government. But communism finally triumphed and Sorokin was imprisoned again. He was again released December 31, 1918 and returned to the University of St. Petersburg as a professor of sociology.

Here it was that finally the situation became impossible. After the famine of 1921, in which American food gifts saved a number of millions of lives—at least 10 million according to Sorokin (p. 190, *Journey*)—he embarked upon a study of the sociology of hunger and famine. The communist government had killed the landowners and tried to collectivize the peasants. As a result of this, agricultural production declined to disastrously low levels. A former grain exporting country could no longer feed itself. A drought in 1920 and 1921 resulted in wholesale starvation. Millions died of famine. Sorokin's book about this was too much for the communists. His manuscript was destroyed and he accepted banishment on September 23, 1922 to save his life. Lenin had been approached about him and agreed to banishment as a substitute for the death sentence.

A year in Prague, Czechoslovakia, enabled him to recover a part of his health. In October 1923 he came to the United States, after a year of acclimatization to English in America, he came to the Sociology Department at the University of Minnesota at the city of Minneapolis for the beginning of the summer term of 1924. From that time he taught at the University of Minnesota for 6 years until 1930 when he was invited to Harvard University. Since 1930 until his retirement he continued to work at Harvard. Since then he lived in a suburb, 8 Cliff Street, Winchester, Massachusetts, and continued his writing and lecturing. Undoubtedly he died as the world's most famous sociologist.

### The Writings Summarized

In the field of Sociology starting with a study of *Crime and Punishment* (in Russian, 1913) Sorokin has written about forty "titles". His last two important ones were *Twentieth Century Sociological Theories* and *Basic Trends of Our Time*.



reprinted in entirety by Bedminster Press as noted. In addition a title may have only one issue but generally a number of reprints, abridgements, and translations. There have been at least 12 or more translations of *Contemporary Sociological Theories*, New York 1928. It was followed by *Twentieth Century Sociological Theories*, 1966. This is not a revision of the work *Contemporary Sociological Theories* but is a supplement to that work giving the general details of most of the important sociological theories appearing in the forty years since the first work. These are bound volumes and do not include the about 500 essays published in various scholarly journals and scientific publications.

The 1963 work *Pitirim Sorokin in Review*, Edited by Allen, is a work analyzing Sorokin's writings in many fields. It is most valuable for a consideration of the theories of Sorokin because it contains among other items, a most definitive bibliography of the books, translations and other writings by Sorokin to that time, a critique of his main theories of history by Arnold Toynbee, a lengthy reply of 125 printed pages by Sorokin to all his critics and a self-analysis of Sorokin, called *Sociology of My Mental Life*.

Thus there is now available to those institutions wishing a minimum of the best of Sorokin for the future teaching in Sociology, seven or eight volumes of his best writing, his autobiography and two important works about him by students and admirers. In addition, copies of a previous semi-autobiography called *Leaves from a Russian Diary* (revised edition) are probably to be found.

The reduction of *Social and Cultural Dynamics* by Beacon Press of Boston to a one volume edition was achieved largely by elimination of footnotes and tables of interest mostly only to specialists and not the general sociological public.

A few lines from his autobiography, written at 72 years of age, gives Sorokin's interpretation of himself.

Eventfulness has possibly been the most significant feature of my life-adventure. In a span of seventy-two years I have passed through several cultural atmospheres: pastoral-hunter's culture of the Komi, agricultural and then urban culture of Russia and Europe and, finally, the Megalopolitan technological culture of the United States. Starting my life as a son of a poor itinerant artisan and peasant mother, subsequently I have been a farm-hand, itinerant artisan, factory worker, clerk, teacher, conductor of a choir, revolutionary, political prisoner, journalist, student, editor of metropolitan paper, member of Kerensky's cabinet, an exile, professor of Russian, Czech, and American universities, and a scholar of an international reputation. No less eventful has been the range of my life-experience: besides events, joys and sorrows, successes and failures of normal human life, I fully tasted six imprisonments—three under the Czarist and three under the Communist regimes; the unforgettable experience of a man condemned to death and daily during six weeks, expecting his execution by the Communist firing squad. I know what it means to be damned and praised, to be banished or to lose one's brothers and friends in a political struggle, and, in a modest degree, I have experienced also the blissful grace of a creative work. These life-experiences have taught me more than innumerable books I have read and lectures I listened to.

