Nikolai Aleksandrovich Rozhkov 
(1868-1927): historian and revolutionary 

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Chapter Two

Positivism and Kliuchevskii: The Two Essential Components of Rozhkov’s Theory of History

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Rozhkov's intellectual development as a professional historian was not unique. Like most of his colleagues, including Pokrovskii, Rozhkov was influenced by the complex variety of ideas that existed in Russia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Most commentators have noted the variety of influences on Rozhkov's thought. However, most discussions of Rozhkov's historical writings fail to go beyond the simple observation that his works were eclectic. The charge of "eclecticism" by Soviet historians has been a convenient way of dismissing Rozhkov's works as "non-Marxist". In their efforts to trace the origin of Marxist thought in Russia, these writers have oversimplified the complex evolution of Russian philosophical and historical thought at the turn of the century. This trend began with Lenin and Plekhanov, who tried to canonise their version of Marxism as the only scientific and therefore legitimate school of philosophy and history. Anybody who admitted having been strongly influenced by non-Marxist thinkers was guilty either of adopting bourgeois ideology or the equally heinous crime of "eclectic mish-mash", to borrow a phrase from Plekhanov.2

Soviet accounts have generally regarded eclecticism as an unoriginal attempt to unite discordant and often contradictory schools of thought and concepts. Yet in reality scholarly eclecticism, the adoption of the “best” elements of different theories to form a new, more complete and plausible doctrine, was commonplace at the turn of the century and for good reasons. The cross-fertilization of ideas led to some highly productive and challenging work. Rozhkov was one of those who, by taking ideas from different sources, found himself inspired to take up the challenge of building a new and exciting framework of history and sociology that would serve to house an integrated account of the evolution of Russian society.

It is necessary to examine the major influences that shaped Rozhkov's theory of history not just because these influences have been ignored in the past but because they are simultaneously a source of strength and weakness in Rozhkov's historical works. This chapter will examine in greater detail the two major forces that shaped Rozhkov's historical and sociological thought within the general context of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Russian social thought. It will place greater emphasis on an examination of

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positivism and its influence on Rozhkov for several reasons. Firstly, there is no major study of the influence of positivist ideas on Russian thinkers or philosophy. Although most authors that examine Russian philosophical thought in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries mention positivism in one way or another, their comments are kept to a minimum and reduced to a footnote or a cursory inspection. Secondly, the positivist influence on Rozhkov's historical thought has never been examined in any systematic and detailed fashion. And thirdly, while the most important aspects of the influence of Kliuchevskii will be mentioned in this chapter, the way it was reflected in Rozhkov's work will become clearer in Chapters Three and Four where a close analysis of Rozhkov's historical writing will be made.

When N. Stepanov, Rozhkov's contemporary and author of the article entitled "The Political Career of N.A. Rozhkov", claimed in 1928 that "the sociological credo of Rozhkov at the end of the nineteenth century" was first of all eclectic, he did not mention the fact that this sort of eclecticism was common. Like most thinkers of his period, Rozhkov believed that any new social theory that claimed to be scientific, including

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6 Ibid., p. 77.
Marxism, had to be able to reconcile itself with the latest developments in the natural sciences. At the turn of the century, the crisis in the social sciences coincided with and was related to the crisis that was taking place in the natural sciences.

While major debates occurred in philosophy, sociology and history, a revolution was taking place in the natural sciences. Classical scientific thinking was being reexamined. As Sheehan put it: "The new discoveries of radioactivity, of the electron, of the structural complexity of the atom, of the electromagnetic field, of transformations in mass effected by transformations in velocity, called into question established notions of time, space, motion, matter and energy". Any thinker who believed that science was the harbinger of the future had to be able to explain the new discoveries in the natural sciences. Rozhkov was one of these thinkers and he had no qualms about reconciling his social theory with the latest developments and trends in the natural sciences, particularly physics.

It is worth noting that in 1966 the authors of Essays on the History of Historical Science in the U.S.S.R. also claimed that eclecticism was at the basis of Rozhkov's last major work which was published between 1918 and 1926. They wrote:

Sheehan, op.cit., p. 120.
In Rozhkov's *Russian History* it is possible to find many interesting and useful thoughts, observations, generalisations, historical parallels and comparisons. But at the basis of this work is found a characteristically eclectic methodology. The author identifies Marxism with economic materialism and he searches for "the philosophical basis" of the latter in the achievements of contemporary natural science with its notion of electricity as the "new, great, universal principle of energy".

The authors were correct in pointing out that Rozhkov tried to keep up with the latest scientific trends during his lifetime. Rozhkov believed that the social sciences had to mirror the development of the more advanced natural sciences. However, the authors failed to mention that Rozhkov was using a theory of history that he had formulated as a professional historian before Marxism had any significant influence on him. More importantly, the charge of "eclecticism" does not explain or reveal the factors that shaped Rozhkov's historical theory.

By branding Rozhkov a poor Marxist or a non-Marxist, Soviet critics have failed to elucidate Rozhkov's theory of history. They have failed to consider

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8 See: N.A. Rozhkov *Russkaia istoria v sravnitel'no-istoricheskom osveshchenii (Osnovy sotsial'noi dinamiki)*. Vol. 1 was published in 1918 and vol. 12 was published in 1926.

9 M.V. Nechkina et al., *Ocherki istorii istoricheskoi nauki v SSSR*, Vol. IV, (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Nauka, 1966), p. 171. It is difficult to accept that this was the same Nechkina that not only admired Rozhkov in her younger days but also believed that the term "economic materialism" was an acceptable synonym for Marxism in its early period in Russia. See: M.V. Nechkina, *Russkaia istoria v osveshchenii ekonomicheskogo materializma (istoriograficheskii ocherk)* (Kazan': Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1922), p. 26 and passim.
the broader question of the relationship between Marxism and other major theories that existed at the time, including those developed in the natural sciences. The views of the critics belonged to the much discussed and much disputed school of thought that maintains that Marx, unlike Engels, was only interested in explaining human nature not nature in general. \(^{10}\) Like many other thinkers of his generation, Rozhkov belonged to the opposing school of thought that held that any scientific social theory had to incorporate the latest trends and developments of both the social and natural sciences. Given such a view, traces of philosophical eclecticism are to be expected in the works of Rozhkov. It must be understood that Rozhkov's eclecticism was not extraordinary. It was fairly typical of the Russian intelligentsia generally and was certainly so of the Russian historians of Rozhkov's generation. \(^{11}\)

Soviet thinkers have oversimplified the nature of the complex trends of historical and philosophical thought at the turn of the century to such an extent that labels such as “Marxist” or “non-Marxist” or “bourgeois revisionist” have taken the place of serious analysis. As Pierre Vilar has pointed out, using labels in this fashion can have the effect of reducing the trade of history to a

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\(^{10}\) Sheehan has a good survey of the wide literature on the Marx-Engels relationship. See Ch. 1 in Sheehan, op.cit., esp. pp. 48-66.

level lower than the detergent industry. Unlike in the detergent industry, labels and "brand-names are very poorly protected" in the trade of history. While they highlight certain issues, labels are of limited value, because they are insensitive to the many nuances that necessarily arise from an analysis of any historical debate or discussion. In the highly-charged atmosphere of Russia in the early twentieth century, this was even more true.

