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SOME ASPECTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONTEMPORARY SOCIOLOGY IN BULGARIA

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Ljubiša Mitrović

University of Niš, Faculty of Philosophy, Serbia
E-mail: ljubisa@filfak.ni.ac.rs

Abstract. *The paper analyses the basic characteristics of and trends in the development of the contemporary Bulgarian sociology. It first presents an overview of the sociological tradition and historical development of sociology as a science in Bulgaria. Then it moves on to present the most important representatives of contemporary sociology in Bulgaria, research institutions and organizations.*

Key words: *sociology, Bulgaria, sociological tradition, contemporary sociology.*

1. A Short Overview of the Development Path of Bulgarian Sociology

Sociological research of the development of national sociologies is important not only for the sake of having knowledge about national traditions in the field, but also for the sake of understanding the deep structural roots of the current trends in the development of contemporary sociology. In that sense, the sociology of sociology and the history of sociology as well as the sociology of knowledge, have a common aim of researching the preconditions of the emergence and the specific development of sociological thought and practice, i.e. of the institutionalization of sociology as a calling and as a profession in the context of the national and regional development of different countries. The contemporary sociological literature already boasts a number of books in the history of sociology. Unfortunately, such books are still relatively scarce whent it comes to the history of sociology in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. Among the rare ones is the book named *The History of Sociological Thought in the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe* by Z. T. Golenkova and N. P. Narbut (Moscow, 2003). The history of the development of Bulgarian sociology has been written about in severel books written by Bulgarian colleagues, primarily Stoyan Mihailov, Boris Stavrov, Dobriyanov Velichko i Nikolai Genov[1]. While

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[1] See*: Savremena sociologija u Bugarskoj* [*Contemporary Sociology in Bulgaria*] (Dobriyanov Velichko, Boris Stavrov, Nikolai Genov) Sofia, 1978; *Sociologija u Bugarskoj posle Drugog svetskog rata* [*Sociology in*

some of the given authors have written about the national sociological tradition in the development of Bulgarian sociology after the Second World War, others have written about the development of sociology in Bulgaria within the larger context of internationalization and globalization of contemporary sociology.

There are four basic phases that can be established in the history of the development of sociological thought and the calling of a sociologist in Bulgaria: *the first one*, lasting from the second half of the 19th century to 1918; *the second one*, inbetween the two world wars; *the third one*, from the 1950s to the 1980s, and the *fourth one*, that started in the 1990s and has lasted ever since.

At the end of the 19th century, i.e. at the time when the Bulgarians fought for national liberation and when Bulgaria was indeed liberated in 1878, social and political thought developed in the works of Karavelov, Botev, Levski and Rakovski, who were revolutionary and democratically oriented. It should also be noted that the social thought in Bulgaria at this time developed under the influence of Russian revolutionaries (Herzen, Chernishevski and Pisarev). Luben Karavelov was the first one to use the term sociology in Bulgaria, and the first lectures in sociology were held at the University of Sofia; it was an introdutory course named *General Sociologies*, which was given at the Higher Military Academy in Sofia (1880). It is at this period of the development of capitalist relations that civil and Marxist sociology began to emerge only to then strat to mix and be informed by the other forms of social, scientific and sociological thought.

Between the two world wars sociology developed into two directions: the civil and the Marxist one. The Bulgarian scientific sociological society was founded in 1931 and it organized a number of lectures and discussion panels on sociological problems at the University of Sofia. Marxist sociology was primarily developed by *Dimitar Blagoyev* (1856-1924), *A. Nedelkov* (1876-1942), *I. Yanulov* (1881-1965), *Georgi Dimitrov* (1882-1949) and *T. Pavlov* (1890-1977). The most prominent among them is *Dimitar Blagoyev* (one of the founders of the Communist Party in Bulgaria). His major books include: *Socialism and the Worker Question in the Country* (1900), *Big Industry and the Worker Class in Bulgaria* (1908), *The Position of the Worker Class in our Industry* (1911). All of them analyse the class structure and the contraditory trends in the development of the Bulgarian society. In addition, a significant contribution to the development of Marxist sociology was given by *Todor Pavlov*, whereas the best-known author when it comes to sociological, ethnosociological and socio-psychological research is *Ivan Hadziski* (1907-1944).