Sorokin will be very much missed as a friend and as a fellow scientist. However, we shall have with us in perpetually his books and ideas. These treasures will in the opinion of the Editors of *Sociologia Internationalis* remain immortal.

### TRIBUTES by Kenneth V. Lottich

Russian-born, one of the most influential contemporary world-famed sociologists, and one of the most prolific trenchant sociologists of our century, Sorokin was the founder and head of Harvard University's Sociology Department (1931-1946). As "a starving and hunted revolutionary" (as he described himself in his "Sociology of My Mental Life", pp. 3-38 in Philip J. Allen, Ed., *Pitirim A. Sorokin in Review*, 1963) and a student of the Psycho-Neurological Institute and of the University of St. Petersburg, he was imprisoned several times. These imprisonments gave him, he says, "a first-hand experience in criminology and penology...the field of my graduate study and then of my first professorship." With the explosion of the Russian Revolution, he became a secretary to Prime Minister Kerensky, and imprisoned for four months. One of the groups which engineered the overthrow of the Communist Government in Archangel in 1918, he was condemned to death. Freed by Lenin's order, he became the founder, first Professor, and Chairman of the Department of Sociology at the University of St. Petersburg; arrested again in 1922 he was banished by the Soviet Government. After 9 months in Czechoslovakia as a guest of President Masaryk, he was invited to lecture at the Universities of Illinois and Wisconsin; in 1924 became Professor at the University of Minnesota, as the first Professor and Chairman of the Sociology Department at Harvard, he retired in 1959, and directed then the Harvard Research Centre in Creative Altruism.

During his lifetime in America, Sorokin published, besides many scientific papers, some 30 substantial volumes, translated into many languages (*The Sociology of Revolution*, 1925; *Social Mobility*, 1927; *Contemporary Sociological Theories*, 1928; *Principles of Rural-Urban Sociology*, with C. C. Zimmerman, 1929; *Social and Cultural Dynamics*, 4 vols., 1937-1941; *The Crisis of Our Age*, 1941; *Society, Culture, and Personality: Their Structure and Dynamics: A General Sociology*, 1947; *The Reconstruction of Humanity*, 1948; *Explorations in Altruistic Love and Behaviour*, 1950; *Social Philosophies in an Age of Crisis*, 1950; etc.). Early in his career Sorokin promoted behaviourism and positivism, but later came to be anti-behaviourist and anti-positivist, insisting that the study of social phenomena must include meanings, values, and norms. His *Social Mobility* helped to develop the study of class stratification; his books on rural-urban sociology gave the lead to studying comparative values, structures, and factual data of this field. Sociology is the study of sociocultural phenomena, or the superorganic world and its changes in time and space. This superorganic world consists of the developed manifestations of "mind" (much in the sense of Hegel), which includes language, science, philosophy, religion, art, technology, social organisations, and personality, all considered as products of "meaningful" human interaction. A sociocultural phenomena comprise three factors: (1) individuals who interact; (2) scientific, philosophical, religious, ethical, and aesthetic; meanings, values, and norms, which are non-material; and (3) material "vehicles" or "conductors" which express, convey, and signify meanings and values. Personality is



a product of shaping influence of culture and society, so that a plurality of selves in the individual reflects the pluralism of the groups to which he belongs.

History is not cyclical or linear process of fluctuation from one sociocultural system to another, a change in the "supersystems" entailing corresponding changes in all the "subsystems" of art, science, philosophy, ethics, law, war, revolution, social relationships, and types of personality. These fluctuations are due to a principle of change immanent in the superorganic, sociocultural world itself, though not uninfluenced by extrinsic, physical, biological and other factors. Western culture is "sensate", decaying culture which is in the process of dissolution and will be superseded by some form of "ideational" or "idealistic" supersystem of culture. Sorokin prefers the "idealistic" which recognises reality as both spiritual and material, and considers truth and knowledge as deriving from *intuition* and *faith* as well as from human reason and sensory experience. Sorokin's influence has been disseminated by his graduates, scattered throughout the world, and through his prestige as President of the American Sociological Society (1965).