Before 1905, Rozhkov did not fit the label of "Marxist" in any sense at all. The label "Marxist", like the label "non-Marxist", is of little value in helping us to understand Rozhkov and his contemporaries. It would be incorrect to assume, as the majority of Soviet writers do, that "an orthodox Marxism" or "a Marxist doctrine" existed in Russia at the turn of the century. It would be just as foolish to believe that the brand of Marxism that subsequently developed in Russia was anything other than a unique synthesis of eclectic thought. The period of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was characterised by what Baumer

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13 See: V.I. Lenin, "The Three Sources And Three Component Parts Of Marxism", pp. 44-48. Lenin wrote: "the genius of Marx consists precisely in his having furnished answers to questions already presented by the foremost minds of mankind. His doctrine emerged as the direct and immediate continuation of the teachings of the greatest representatives of philosophy, political economy and socialism ... It is the legitimate successor to the best that man [sic] produced in the nineteenth century", p. 44.
has called the "Enlightenment mode". This period was also known as the "classical age" of sociology, "the golden age of Marxism" and the period of philosophical debates. As Zenkovsky aptly put it:

In general Russian philosophic thought during this "period of systems" displays such a rich differentiation that the separate tendencies often seem isolated from one another by a virtual "blank wall". But, although such a description is just, we must still admit that these tendencies do not all merely "co-belong" to a kind of cultural and national unity, but in their depths are dialectically connected with one another.

White summarized Zenkovsky's point nicely when he wrote: "Russian philosophy at the beginning of the twentieth century presents a most complex picture" in which "various systems exist side by side, or even enter into a peculiar form of symbiosis".

Given such an elaborate picture of social thought, it is not unusual or surprising to discover that when philosophical materialism began to develop in Russia during the second half of the nineteenth century, it took various forms. As White demonstrated, Marxism was

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17 Sheehan, *op.cit.*, pp. 113, 115 and 122.
“only the third doctrine of materialism which was superimposed on the basic, physiological variety”. The first was the nihilism which was expressed by such people as Chernyshevskii, Pisarev, Dobrolyubov and Sechenov. The second was the positivism of Auguste Comte which “was absorbed in Russia so naturally and imperceptibly that it was difficult to distinguish it from the earlier type of materialism”. As a result of such a complicated network of philosophical systems, it comes as no surprise that Rozhkov, like so many other intellectuals of his generation, for example, Plekhanov, Bogdanov and Pokrovskii, developed philosophically eclectic views.

Like materialism, positivism had many forms. As Zenkovsky put it: “the basic tendency of Russian positivism merely started from Comte, absorbing a great deal from the theoretical constructions of Spencer and J.S. Mill, as well as the critical philosophy of Kant and his followers”. Consequently, positivism in Russia not only “acquired an independent existence” but “went on to produce a remarkable variety of specifically Russian forms”. In its many forms, positivism was the most influential school of thought during the last decades of the nineteenth century. It prevailed in the

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20 Ibid., p. 6.
21 Ibid.
22 Zenkovsky, op. cit., p. 707.
social sciences and "was the chief influence in historical thought".  

It is not the intention of this study to provide an all-embracing definition or to present an overall view of positivism. Attempts have been made by Kolakowski, Giddens, Bryant and others to articulate such views and an examination of these attempts only confirms their difficulty and limited value. Neither is it the intention of this study to use the term positivism as a convenient label. In order to make the term "positivism" informative and useful, it is necessary to qualify it as it relates to Rozhkov's historical thought in particular and, to a lesser extent, Russian historical and sociological thought at the turn of the century in general.

In his study of the history of Russian philosophy, Zenkovsky made the point that there has been "in Russian philosophy a trend of thought allied to positivism" and that the term "positivism" must be understood in a very broad sense. He wrote that positivism implied "a philosophy based on science and often limited to a synthesis of scientific generalisations. Indeed, there is more interest here in a


27 Zenkovsky, op.cit., p. 706
'scientific world-view' than in philosophy”.28 In 1966, several years after Zenkovsky, Kolakowski claimed that "the existence of a 'positivist current' in nineteenth and twentieth century philosophy is universally acknowledged" and added that positivism was "a collection of rules and evaluative criteria referring to human cognition".29 Positivism was "a normative attitude, regulating how we are to use such terms as 'knowledge', 'science', 'cognition' and 'information'".30 Although he was concerned with positivist philosophy in general, Kolakowski stated in his fourth rule that the "belief in the essential unity of the scientific method " was a fundamental tenet of positivism.31

The notion of the unity of the scientific method is present in all discussions of positivism. Generally speaking, this notion expresses the belief that "the methods for acquiring valid knowledge and the main stages in elaborating experience through theoretical reflection are essentially the same in all spheres of experience".32 More importantly, the notion of the unity of the scientific method carries the assumption that "all knowledge will be reduced to the physical sciences,

28 Ibid.
29 L. Kolakowski, The Alienation of Reason: A History of Positivist Thought (New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1968), p. 2. This work was first published in Poland in 1966 as Filozofia Pozitwywistyczna (od Hume 'a do Kola Wiedenskiego). It was republished in 1972 by Penguin. This time the work was more accurately translated as Positivist Philosophy: From Hume to the Vienna Circle.
30 Ibid., p. 3.
31 Ibid., p. 8.
32 Ibid., p. 9.
that all scientific statements will be translated into physical terms".\textsuperscript{33} This assumption is central to the particular problems of positivism in sociology.\textsuperscript{34} As Giddens pointed out: "the introduction of positivistic assumptions into sociology created a series of quite specific difficulties which cannot be resolved on the level of generalized philosophical inquiry".\textsuperscript{35} Consequently, Giddens discusses the specific problems of positivism in sociology in connection with the assertion that "the concepts and methods employed in the natural sciences can be applied to form a 'science of man', or a natural science of sociology".\textsuperscript{36} Giddens' account of positivism in sociology focuses on Kolakowski's fourth and final rule of positivist philosophy.

According to Giddens, "the 'positivistic attitude' in sociology may be said to comprise three connected suppositions".\textsuperscript{37} These suppositions are: the methodological supposition that the procedures of natural science may be directly adapted to sociology; the analytical supposition that the end result of sociological investigations can be formulated as "laws" or "law-like" generalisations of the same kind as those

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid. See also: M. Cornforth, \textit{Communism and Philosophy} (London: Lawrence and Wishart Ltd., 1980), p. 137.
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.
established by natural scientists; and the practical assumption that sociology has a technical character.\footnote{Ibid., p. 4.}

The three suppositions that Giddens believed comprised the "positivistic attitude" in sociology were also, as will be shown, fundamental characteristics of Rozhkov's work. In this sense, it may justifiably be claimed that Rozhkov's work was positivist in nature.

There can be no doubt that the "extension of natural scientific methods to the study of society: the establishment of a scientific 'sociology'" was an essential part of positivist thought.\footnote{T. Bottomore (ed.), \textit{A Dictionary of Marxist Thought} (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher Ltd., 1985), p. 382.} Writing generally on methodological dilemmas in sociology, Shaw pointed out that:

\begin{quote}
Positivism has been, in various forms, the most coherent and influential, if implicit, methodological stance in sociology. Even today, when it is rarely defended as a doctrine, it is the foundation of a very large part of social research.\footnote{M. Shaw, \textit{Marxism and Social Science: The Roots of Social Knowledge} (London: Pluto Press Ltd., 1975), p. 86.}
\end{quote}

There can be no doubt either that "the all-pervading influence of positivism is not at first apparent, owing to the great variety of forms in which it appeared, how it might be interpreted or indeed vulgarized".\footnote{White, "The First \textit{Pravda} ", p. 185.} The fact that the influence of positivism on Russian philosophical and historical thought has been all but ignored is, to a large degree, evidence of this
claim. While many writers have pointed out the influence of positivism in Russia, there does not exist a single major study on the subject. This thesis is the first major study, to my knowledge, that attempts to examine the influence of positivist ideas on Russian philosophical thought in any systematic and detailed fashion. The need for such a study has long been overdue as most authors who examine Russian philosophical thought in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries mention the profound influence of positivism in one way or another; but none has examined this influence in detail.