Ivan Hadziski is the founder of the geocultural, ethnoculturological and ethnopsychological research in Bulgaria. In 1940 he was proclaimed by the academician Mihalchev to be one of the most talented Bulgarian sociologists. In many respects his work is a pioneering one, especially in the area of the reserach of the ethnopsychological character of the Bulgarian nation, the sociological self-knowledge of the Bulgarian man and the foundation of the sociology of Bulgarian society[2]. I. Hadžiski can be said to be one of the founders of the Bulgarian sociological school. In his papers, and especially in his book

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Bulgaria after the Second World War] (Stoyan Mihailov), Sofia, 2003; *Istorija Bugarske sociologije* [*The History of Bulgarian Sociology*] (Boris Stavrov), Sofia, 2004; *Bibliografija Bugarske sociologije* [*The Bibliography of Bulgarian Sociology*] (Boris Stavrov) , Sofia, 2009.

[2] See: P. E. Mitev "*Predgovor za prvi tom Izabranih dela I. Hadžijskog*" [*Preface to the First Volume of Selected Works of Ivan Hadziski*], Sofia, 2002.

entitled *The Essence and the Psyche of our Nation*, and *Authority, Dignity and the Mask* (Sofia, 1933), he presented a scientific analysis of the essence of social psychology of different classes and social groups in the Bulgarian society. The conclusions made by this author (who P. E. Mitev views as "the miracle of Hadziski") and who is the founder of the Bulgarian sociological school, are important not only for the Bulgarians but also for all the others in the Balkans, so that it is regrettable that they have remained unknown to the Balkan neighbours of Bulgaria[3]. In addition, it should also be pointed out that Hadziski resolutely opposed the ideology of fascism. His book entitled *Authority, Dignity and the Mask* (Sofija, 1933) is a study of leadership in politics and it exposes the personalities of Hitler and Mussolini[4]. His creative work is bound to be an object of research and will be of great importance for the on-coming generation of Bulgarian sociologists, social pathologists and ethnologists.

The development of sociology in Bulgaria after the Second World War can be divided into three phases: *the first one*, lasting from 1947 to 1955, when sociology was ideologically anathemized, and in which it did not exist as an institutionalized study, but developed within historical materialism, i.e. it was dominated by the histomat. The second phase lasted from 1956 to 1968, when theoretical sociology emerged and the way was paved for its becoming an independent science. At this time, a major contribution to theoretical sociology was given by *Zhivko Oshavkov*. *The Bulgarian Sociological Assciation* was also created at this period. The initial empirical sociological work was conducted by *S. Mihailov* and *Z. Stoykov*; in addition, *the Institute of Sociology* at the BAS (the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences) was founded (headed by Z. Oshavkov) along with *the Centre for the Sociological Reearch of the Youth* (headed by Mincho Semov). Future professionals in sociology at this time started to get educated at the University of Sofia. The Bulgarian sociologists started to cooperate with various foreign sociological associations. The journal entitled *Sociological Problems* gets revived (1968). *The 7th World Congress in Sociology* was held in Varna in 1970. That was the period when the Bulgarian Sociological Association was on the rise, and when the following sociologists get deserved attention, namely *Dimitar Mihalchev* (1880-1967*), Zhivko Oshavkov* (1913-1982), *Velichkov Dobriyanov* (1926-1992), *Luben Nikolov* (1937-1991), *Stoyan Mihailov*, *Niko Jahiel*, *Georgi Fotev*, *Nikolai Genov*.