Although many sociologists, especially in North America, disagreed (sometimes violently) with Sorokin, at the national meeting of the A. S. S. held in 1965, they almost totally recognised his "Deanship" as he rose to present his presidential address.

### TRIBUTES by The York Times (Feb. 11, 1968)

Professor Sorokin, who retired from the faculty of Harvard University in 1955, had been the first chairman of its sociology department for 13 years. His studies of cultural change and social systems were translated into 17 languages, and his analysis of historical change attracted wide attention. History, he said, sweeps from periods of "sensate" to periods of "ideational" culture, with a balance in the "idealistic" seldom achieved. By "ideational," Professor meant a cultural attitude of looking to "truth of faith," mysticism, and authority, such as that which governed medieval European society. A "sensate" culture is more materialistic, depends on sense evidence and develops strong natural sciences. He designated Western cultural sensate, and he saw its breakdown nearing. This analysis turned Professor Sorokin to considering creative altruism, and, when he retired in 1955, he continued studies in the techniques of altruism and its application to social and cultural problems.

In an interview in the New Yorker magazine in 1958, Dr. Sorokin spoke of his "creative altruism": "Beginning in 1940's, I came to the conclusion that if individual human beings, groups, and cultural institutions in general did not become notably more creatively altruistic, nothing could save mankind. Popular prescriptions, such as political changes, and education as a panacea against war, won't do it. This century, in which science and education have reached unrivalled heights, is the bloodiest of all the 25 centuries of Greco-Roman and European history."

Sorokin's *The Ways and Powers of Love* uncovers a sufficient body of evidence to



show that unselfish, creative love can stop aggressive inter-individual and inter-group attacks, tangibly influence international policy, and pacify international conflicts.

Sorokin's 1947 book, *Society, Culture and Personality*, revealed why he felt that radical cures were necessary for modern society : "Contemporary art is primarily a museum of social and cultural pathology. It centres in the police morgue, the criminal's hide-out, and the sex organs, operating mainly on the level of the social sewers."

Sorokin had little faith in man's ability to control his future through social science : "The more economists have tampered with economic conditions the worse they have become; the more political scientists have reformed governments the more are governments in need of reform; the more sociologists have tampered with the family the more the family has disintegrated. Likewise, all the social sciences have failed correctly to foresee the trends of important sociocultural processes. On the eve of war they were forecasting peace; on the eve of economic crash and impoverishment they were predicting bigger and better prosperity."

In his lighter moments, Sorokin could state that it was inevitable that I. Q. tests would be devaluated into give away programmes on radio and television, "the field of entertainment and commercial advertising where, by their nature, they belong."

And once he proposed a super-university, "Genius Tech," with admittance depending on students' ability to resist for three days the temptations of beautiful girls on luxurious lounges near tables piled high with ultra-rich food. "Unfortunately, there is too much soft living at Harvard," he said. "The students are fat and lazy from too much to eat and drink. They live too luxuriously in their separate houses and their beds are too soft."

#### TRIBUTES by Kewal Motwani

My first contact with Sorokin was through the study of his *Contemporary Sociological Theories* (1929). The book gave an unmistakable evidence of Sorokin's encyclopaedic knowledge of social thinkers, both of the past and the present, of the east and the west, who had dealt with the social life and institutions. I believe Professor Chapin has stated somewhere that Sorokin had passed in review about 2,200 thinkers. To have studied the writings of such a vast array of thinkers, to have classified them into different schools and to have presented their contributions in such a succinct manner was indeed a gigantic feat of intellect.

In addition to this wide sweep of things and microcosmic vision, Sorokin had retained and revealed a firm fidelity to the intellectual ethos of the age that was hovering on the horizon. He had crossed the geographical and racial frontiers, taken in his stride humanity as one unit of investigation and presented an integrated picture of the social thought of the whole world. To be sure, there were many factors that helped him to develop such a wide outlook and given shape to his intellectual impediments. A close affinity between the Russian and Sanskrit languages was a prime factor. While preparing for his Master's Degree, Sorokin's teachers gave him lists of



hundreds of books which he had to study for his examination and these lists covered the fields of sociology and law fairly thoroughly. Also, elaborate accounts of Russian archaeologists, ethnologists, geographers and linguists, who travelled to different parts of Russian, Siberia, Central Asia, China, Tibet, India, Iran, etc. appeared in scientific and popular Journals. They made Sorokin realize that the world was much bigger than what was found within the boundary lines of his own country.