Because positivism can take so many forms, its influence is often subsumed in other doctrines. An excellent illustration of this is the relationship that exists between positivism and Marxism. An analysis of this relationship is beyond the scope of this chapter and thesis but it is sufficient to claim, as Bottomore did, that "Marx's conceptions were capable of giving rise, in one direction, to a broadly positivist sociology, and in another direction to a style of thought which has generally been referred to as 'critical positivism'; and that these possibilities existed side by side in his thoughts from the outset, even though the emphasis in

his early writings appears more Hegelian, and in his later writings more positivist".43

In studying the positivist nature of Rozhkov’s historical and sociological thought, the above-mentioned difficulties associated with the term “positivism” become apparent. There can be little doubt that one particular version of positivism affected Rozhkov more than any other and that was the version enunciated by Auguste Comte.

Comtean positivism is based on the belief that the social sciences are essentially the same as the natural sciences. Comte maintained that every science contains facts or phenomena which are only perceivable by the senses, that is, sensory phenomena.44 Comte’s conception of the scientific method was not only empiricist, it was also evolutionary. He believed that every branch of knowledge passes through three necessary historical stages: the theological stage, the metaphysical stage, and the “positive”, or the “scientific” stage.45 In the final stage, instead of looking for causes in the strict sense or for teleological goals, the scientist needs only to discover “laws” or “law-like regularities among observable phenomena”.46 The discovery of such laws means that the development of society can be controlled and determined in

43 Bottomore, Marxist Sociology, p. 11.
44 Runes, op.cit., p. 243.
45 Bottomore, A Dictionary of Marxist Thought, p. 382.
46 Ibid.
accordance with the laws that govern it. So societies are predictable and their future can be determined.47

Rozhkov fully accepted the idea that the methods of the natural sciences could be applied to the study of society. He believed in the scientific nature of the social sciences and along with this fundamental premise, Rozhkov accepted the other suppositions that generally characterised Comtean positivism. Rozhkov also accepted and developed several other more specific features of Comtean positivism, including its belief in a hierarchy of sciences, its division of theoretical knowledge into "abstract" or "general" knowledge and "particular" or "descriptive" knowledge and the belief that society can be studied in a state of rest or a state of motion. It remains to be demonstrated that the major assumptions and principles underlining Rozhkov's theory of history were direct products of the influence of Comtean positivism.

Rozhkov believed that every aspect of human existence could be explained in terms of a model, that is, a scheme governed by a series of laws. Such models or schemes are necessary in order to make any study scientific. As Rozhkov wrote in 1904:

Two fundamental features distinguish contemporary science: a yearning for the stimulus of an organised, intelligent and systematic understanding of reality and a yearning to put into practice theoretical conclusions. These features also

47 Ibid. See also: Boeselager, op.cit., pp. 8-10.
characterise history, which is a science. Indeed, the historian of our time, if he places himself on the highest level, cannot remain a curious, dry as dust archaeologist, unconsciously covering himself with archival dust and sepulchral mould, accumulating fragmentary bits of knowledge without any order or system. He must be made into an inquisitive researcher who generalises factual material, discovers the laws of social development and revels in the wholeness, the orderliness and connectedness of his scientific constructions.48

He repeated these thoughts in 1918 when he wrote:

Science is always schematic. Where there is no schema, no general, unified conformity with a law, where there is no harmony, unity, consistency, there is no science. There is no detail, no concrete detail, that has scientific meaning on its own. It is only important as an inalienable, necessary part of the whole.49

When critics claimed that his interpretation of history was “too schematic”,50 Rozhkov was not bothered by the accusations. On the contrary, these comments were interpreted by Rozhkov as praise since history can only be scientific if it is schematic.51 Developing his thoughts further, Rozhkov added in 1918 that:


50 Ibid.

a scientific model or schema does not perfectly or precisely express actual ties or relationships. We still lack the knowledge and intelligence to create such accuracy. However, in order to approach this accuracy as closely as possible, even if it is only partly, a schema is necessary.\(^{52}\)

So, while a scientific model or schema may be imperfect, Rozhkov believed it was absolutely necessary in order to advance scientific theory.

In 1904 Rozhkov wrote in his essay entitled “History, Ethics and Politics” that social phenomena could in fact be studied from three different points of view.\(^{53}\) They could be studied from the point of view which examines the “concrete manifestations of social life”, from the point of view which aims at uncovering the general laws of the development of social phenomena, and from the point of view which investigates practical questions such as what is the best way to construct human society.\(^{54}\) The first point of view is the concrete-theoretical point of view of history. History, Rozhkov added, must be understood in the broad sense of the word, not in the sense of the history of individuals and events.\(^{55}\) It must be understood as the history of the economy, social


\(^{54}\) Ibid., pp. 5-6 and 16-19.

\(^{55}\) N.A. Rozhkov, *Osnovnye zakony razvitia obshchestvennykh iavlenii (Kratkii ocherk sotsiologii)* (Moscow, 1907), p. 5.
formation, governmental structure, customs, religion, art, literature, law, science and philosophy. The second point of view is the abstract theoretical or the sociological point of view. The third point of view is the point of view of scientific politics so that politics must be understood in the broad sense of the word. It is the politics of the economy, society and government. According to Rozhkov, this is the so-called practical or applied point of view. The researcher begins with history, moves on to sociology and finally to politics. Such reasoning came to have practical implications for Rozhkov when he became involved in political activities after 1903. He always maintained that political action was based on sociological laws derived from historical research.

There can be no mistaking the fact that this interpretation was influenced by Comte's firm belief that social phenomena can be explained using the same methods of inquiry that explain the natural sciences. Comte considered the three basic methods of inquiry to be observation, experimentation and comparison. As Comte wrote: "No real observation of any kind of phenomena is possible, except in so far as it is first directed, and finally interpreted, by some theory". He added:

56 Ibid.
57 Ibid.
Hence it is clear that, scientifically speaking, all isolated, empirical observation is idle and even radically uncertain; that science can use only those observations that are connected, at least hypothetically, with some law; that it is such a connection that makes the chief difference between scientific and popular observation, embracing the same facts but contemplating them from different points of view; and that observations empirically conducted can at most supply provisional materials, which must usually undergo an ulterior revision.59

Comte also believed that the comparative method of inquiry was of vital importance to sociologists. According to Comte, the comparative method enables the sociologist to draw together the various states of human society which coexist in different areas of the world and among peoples independent of one another. Although humanity as a whole has evolved in a single and uniform manner, "various populations have, from causes that are little understood, attained extremely unequal degrees of development".60