The third phase started in the 1990s and has lasted ever since. Here the Bulgarian sociology is on the rise through an active participation in the international sociological association and reliance on national sociological tradition. The Bulgarian sociological school is founded on the basis of the work of *Ivan Hadziski* and *Zhivko Oshavkov*. Zhivko Oshavkov[5] brought about the renewal of the Bulgarian Sociological Association in 1959, and was its first president. Oshavkov was also the first director of the BAS Institute of Sociology (1968-1973), the chair of its General Sociology and Sociology of Knowledge

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[3] See: P. E. Mitev "*Ivan Hadžijski: istorija i aktuelnost*" [*Ivan Hadzijski – History and Actuality*], Zbornik radova povodom stogodišnjeg jubileja Ivana Hadžiskog, Sofija, 2007, p. 9.

[4] On I. Hadziski and his work see: Tz. Tomova "*Ivan Hadžijski – vreme, stvaralaštvo, sudbina*" [*Ivan Hadzijski – the Time, the Work, the Fate*], Sofia, 1990, and the book "Bibliografija radova od i za Ivana Hadžijoskog" [*Bibliography of Work by and on I. Hadzijski*], Sofia, 1982.

[5] For details on Zh. Oshavkov see Stoyana Mihailov "*Sociologija u Bugarskoj posle Drugog svetskog rata*" [*Sociology in Bulgaria after the Second World War*], Sofia, 2003.

Department, the President of the Bulgarian Organizing Committee for the 7th World Congress of Sociologists, as well as the vice-president of the International Sociological Association. (1970-1974). This author dealt with the problems of general theoretical sociology and empirical sociological research of the social structure of the contemporary Bulgarian society. He was the first Bulgarian sociologist to participate in a number of internatioanl sociological congresses starting from 1956 and onwards. His best-known books include: *Historical Materialism and Sociology* (1958), *Sociology as a Science* (1970), *A Thesaurus on Information for Empirical Sociological Research* (1983), *Sociology*[6].

A significant contribution to the development of Bulgarian sociology was also given by Niko Jahiel, Luben Nikolov, Dobrin Spasov and others. Especially prominent are the books *Niko Jahiel* such as: *Sociology and Science – Theoretical and Methodological Problems* (Sofia, 1975), *Sociology and Social Practice* (Sofia, 1982), *Sociology of Science* (Sofia, 1987), *Sociology and Social Change* (Sofia, 1988). Most of them have also been published abroad, both in the East and in the West, and have contributed to the visibility of Bulgarian sociology in the world.

2. The Basic Traits of the Development of Contemporary Sociology in Bulgaria

Generally speaking, there have occurred major changes in the development of sociology in Bulgaria during the last 20 years. First of all, sociology as a science, a calling and a profession, spread into different university centres. Secondly, there occurred a change in the programme and theoretical orientation in the sense of focusing on new scientific and problematic fields, as well as professional expansion through the emergence of sociologists with a university diploma, oriented towards pragmatic i.e. applied sociology. In short, sociology develops in Bulgaria today both as a research-oriented and institutionalized profession, and as an independent department at various faculties and universities (in Sofia, Blagoevgrad, Veliko Trnovo, Varna, Shumen, etc.). Parallel to the development of general theoretical sociology is the process of advancing the methodology of empirical research (especially in the work of S. Mihailov, G. Fotev, N. Genov, etc.). An array of specialized applied sociologies is developed, such as sociology of work and economic life (Ch. Kjoranov, D. Dimitrov, K. Petkov, T. Tonchev, G. Kostov, H. Stoyanov, S. Todorova, T. Rakidzijevska), of regional and global development (N. Genov, A. Mantareva), urban sociology and sociology of stratification (V. Kozhuharova, N. Tilkidzijev, M. Draganov), sociology of organization and politics (D. Minev, M. Yelazakova, S. Nikolov, S. Donchev), sociology of interethnic relations (V. Topalova, T. Nedelcheva, K. Kertikov, P. E. Mitev), sociology of religion and everyday life (G. Fotev, N. Bogumilova, B. Nikolova, V. Bosakov), sociology of youth (M. Semov, P. E. Mitev), sociology of culture (I. Stefanov, V. Dobriyanov, Ch. Kyoranov, K. Goranov), sociology of science and education (G. Gornev, P. Boyadzieva, Y. Minkov, V. Milenkova, K. Petkova, I. Chalkov), sociology of transition (N. Genov, A. Raichev, K. Stojchev).