As a result of this first-hand contact with the fundamentals of Asian thought, Sorokin refused to be awed into unquestioned acceptance of the anthropological interpretation that had been made popular by Max Muller and his disciples in various countries in Europe. He saw depths and heights beyond the comprehension of scholars brought up in a mechanistic, secular climate of thought prevailing in Europe at that time.

An equally important factor that contributed to the formation of the intellectual and psychic anatomy of his being was his wholesome, integrated personality. He had grown up amidst pristine purity and serene strength of nature. Vast forests, still unravaged by the ravenous greed of man, lakes and rivers unpolluted by the dregs of industrialism, open skies, Sun, Moon and stars illuminating the unfathomable spaces of cosmos, had all helped to induce a contemplative frame of mind and given him an assurance of the reality of life that transcended the diurnal life of senses. His intellectual development took place under conditions of extreme indigence, adding necessity to instinctive urge for intellectual opulence. The social and political turmoil around him oriented him towards the confusion and chaos of the times for which his restless mind sought an immediate solution. To these physical, emotional and mental factors must be added the element of wisdom that came from within and found confirmation in the sacred teachings of the ancient people of Asia and Europe.

It was this rare combination of different factors that contributed to the formation of his personality, and it is not difficult to see here the secret of Sorokin's dynamism, inexhaustible energy, creative elan, incessant search for the reality of things and an abounding eagerness to communicate the fruits of his labours to his fellowmen.

If any of these factors had been wanting in the formation of his personality, Sorokin would not have been the Sorokin we know, the daring protagonist of the "grand theories of sociology", the champion of intuition as being one of the methods of knowing, the saintly soul who appealed ardently for cultivation of altruistic love, it being the only saving grace for man now sunk so low into the savagery of self-annihilation and decimation of all life on this planet, the Sorokin who bore the burden of lifting up, in all parts of the world, the level of sociological thought to a higher dimension. Through the uniqueness of his personality and principles, Sorokin has secured for himself a place among the front ranks of sociologists, scholars and servants of humanity.

**TRIBUTES by Arnold J. Toynbee**

I met Professor Sorokin first on paper and as a critic. He raked my own work from bows to stern with the kind of broadside and used to be fired by ships of the line carrying one hundred guns, I was surprised to find myself still afloat, but I was, and this gave me the chance of studying Sorokin's works, particularly *Social and Cultural Dynamics*, which will, I take it, go down to history as his *opus magnum*. In reading this great work, I realized that I was communing with a mind that possessed two faculties rarely found in combination. A general hypothesis about the course of human affairs was supported by a wealth of statistics. The author was evidently pursuing the scientist's aim of converting qualitative descriptions into quantitative terms, and I was impressed by his daring. He applied his statistical tests in the most intractable provinces of human activity—in the province of art, for instance, and in the province of religion. Like the true pioneer explorer that he was, he mapped out his findings and presented the results for the benefit of his contemporaries and successors. Though Sorokin felt a robust assurance that his own hypotheses were absolutely right, he must have reckoned with the possibility that they would be criticized and modified by successive generations of workers in the same field. What I, for my part, should predict for certain is that no future student of human affairs will be able to by-pass Sorokin's work. The future student may be a disciple or he may be a dissenter, but in either capacity his encounter with Sorokin will be a major event in his own progress.

**TRIBUTES by Michael V. Belok**

It was with great sorrow that I learned of Sorokin's recent death. He was a great man. We in America needed him more than ever.

**TRIBUTES by Santosh K. Nandy**

Sorokin is no more. He died after a long illness. The loss to sociology, to the world of learning, and to humanity was just incalculable. He was a great friend of India. We all pray : May his soul rest in peace !