Comte argued that while all three methods of inquiry must be used in sociology, it relies above all on a fourth one, the so-called historical method which is the "only basis on which the system of political logic can rest".61 As Comte wrote: "The historical comparison of the consecutive states of humanity is not only the
chief scientific device of the new political philosophy. Its rational development constitutes the substratum of the science, in whatever is essential to it.\footnote{Ibid., p. 248.} In other words, historical evolution and historical comparisons have been of central importance to sociological inquiry. As Comte claimed:

\begin{quote}
this preponderant use of the historical method gives its philosophical character to sociology in a logical as well as a scientific sense. By the creation of this new department of the comparative method, sociology confers a benefit on the whole of natural philosophy, because the positive method is thus completed and perfected, in a manner that, for scientific importance, is almost beyond our estimate.\footnote{Ibid.}
\end{quote}

Rozhkov believed that by following Comte’s theory of social inquiry it would be possible to create not only a scientific social science but a theory of politics that was also scientific. Rozhkov wrote:

\begin{quote}
a scientific sociology, rich in fruitful conclusions, is only possible on a historical basis, on the basis of those concrete observations which historians make and, on the other hand, scientific politics, as the applied branch of social science, is inconceivable without the construction of sociology.\footnote{Rozhkov, Osnovnye zakony, p. 6.}
\end{quote}

In the past, the majority of attempts to construct a scientific sociology or a scientific theory of politics
have failed because the Comtean method of inquiry was not adhered to. As Rozhkov added:

> With a few exceptions, attempts were made to construct sociology without the help or at least without the sufficient help of history; and politics was erected on the unstable ground of separate, concrete observations that were not connected to superior sociological generalisations.\(^5^5\)

Rozhkov believed that he had rectified this weakness. He claimed that:

> The method of subsequent research is now clear: we will construct sociological conclusions on a historical basis, we will formulate the general laws of the development of social phenomena, using the historical-comparative method.\(^6^6\)

He believed that the necessity for attempting such a methodology far outweighed the probable failures and weaknesses inherent in such an approach. Such failures, he believed, could only make the task for other researchers easier and more fruitful.\(^6^7\) Rozhkov claimed that it was necessary to make one stipulation:

> if all of the construction or even a part of it turns out to be incorrect, unable to sustain criticism, then let this be attributed to the unskilfulness, inability and deficiency in the knowledge of the author of this construction and not to the aim and method of the investigation. Sociology can and must be constructed precisely on a historical basis: this is a

\(^{65}\) Ibid.

\(^{66}\) Ibid., p. 7.

\(^{67}\) Ibid.
truth which cannot be shattered by any criticism and which will not be shaken by the failure of any individual worker who is weakened by circumstances.\(^68\)

Rozhkov declared that the history of any country is a “concrete science” \([\text{nauka konkretnaia}]\) because history “studies the laws of the development of a specific and given society at various periods of its existence”\(^69\). Sociology, on the other hand, “or the theory of social life \([\text{obshchestvennaia zhizn’}]\), has as its aim the investigation of the general laws of social relationships \([\text{obshchezhitie}]\) independently of any concrete situation. Consequently, sociology is an abstract science \([\text{nauka abstraktnaia}]\).\(^70\)

Rozhkov’s quest for an interpretation of history that presented a “final synthesis”, “a proper, well-structured system”, that established the general laws of the coexistence and development of social phenomena was based on the Comtean notion that the methods and procedures of the natural sciences were applicable to the study of humans.\(^71\)

In his first major essay discussing historical methodology, “The Successes of Contemporary Sociology in Relation to History” 1898,\(^72\) Rozhkov claimed that

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\(^68\) Ibid.
\(^70\) Ibid.
\(^71\) N.A. Rozhkov, \textit{Obzor' russkoi istorii s' sotsiologicheskoi tochki zreniiia}, Chast' vtoraaia, Vypusk vtoroi (Moscow, 1905), p. 142.
\(^72\) Rozhkov, “Uspekhi sovremennoi sotsiologii v ikh sootnoshenii s istoriei”, pp. 17-36 which was reproduced under the title “Psikhologicheskaia shkola v sotsiologii” as the first article of the work entitled “Psikhologiia kharaktera i sotsiologiia” in N.A.
sociological conclusions and principles have to be based on historical research.\textsuperscript{73} He added:

\begin{quote}
The theoretical importance of the sociological principles of history is increased by the fact that these principles inevitably influence life and practical activity. An understanding of the fact that humanity is formed under such basic influences is inevitably reflected in the development of social ideals and in the choice by which these ideals can be brought about in reality.\textsuperscript{74}
\end{quote}

Rozhkov claimed very clearly that he had in mind the sociology elaborated by Auguste Comte.\textsuperscript{75}

Rozhkov believed that a social scientist had to be a historian and a sociologist. Social scientists had two major tasks to complete: firstly, they had to establish and explain the laws that govern the development of different parts of humanity \textit{[chelovechestva]} and, secondly, they had to relate these concrete historical laws to the more abstract laws established by the

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\item \textsuperscript{73} Rozhkov, \textit{Istoriicheskie i sotsiologicheskie ocherki. Sbornik statei}, Vol. 1 (Moscow, 1906), pp. 165-185.
\item \textsuperscript{75} Rozhkov, "Uspekhi sovremennoi sotsiologii v ikh sootnoshenii s istoriei", p. 17.
\item \textsuperscript{76} \textit{Ibid}.
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sociologist. After all, "is not the historian who avoids sociological problems nothing more than a dry as dust grave-digger [grobokopatel']?". Rozhkov concluded:

It is clear that the history of every individual country and its peoples must be illuminated from a sociological point of view. The concrete process of the historical development of every part of humanity becomes understandable and meaningful only when it is examined as material for the construction of the general laws of the development of human societies.

When history and sociology are combined in such a manner not only is it possible to draw conclusions about a particular country's development but it becomes possible to predict and shape a country's future development. Rozhkov believed that this procedure alone, the procedure used by the natural sciences, could obtain worthwhile results in the social sciences, particularly history and sociology. It was Rozhkov's belief that by adopting the procedure he outlined, the fields of history and sociology would be elevated to the rank of the highest science, physics.

From 1898 onwards, Rozhkov's determination to apply a scientific method to social life, to discover the invariable laws that governed social phenomena and to create a science of society was clearly influenced by

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76 Rozhkov, Obzor', Chast' I, p. 2.
77 Ibid.
78 Ibid., p. 7. In 1918, Rozhkov reiterated this belief and used it to promote his Menshevik interpretation of Russia's development. See: Rozhkov, Russkaia istoriia, Vol. 1., p. 9.
Comtean methodological and sociological conceptions. Following Comte, it was Rozhkov's contention that the social sciences \([obshchestvennye nauki]\) could be compared to the natural sciences \([estestvoznaniia]\) and therefore the same methodology could be employed. Rozhkov's belief that a science of human behaviour was possible and that sociology had as much claim to scientific status as physics, chemistry and biology came directly from Comte's theory of the hierarchy of sciences.

Rozhkov claimed that "one of the greatest philosophical advances of the nineteenth century, the most fruitful classification of the sciences, belongs to Comte". Comte's hierarchy of the sciences was founded on the principle of the decreasing generality and the increasing complexity of the phenomena being studied. For example, because Comte believed that astronomy \([astronomiia]\) studies the most general and simplest phenomena, he gave this science first place in his classification. As Comte also believed that sociology studies the least general and the most complex phenomena, he gave sociology the last place in his classification. Between these two extremes, Comte

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80 Rozhkov, Istoricheskie i sotsiologicheskie ocherki, p. 2.