The Bulgarian Sociological Association is an active institution, just like the journals entitled *Sociological Journal* (1968), *Sociological Research*, *Sociological Overview*

[6] For details on the work of Zh. Oshavkov see the proceedings "*Živko Ošavkov – ličnost i naučno delo*" [*Zhivko Oshavkov – Life and Work*], ur: Vera Ošavkova i Stojan Mihailov, Sofia, 1993.

(1977), *Sociological Problems* (1969). Especially active is *the Institute of Sociology* at the BAS (1968) with its developed and numerous departments (the Department of Communication and Social Stratification, the Department of the Sociology of Organization and Politics, the Department of the Sociology of Work and Social Policy, the Department of the Sociology of Science and Education, the Department of the Sociology of Deviant Behaviour, the Department of Etnosociology and Ethnopsychology, the Department of the Sociology of Religion and Everyday Life, the Department of the Sociology of Global and Regional Development, the Department of the Methods of Sociological Research, the Department of the Research of Public Opinion). In addition, Bulgarian sociologists actively participate in the work of the International Association of Sociology and other scientific sociological gatherings in the world. Bulgarian sociologists in diaspora (e.g. M. Todorova and Tz. Todorov) are also active (their most important works include *The Imaginary Balkans* and *We and the Others*, both of which have been translated into Serbian)[7].

Contemporary Bulgarian sociology is open and pluralist when it comes to its theoretical orientations, and diverse in its subdisciplines and problem areas. As opposed to the post-war generation of sociologists, who dealt with general theoretical and methodological issues, the problem of the status of sociology and its relation towards historical materialism, contemporary sociologists focus on the problem fields of specialized sociologies and applied empirical research. In that sense, they have developed a number of applied sociologies such as sociology of work and economic sociology, sociology of culture, sociology of politics, sociology of stratification, rural sociology, sociology of regionalnog and global development, sociology of religion, ethnosociology, sociology of interethnic relations, sociology of communication, sociology of youth and sociology of transition.

Sociology is an established discipline, calling and profession in Bulgaria today. It is taught at a number of faculties and universities. The professional activity of sociologists has been fostered by the Bulgarian Sociological Association (BSA) since 1969, as well as by theoretical journals. Apart from university sociology, Bulgaria also boasts institutes of sociology whose activity contributes to the assertion of sociology as a science, a calling and a profession. The Heads of the Institute of Sociology of the BAN have been: Zhivko Oshavkov as the founder, Stoyan Mihailov, Georgi Fotev, Velina Topalova, Dimitar Dimitrov.

Sociology as a profession becomes ever more important in the professioanl division of labour. Despite the fact that the greatest number of sociologists is employed in the education system and the mass media, they have lately also been able to find jobs in public administration, as public analysts, or as parts of the professional, developmental and advertizing teams in various companies. Naturally, this short overview of the major traits and trends in the development of contemporary Bulgarian sociology would not be complete if I did not present in somewhat greater detail the achievements of what I deem to be the most important authors / sociologists in Bulgaria today, namely *Stoyan Mihailov, Georgi Fotev, Nikolai Genov, Petar Emil Mitev* and *Vasil Prodanov.*

Academician prof. *Stoyan Mihailov*, PhD (1930) is doubtlessly one of the doyens of Bulgarian sociology. He graduated in philosophy. He started working as a teaching assis-