82 Rozhkov, "Uspekhi sovremennoi sotsiologii", p. 28.
placed physics, chemistry and physiology. Comte expressed his well-known theory of the hierarchy of the sciences in his celebrated work *Cours de philosophie positive*. Comte wrote:

Thus we have before us five fundamental sciences in successive dependence — astronomy, physics, chemistry, physiology, and finally social physics. The first considers the most general, simple, abstract, and remote phenomena known to us, and those that affect all others without being affected by them. The last considers the most particular, compound, concrete phenomena, and those which are the most interesting to man. Between these two, the degrees of specialty, complexity, and individuality are in regular proportion to the place of the respective sciences in the scale exhibited.

Rozhkov used the principle of the decreasing generality and the increasing complexity of phenomena, which was at the basis of Comte's hierarchy of the sciences, to classify his categories of social phenomena in his study of social statistics. This classification of social phenomena was the first task of social statistics and Rozhkov commenced his study of the laws of social statics by placing different phenomena in order of their increasing complexity. Consequently, Rozhkov

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83 Ibid.
formulated a hierarchy of five categories of social phenomena.  

Rozhkov believed that the physicists of his time were representatives of the "most precise and most highly developed branch of natural science". If they were satisfied with constructing models or "conditional representations" as Rozhkov later called them, then surely there was nothing wrong with historians attempting to discover similar models in history. Rozhkov's understanding of the natural sciences was formed at a time when the principles of Newtonian physics still held sway. Rozhkov maintained a Newtonian view of the world even after 1905 when Einstein's publications began to point to a more complex and paradoxical universe than Newton had imagined.

Although Rozhkov discussed the nature of facts, he never doubted that a particular type of fact existed and could be ascertained by sensuous perception. Rozhkov maintained that historical theory could be measured and tested. Once the historian had arrived at a sociological theory about a country's past, he or she could then make predictions about that country's development. As Rozhkov wrote in 1898:

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86 Rozhkov's study of the laws of social statics and his classification of social phenomena will be examined in the next chapter of this thesis.

87 Rozhkov, Russkaia istoriia, Vol. 1., p. 9. Rozhkov was quoting the 1902 publication of the lectures of the well-known physicist A.G. Stoletov. See: Kolakowski, The Alienation of Reason, p. 9.

The theoretical importance of the sociological principles of history is increased by the fact that they inevitably influence life and everyday activities. An understanding of the fact that human existence [zhizn' chelovechestva] is formed under certain basic influences inevitably affects the way social ideals are worked out and the means by which we choose to achieve these ideals in reality.89

The predictions and the theory on which they were based could be tested or verified after a period of time had elapsed. In so doing, the conclusions postulated by the social scientist can be shown to be correct or incorrect.90 The complex nature of such a theoretical position has subsequently been examined in the well-known debates on the nature of scientific explanation.91 Suffice to note that no amount of empirical evidence can ever confirm the validity of a theory that is based on logical induction from empirical data or evidence. Or, as Rozhkov wrote:

the truthfulness of a prediction is solved, of course, in the future. The degree of this truthfulness must be seen as a reliable way of verifying the correctness of the steps, methods and theories that have been used to obtain the material needed for a particular understanding of the past and present and needed also to make a prediction about the future.92

89 Rozhkov, "Uspekhi sovremennoi sotsiologii", p. 17.
90 Rozhkov, Obzor', Chast' I, p. 7.
92 Rozhkov, Obzor', Chast' I, p. 7.
Rozhkov's point of deviation from both Comtean positivist thought and the economic interpretation of history stemmed from his belief that the psychological elements of society were ignored in both these interpretations of social development. Rozhkov explained the lack of interest in the psychological interpretation of history in terms of the fact that Comte himself had ignored psychology in his hierarchy of sciences. Comte believed that psychology was still too primitive to warrant a separate category and it was therefore included as a branch of biology.

Rozhkov wrote: "At the present time no one, not even the advocates of experimental psychology, can deny the science of the spirit a right to an independent status".\(^9^3\) Rozhkov argued that J.S. Mill made the "only necessary adjustment to Comte's hierarchy of sciences" when Mill gave psychology an "independent status" by placing it between physiology and sociology.\(^9^4\) Rozhkov believed that the Comtean classification of the sciences, with this necessary alteration, occupied a central place in the philosophical system of positivism.\(^9^5\) After all, Rozhkov argued, "Comte does draw a whole series of important conclusions from it".\(^9^6\)

\(^9^3\) Rozhkov, *Istoricheskie i sotsiologicheskie ocherki*, p. 177.
\(^9^5\) *Ibid.*
Of all the conclusions drawn by Comte, the most important in Rozhkov's opinion was the one "on which the classification was built". As Rozhkov wrote in his work entitled *Historical and Sociological Essays*:

> In accordance with the principle on which the scheme of classification is based, phenomena which are studied by a given science are composed of the combined action of phenomena which are examined by all the other sciences that precede it in the hierarchy. That is why the conclusions of the next highest science provide the most material for the explanations of questions that arise. Thus, sociological phenomena must be explained in terms of the sum of all the other factors subject to scientific investigation and here psychological phenomena have the main significance since psychology is the science which occupies the next highest place in the classification.

This is why in Rozhkov's revised version of the hierarchy of sciences, the study of psychological phenomena occupies a very important place.

It is worth noting that Rozhkov clearly acknowledged his debt to Comte and Mill with regard to the importance of psychology in a polemic with Professor N.I. Kareev, the author of *Fundamental Problems of the Philosophy of History* and *The

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97 Ibid.
98 Ibid.
Essence of Historical Progress and the Role of the Individual in History. Rozhkov admitted that he and Kareev “had an identical understanding of the aim of sociology and its relationship to history, psychology and practical actions”.100 “However”, he wrote, “while our understanding is identical it does not belong to me or Kareev but to Comte and Mill. Consequently, the similarity between my views on these questions and the views of Kareev is an accidental phenomenon”.101 Rozhkov maintained that Kareev could have used the same conclusions that he had borrowed from Comte and Mill and therefore the similarity that existed between their views was explained.

In her excellent study, Russian History in the Light of Economic Materialism, Nechkina claimed that Rozhkov agreed with those philosophies of history that divided all historical phenomena into two groups: a group that contained “functions” [funktsiia] or “cultural” [kul’turnye] facts and another group that contained “pragmatic” [pragmaticheskie] facts.102 J.D. White, in his unpublished doctoral thesis, accepted this claim.103 This view is incorrect. Rozhkov went to great length to show that this division of the historical process was nothing more than:

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100 Rozhkov, “Neskol’ko spornykh sotsiologicheskikh voprosov “, p. 87.
101 Ibid.
103 White, M.N. Pokrovsky, p. 52.
the simple after-taste of youthful impressions obtained from the manner in which history was taught in secondary schools. Instead of teaching history, quite often a pile of uncoordinated events was given to the students who confusingly packed them into their impressionable minds and later, as specialist historians or simply as educated people wishing to study real historical science, they could not even blot out from their memory that imaginary contrast between practical and cultural facts which was an artificially created system or, rather, a high school instruction without a method.\textsuperscript{104}

According to Rozhkov, this division of all historical phenomena into cultural and pragmatic facts characterised the work of Kareev, with whom he strongly disagreed on this point.\textsuperscript{105}

Rozhkov argued that cultural facts, that is conditions and forms of being, could not be separated from pragmatic facts, that is the deeds of individuals and events.\textsuperscript{106} They are interacting and cannot possibly be separated. Rozhkov claimed that pragmatic facts do not exist for the historian, “even if we were to deduce a psychological connection between them”.\textsuperscript{107} These so-called pragmatic facts are not historical facts. Hence, while pragmatic facts may exist for the psychologist and the biographer, they do not exist for the

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{104} Rozhkov, \textit{Istoricheskie i sotsiologicheskie ocherki}, pp. 166-167.
  \item \textsuperscript{105} Rozhkov, “Neskol’ko spornykh sotsiologicheskikh voprosov “, pp. 83-84.
  \item \textsuperscript{106} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 83.
  \item \textsuperscript{107} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 84.
\end{itemize}
Rozhkov agreed with Louis Bourdeau, the French positivist philosopher and sociologist, who wrote that: "les événements ne sont que des cas particuliers de fonction" or, using the terminology of Kareev, "pragmatic facts are really only particular cases of cultural facts". It is only through cultural facts that pragmatic facts can be observed and explained.

In his polemic with Kareev, Rozhkov denied that he borrowed Kareev's theory that a causal relationship [prichinnaia sviaz'] is peculiar to pragmatic facts while an evolutionary relationship [evoliutsionnaia sviaz'] is peculiar to cultural facts. Rozhkov claimed that he became acquainted with these ideas in his student years, before Kareev's books were published. He argued that these ideas came not only from Comte but also from Kant and Spencer. In 1899 Rozhkov wrote that he was only concerned with cultural facts and maintained that "cultural facts, that is natural, economic, social, political and psychological processes in history, are found in two kinds of connection — causal and evolutionary".

108 Ibid.
109 Ibid.
110 See: N. Kareev, "K voprosu o ponimanii istorii (Vozrazhenie g. N. Rozhkovu)", Obrazovanie, No. 2, 1899, pp. 64-65. The polemic between Kareev and Rozhkov began in 1898 and was published in the journal Obrazovanie between 1898 and 1899. In his article "Uspekhv sovremennoi sotsiologii v ikh sootnoshenii s istoriei", Rozhkov criticised Kareev's historical views. Rozhkov was particularly critical of the distinction Kareev drew between phenomena relating to the actions of individuals and phenomena relating to the conditions and forms of being. Rozhkov argued that such a distinction could not be made.
111 Rozhkov, "Neskol'ko spornykh sotsiologicheskikh voprosov", p. 84.
According to Rozhkov, every process develops in a determined fashion because of its inherent internal properties. This is its evolutionary connection. Every process is also influenced by other processes which act on it. This is a causal connection.\(^{112}\) Rozhkov added that, in an effort to avoid misunderstanding, he was prepared "to call an evolutionary relationship that relationship that concerns internal causality (in the positive sense) and a causal relationship that relationship concerning external causality".\(^{113}\)

As early as 1898, Rozhkov wrote that the causal relationship of phenomena was the cornerstone of historical philosophy and science.\(^{114}\) In 1899 he reaffirmed this idea when he wrote that the task of a monist sociological theory was "to uncover that process which most strongly of all causally influences other processes but, at the same time, is least affected by them".\(^{115}\) According to Rozhkov, the notion of causality necessarily implied a hierarchy or a sequence of phenomena. As Rozhkov wrote in 1903:

\[\text{The history of any knowledge begins with the simple accumulation of separate observations, completely devoid of system or reduced only to a superficial connection. Knowledge turns into a science only when}\]

\(^{112}\) Ibid.

\(^{113}\) Ibid., p. 85. This statement about cause and effect, he repeated, was influenced not by the views of Kareev but by Comte, Spencer, Mill and others.


\(^{115}\) Rozhkov, "Neskol'ko spornykh sotsiologicheskikh voprosov", pp. 84-85.
the connection between the separate phenomena becomes internal or necessary. In other words, when the concept of causality or the necessary consistency of phenomena appears.\textsuperscript{116}

In his sociological theory, Rozhkov placed all his categories and sub-categories of phenomena in strict hierarchy.

Rozhkov believed that the level of influence that one group of phenomena asserted on another group of phenomena was related to the notion of force [\textit{sila}] and also to the notion of a primary cause [\textit{pervonachal'nosti etogo vliianiia}] in nature.\textsuperscript{117} These ideas were consistent with the classical Newtonian interpretation of physics that held sway in Rozhkov's time. As Rozhkov pointed out in the following analogy: "once certain physical and chemical principles have been established in physiology, it is possible to deduce the entire mechanism of physiological processes. This is because the underlying phenomenon in physics [\textit{v fizike gipostaziruetsia dvizhenie}] is considered to be motion".\textsuperscript{118} He believed that sociology had to be governed by the same reasoning. That is why he argued that economic phenomena are a stronger force than social, political and psychological factors in determining society. Once economic factors have been established, all the other components that comprise

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{116} Rozhkov, \textit{Obzor}, Chast' I, p. 5.
\item \textsuperscript{117} Rozhkov, \textit{Osnovnye zakony}, p. 25. See also: Rozhkov, \textit{Obzor'}, Chast' I, p. 5.
\item \textsuperscript{118} Rozhkov, \textit{Obzor}, Chast' I, p. 6.
\end{itemize}
society can then be deduced. Rozhkov had very little time for the notion of dialectics in his writing of history.

The question of establishing the first cause and a hierarchy of causality was of vital importance to Rozhkov. Like many thinkers of his time, Rozhkov borrowed from the physical sciences to explain social phenomena.\textsuperscript{119} In Russia, no scientific materialist was as bold as Rozhkov in devising a mechanical paradigm to explain social development. The task for Rozhkov was not only to find which phenomenon was going to form the basis of his sociological construction, but to ascertain what effects such a phenomenon would have. Rozhkov believed it was essential that he discover the sequence of events or the direction and order in which the phenomena that shaped society developed.

According to Rozhkov, it was “especially important to distinguish strictly between active causes [aktivnye prichiny] and passive conditions [passivnye uslovie]”.\textsuperscript{120} He defined active causes as factors that “create the essence of a phenomenon, that is, they create that phenomenon’s fundamental nature”.\textsuperscript{121} Passive conditions are very different because they “only produce small, insignificant changes that assist or hinder the active causes by accelerating or inhibiting

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\item \textsuperscript{120} Rozhkov, \textit{Osnovnye zakony}, p. 25.
\item \textsuperscript{121} \textit{Ibid}.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
their action”. Rozhkov believed that economic phenomena are active causes [aktivnye prichiny] that influence and determine all other aspects of society. Social, political and psychological phenomena, on the other hand, are only “passive conditions” [passivnye uslovie] resulting from economic phenomena. This fact, he claimed, was confirmed by historical research.