[7] See M. Todorova, "*Imaginarni Balkan*", Biblioteka XX vek i Čigoja štampa, Beograd, 1998; and Cvetan Todorov, "*Mi i drugi*", Beograd, 1994.

tant at the Department of Philosofy at the University of Sofia, but then started focusing on social issues. He is one of the major associates of Zhivko Oshavkov, the founder of the post-war sociology in Bulgaria. He worked as a professor of the St. Kliment Ohridski University in Sofia, was the Director of the Institute of Sociology at the BAS, has been as associate member of the BAS since 1984, the Secretary of the 7th World Congress of Sociologists Organization Committee (Varna, 1970), as well as the editor of the journal entitled *Social Problems*. Mihailov is also the author and editor of the *Encyclopaedia Dictionary of Sociology* (1996). He is the author of the following important monographs: *Society as a Sociological System* (Sofia, 1965), *Empirical Sociological Research* (Sofia, 1973), *Zhivkovism through the Prism of a Personal Drama* (Sofia, 1993), *Stalinist Totalitarianism* (Sofia, 2000), *Sociology in Bulgaria after the Second World War* (Sofia, 2003), *Sociological System* (2010). Some of those monographs have also been translated into foreign languages.

With his theoretical and empirical work, *Stoyan Mihailov* has definitely made a significant cobtribution to the the foundation and the development of Bugarian scosiological school and its recognition in the world. His most important work in general systematic sociology is *Sociological System*, in which he has presented an original acientific and theoretical approach to the strcture and the dynamics of the modern society. In addition, he has also given a significant contribution to the research of the history of Bulgarian sociology, and has also worked successfully as the editor of the *Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Sociology* (1996).

Prof. *Georgi Fotev*, PhD (1941) is among the most prolific authors in Bulgarian sociology. He graduated in ohilosophy, and then became involved in the history of social and sociological ideas and in contemporary social theories. He has worked as a professor of sociology at the University of Sofia, the Minister of Science and Education of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Director of the Institute of Sociology at the BAS, (1990). He has published the following books: *Sociological Theories of E. Durkheim, V. Pareto? and M. Weber* (Sofia, 1979), *Social Reality and Imagination* (Sofia, 1986), *Civic Society* (Sofia, 1992), *History of Sociology 1 and 2* (Sofija, 1993), *Sociological Sources* (Sofia, 1998), *Multiculturalism and Globalization* (Sofia, 1998), *Ethnicity, Religion and Politics* (Sofia, 1998), *Boundaries of Politics* (Sofija, 2001), *The Sense of Politics* (Sofia, 1999), *Contemporary Sociological System – The Disciplines*, *Dialogue Sociology* (2005). Apart form the works in the history of sociological thought and the history of sociology, the most important original work of G. Fotev is *Dialogue Sociology*, in which he has attempted to found a new integrated paradigm of contemporary sociology.

Nikolai Genov (1946) belons to the middle generation of Bulgarian sociologists. He is a professor of sociology at the University of Sofia. He was the Head of the Department of Regional and Global Development at the Institute of Sociology at the BAS, and the Vice-president of the International Council of Social Sciences (Paris). He is a very prolific author and an organizer of sociological reserach projects and of international scientific gatherings. Today he is a professor at the Open University in Berlin, and a visiting professor at a number of universities in Europe and America, a coordinator of a UNESCO scientific projects entitled *Management of Social Transformations* and *Comparative Research in Science*. He has written a number of reserach monographs in contemporary sociology and has been the editor of a number of conference proceedings: *Transformation of Eastern Europe* (Sofia, 2000); *The Labour Market and Unemployment in South-Eastern Europe*

(Sofia, 2001); *Social Sciences in South-Eastern Europe* (Sofia, 2002); *Progress in Sociological Knowledge* (Sofia, 2002). His most important monographs include: *T. Parsons and Theoretical Sociology* (Sofia, 1982), *Internationalization of Sociology* (Sofia, 1991), *The National Sociological Tradition* (Sofia, 1994), *Sociology in Bulgaria - Trends*, *Sociology and a Society in Transition* (So mfia, 1994), *The Risk of Transition* (Sofija, 1994), *Sociology* (Sofia, 1998), *Trends in Social Development* (Sofia, 1999).