In keeping with the rationalistic realism of nineteenth-century scientific materialism, Rozhkov proposed that economic phenomena comprised the simplest and most powerful force that shaped society. He wrote that “when the economy, social relations, political structures and psychological organisations of a society are compared, it so happens that the economy is the primary element of society [pervichnyi element obshchezhitii]”. Rozhkov felt that a further distinction had to be made in the classification of social phenomena, for he believed that every society could be studied either dynamically or in a state of rest. Thus, Rozhkov’s acceptance of the Comtean belief that a social science is like any other natural science led him also to the acceptance of the Comtean notion of social statics and social dynamics. Just as he believed that in

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122 Ibid.
123 Ibid.
124 Ibid.
125 Rozhkov, Osnovnye zakony, p.7. See also Russkaia istoriia, Vol. 1, pp. 9-22.
126 Ibid.
mechanics it is useful to separate statics from dynamics, so it is necessary to make a distinction in sociology between statics and dynamics. As Comte wrote:

The distinction is not between two classes of facts, but between two aspects of theory. It corresponds with the double conceptions of order and progress: for order consists ... in a permanent harmony among the conditions of social existence, and progress consists in social development.\(^\text{127}\)

Comte believed that it was impossible to study social statics without examining social dynamics and he argued that a harmony existed between these two concepts within the social whole. He wrote:

The static study of sociology consists in the investigation of the laws of action and reaction of the different parts of the social system — apart, for the occasion, from the fundamental movement which is always gradually modifying them. \(^\text{128}\)

For Comte, social statics reveals the essential order of every human society while social dynamics ultimately retraces the vicissitudes through which this fundamental order has passed.\(^\text{129}\)

Rozhkov, in a similar fashion, proposed:


\(^\text{128}\) Ibid.

Society may be studied in two conditions: in a condition of rest and in a condition of motion. If we try to comprehend all social life at a definite, given moment, we would thus acquaint ourselves with the interrelation of social phenomena which are in a condition of equilibrium or rest. We would draw for ourselves a scheme of society as if it were in a paralysed form. We would cut the social whole and prepare it as an anatomist prepares a corpse with the aim of acquainting himself with the structure of the human organism. Just like the anatomist, we would acquaint ourselves in a similar manner with the structure of society. However, besides studying social phenomena in a state of rest or equilibrium, it is also possible to study them in a state of motion or development. Studying the structure of society, it is thus possible to examine its functions in the same way that a physiologist examines the functions of the human organism.\textsuperscript{130}

Social statics is a cross-section of arrested motion; society caught in flight, as it were, and dissected. Consequently, Rozhkov maintained that

Sociology breaks down into two large sections: in the first, one researches social phenomena in its state of rest or equilibrium, or in that manner which studies the structure of society; in the second, the subject of study is motion, the development of social phenomena or, expressing it differently, the functions of society.\textsuperscript{131}


\textsuperscript{131} Rozhkov, \textit{Obzor}, Chast' II, Vypusk II, p. 142.
The distinction between social statics and social dynamics was of crucial importance to Rozhkov's theory of history. In chapters 5 and 6 of this thesis, Rozhkov's laws of social statics and social dynamics will be examined.

Kliuchevskii's influence on Rozhkov was unquestionable and the impact it had on Rozhkov's work was far-reaching. It went beyond reinforcing Rozhkov's theory of the primary significance of the economic factor in the study of history. It was also reflected in Rozhkov's impressive use of primary sources, in his formulation of sociological laws and in his periodization of history. It may be said without exaggeration that Kliuchevskii's influence permeated Rozhkov's overall approach to the writing of history.

Given that Rozhkov claimed that he was already interested in economics and history while he was still in high school, it is not surprising that, when he entered the faculty of History and Philosophy at Moscow University in 1886, he continued his studies of these disciplines under Kliuchevskii. It was from Kliuchevskii that Rozhkov learnt the importance of economics in the study of history. Kliuchevskii himself believed that economics played a vital role in history and therefore many of his works developed what could be called an
“economic materialist” interpretation. This point of view was best expressed by Struve who wrote:

V.O. Kliuchevskii ranks among those historians of the XIX century who completely independently, it seems, quite apart from any literary or ideological influences, through their own deep study of the facts and by their own intuition, came to recognize the importance of the “economic” factor in the process of social development. About my own generation I can honestly say that we learnt the economic interpretation of history not only through Marx’s *Capital*, but also from Kliuchevskii’s *Boyar Duma*, where the influence of economic forces and stimuli on the social evolution of Russia are depicted in the kind of classical relief that Marx was never able to master.

Rozhkov expressed a similar thought in a posthumously published article entitled “The Prokhorovskaia Manufactory in the First Forty Years of Its Existence”. He wrote:

Kliuchevskii not only made available a lot of hitherto unexplored material dealing mainly with social history but he inculcated in his students a taste for and an interest in the economic life of bygone days. He provided subtle and profound models of historico-critical analysis and encouraged his students to make wider use of the enormous amount of unpublished primary sources. Thus Kliuchevskii’s work

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was a continuation of the work that had previously been done by S.M. Soloviev. As such, the school of Kliuchevskii continued to make penetrating and incisive breakthroughs in the virgin forest of new primary sources, predominantly those belonging to the XVI, XVII and XVIII centuries.\textsuperscript{135}

As late as 1926, in a series of lectures that he gave to the Society of Marxist Historians, Rozhkov acknowledged the key importance that Kliuchevskii played in instilling in him a thorough understanding of the role of economics in historical explanation.\textsuperscript{136}

Rozhkov's contemporary and fellow historian M.M. Bogoslovskii recalled that when he asked Rozhkov in 1896 what the subject of his master's dissertation was going to be, Rozhkov replied: "I still do not know; something economic!".\textsuperscript{137} In his recollections of Rozhkov, Bogoslovskii also provides an insight into the relationship that he and Rozhkov had with Kliuchevskii. In his account, the three of them would often find themselves sitting around discussing university matters or contemporary political issues to the early hours of the morning.\textsuperscript{138}

An examination of Rozhkov's first periodization of Russian history clearly reveals the influence that Kliuchevskii had on him. Already in his master's thesis, 

\textsuperscript{135} Ibid., p. 79.
\textsuperscript{136} Ibid., p. 80.
\textsuperscript{137} M.M. Bogoslovskii, "Iz vospominanii o N.A. Rozhkovе", \textit{Uchenye zapiski instituta istorii RANIONa}, p. 132.
\textsuperscript{138} Ibid., p. 143.
which was published in 1899, Rozhkov had adopted a periodization that was taken from Kliuchevskii's work. Because his thesis examined the agricultural development of Russia in the sixteenth century, Rozhkov did not produce a general periodization of Russian history. He did this two years later in 1901 when he published his very popular textbook entitled *A Textbook of Russian History for Secondary Schools and Self-Education*. The periodization he used in this textbook was also the periodization used in his equally popular work *Town and Village in Russian History* which was first published in 1902. This periodization remained at the basis of all of his major historical studies until he revised and enlarged it in 1918. Critics have ignored the importance of Rozhkov's 1901 periodization and have focused their comments on his 1918 periodization.

*Town and Village in Russian History: A Short Sketch of the Economic History of Russia* was Rozhkov's first general synthesis of Russian history that employed the concepts he had announced in 1898. It was written in 1902 and, as its full title suggests, it attempted to explore the economic factors responsible for the development of towns and villages in Russia. The author wanted to study "the significance of and the interrelationship between the town and the village in Russian history" in order to show that the "economic criterion" [*priznak khoziaistvennyi*] explained the

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fundamental differences between towns and villages. Rozhkov claimed that economic phenomena were at the basis of all other phenomena. Social and political phenomena were studied by Rozhkov in so far as they helped to elucidate the economic base. On the basis of this general plan, Rozhkov formulated the following periodization of Russian history:

The history of the Russian town and village, as with Russian history in general, is divided into five periods. These are: (1) the Kievan period that lasted until the end of the XII century; (2) the Appanage [Udel’nyi] period which covered the XIII, XIV, XV centuries as well as the first half of the XVI century, in other words, almost up to the beginning of the independent government of Ivan Grozny; (3) the Muscovite period which covered the second half of the XVI century and the entire XVII century; (4) the modern pre-reform period that covered the XVIII and the first half of the XIX century; and finally, (5) the recent post-reform period which began with the Great Emancipation Act of the 19 February 1861 and which we are all still experiencing and witnessing.