Petar Emil Mitev is a professor at the University of Sofia, the Head of the *Ivan Hadziski Research Centre* and the President of the Bulgarian Sociological Association. He is the author of important books in the sociology of the youth, interethnic relations and social transition. He has been the editor of the following proceedings: *Ethnocultural Dialogue in the Balkans* (Sofia, 1999), *Interculturalism and Tolerance* (Belgrade, 1999). He has written the following books: *Social Progress and the Youth* (Sofia, 1969), *Social Initiative and the Esthetic Culture of the Youth* (Sofia, 1972), *Social Activity of the Youth and Science* (Sofia, 1980), *The Young and Social Change* (Sofia, 1988), *Ivan Hadziski, as Interpreted Today* (Sofia, 2007). Petar Emil Mitev has also researched public opinion in contemporary Bulgaria, as well as the problems of ethnic distance, interethnic tolerance and the culture of peace. He has also been a very prominent figure in communication and cooperation with the other sociologists in the Balkans. During the past several years, he has dealt with the transition of Bulgaria, in which sense he has published the following works: *Popular Attitudes towards Politics* (in *Bulgaria in Transition*, John Bell, ed. Westview Press 1998), *Dynamics of Poverty* (Budapest, 2001).

Among the given distinguished researchers in the fields of sociology and philosophy involved in transdisciplinary reserach in Bulgaria, yet other authors that should be mentioned here are: Dobrin Spasov and his books emtitled *From Logic to Sociology* (Sofia, 1980), *Dogmatism and Antidogmatism in Philosophy* (Sofia, 1984), *Philosophy and Sociology for the 21st Century* (Sofia, 2007); *Vasil Prodanov* (The Director of the Institute of Philosophy at the BAS) and his books entitled *Global Changes and the Destiny of Bulgaria* (Sofija, 1999), *The Future of Philosophy* (Sofia, 2005), *Violence in the Modern Era* (Sofia, 2005) and *Global Violence*. Other authors who should also be mentioned in the given context include: Ivail Znepolski, Lubomir Hristov, Stalin Yotov, Ivan Krastev and the like, who have adopted various different theoretical orientations and who work in various institutions (the University of Sofia, the Home of Sciences of Man and Society, the Centre for Liberal Strategies...).

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Contemporary sociology in Bulgaria is in the process of development, and is torn between retraditionalization and modernization, both when it comes to theory and its subject matter. It is torn between the research fields such as religion, tradition, history or ethnosociology, on the one hand, and the new challenging fields such as transition, modernization, European integration and globalization, on the other hand. Apart from upholding the national Bulgarian sociological tradition, the Bulgarian sociologists get incresingly more focused on problems of modern social development, such as the reserach of global and regional development, transition, the problems of European integrations, the problems of interethnic relations, public opinion and cultural orientations of the young generation. It is

also characterized by an influx of new professionals in sociology, educated at the departments of Sociology either in Bulgaria or abroad. It is to be expected that those young people will continue to enrich and push forward the boundaries of contemporary Bulgarian sociology.

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NEKI ASPEKTI U RAZVOJU SAVREMENE BUGARSKE SOCIOLOGIJE

Ljubiša Mitrović

U radu se razmatraju osnovne karakteristike i tedencije u razvoju savremene bugarske sociologije. Autor najpre daje pregled sociološke tradicije i istorijskog razvoja sociologije kao nauke u Bugarskoj. Potom je dat prikaz najznačajnijih predstavnika u savremenoj sociologiji u Bugarskoj, istraživačkih institucija i organizacija..

Ključne reči: *globalizacija, identiteti, akulturacija, nacionalni identitet, geokultura, Balkan*