In *A Survey of Russian History from a Sociological Point of View*, which was first published in 1903, Rozhkov repeated this periodization.

Kliuchevskii never concerned himself directly with the question of periodization in Russian history. However, in his *Course of Russian History*, Kliuchevskii

distinguished periods in Russian history that emphasised the main stages of colonisation.\textsuperscript{143} Colonisation, according to Kliuchevskii, was directly linked to economic, social and political factors, all of which were inseparably connected.\textsuperscript{144} Consequently, when Kliuchevskii distinguished his major stages of colonisation, he also indicated major shifts in the economy and the social and political structure of Russian society. Kliuchevskii wrote:

\begin{quote}
The chief stages of migration group themselves into four periods: which, if named according to the localities in which the Russian population (or such portions of it as helped to make history) was massed during each epoch, may be termed the Dneprian, Upper-Volgan, Great Russian, and Pan-Russian periods respectively; if according to the political régimes in force at the time — the Town Province, Principality, Muscovite Empire, and Russian Empire periods; and if according to their respective economic systems — the Forest Industrial, Free Agricultural Labour, Military Landowning, and Serf Labour epochs of Russian history.\textsuperscript{145}
\end{quote}

Each of these main stages of migration corresponded to the following four periods of time: the Dneprian stage covered the period from the VIII to the XIII centuries;

\textsuperscript{144} \textit{Ibid.}
the Upper-Volgan stage covered the period from the XIII to the XV centuries; the Great Russian stage covered the period from the XV century to the second decade of the XVII century; and the Pan-Russian stage covered the period from the beginning of the XVII century to the mid XIX century.

The similarity that exists between the periodizations of Rozhkov and Kliuchevskii is not accidental. Both periodizations had one element in common. The common element was the primary sources that both historians relied on to justify their interpretations of historical development. Rozhkov, who had acquired Kliuchevskii's profound ability to analyse and scrutinise sources, could not ignore the generalisations that his master had developed about Russian historical development. After all, Kliuchevskii himself was more interested in the influence of economic, social and political factors than the influence of spiritual or moral forces in history. Kliuchevskii's thorough examination of all the major sources of early Russian history necessarily meant that Rozhkov had no choice but to use the same sources and accept those statements made by Kliuchevskii that were verified by the historical material.\footnote{Cf: Kliuchevskii, \textit{Sochineniia v deviatii tomakh}, Vol. I, Lecture V and Rozhkov, \textit{Gorod i derevnia}, pp. 8,9 and 30.}

Rozhkov's early historical works were inspired and influenced by the lectures that Kliuchevskii gave at
Moscow University. These lectures, which Kliuchevskii revised and polished over many years, eventually came to form the first four volumes of his monumental *A Course of Russian History*. In the first two lectures of this work, Kliuchevskii came as close as he ever did to outlining his philosophy of history. By the time the first volume of Kliuchevskii's *A Course of Russian History* was published in 1904, Rozhkov had already written several general surveys of Russian history.\(^{147}\) In many ways, these early works by Rozhkov may be regarded as being products of the Kliuchevskii school of history. More importantly, they also represent a logical extension of the Kliuchevskii tradition. In other words, Rozhkov attempted to explore and develop certain aspects that his mentor mentioned in his lectures but did not elaborate in any of his studies. Perhaps the most obvious example of this is the way Rozhkov explored and developed the sociological aspect of Kliuchevskii's work.

When Rozhkov turned to Comtean sociological thought, he did so because he believed it would help him produce a better history: a history that was even better than the one his master had produced. As early as 1884, Kliuchevskii had expressed his belief that there were several weaknesses with the ways in which Russian history had been studied. In his manuscript “The

\(^{147}\) See: N.A. Rozhkov, *Uchebnik russkoi istorii dlia srednikh uchebnykh zavedenii i dlia samoobrazovaliia* (Moscow, 1901); Rozhkov, *Gorod i derevnia* and Rozhkov, *Obzor* 'Chast' I and II.
Methodology of Russian History”¹⁴⁸, Kliuchevskii argued that most of the weaknesses in Russian history existed because there was an “absence of a method”.¹⁴⁹ He believed that Russian historical research had been separated from general historical thought in Europe and rightly claimed that whereas French historical literature “came under the scrutiny” of English, German and western European writers in general, Russian historical literature was deprived of the benefits of criticism from abroad.¹⁵⁰

Kliuchevskii believed that the absence of a historical method was a result of the “lack of a sense of responsibility” [slabost' otvetstvennosti] felt by Russian historians.¹⁵¹ He then compared Russian scholars to German scholars and came to the following conclusion:

When a German scholar investigates a specific fact of ancient Roman history, for

¹⁴⁸ V.O. Kliuchevskii, Sochineniia v deviati tomakh, Vol. VI, (Moscow: Mysl', 1989), p. 436. This is the first time that Kliuchevskii's lectures entitled "Metodologiia russkoi istorii" have been published. There are twenty lectures in all and they were read, along with his other lectures entitled "Terminologiia russkoi istorii", for the first time in 1884 and 1885. These lectures are more than a century old and, as R.A. Kireeva has pointed out: "Since that time the science of history has progressed significantly. The conception of the general historical process has changed qualitatively. There has been an increase in demands for theoretical, methodological works. In a word, readers have before themselves not a late twentieth century work but a monument of historical thought from the eighties of the last century, that is, the first attempt in pre-revolutionary Russia to create a course of studies with a methodological character. This was novel even in his time and since then there have not been too many detailed studies of this type". See pp: 436-437.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 5-6.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p. 6.
example, he well understands the gravity of the task he has chosen. He knows that it has general scientific significance and investigates it in such a way as to ensure that it meets the standards set by science. He does this by having to say something new and, moreover, something substantial about the fact he is investigating. On the other hand, when a fact of Russian history is investigated, the researcher ignores these concerns. It is as if such a fact is only of interest because it relates to our country and deserves attention only for this reason.152

Kliuchevskii believed that Russian history could not be separated from world history and, as such, was inextricably linked to “the general sociological question relating to the problem of the history of humanity and its law-governed regularity”.153 As such, he believed that it was possible to construct a sociological scheme which showed that the development of Russian history was governed by laws. As Rozhkov’s colleague M.M. Bogoslovskii pointed out: “the abstract work of philosophising was alien to him [Kliuchevskii] ... and it would seem that with the exception of the first lecture of his course, he did not concern himself any further with the question of a sociological theory of history”.154 As E. Chumachenko aptly put it in the title of her book, Kliuchevskii wisely remained a “student of sources”.155

152 Ibid.
Kliuchevskii chose to concentrate his efforts on examining what he called “local history” [mestnaia istoriia], that is, Russian history. In his opinion, the science of history had not yet reached the stage that made the establishment of the laws governing history possible. In 1903, Kliuchevskii wrote in his diary:

We know that historical life and the entire universe must have its own law-governed regularity [zakonomernost’]; a necessary connection of causes and effects. However, the present level of historical science does not enable us to comprehend this connection. We cannot penetrate this logic of life and satisfy ourselves with an observation of the continuity of life’s processes.156

In June 1904, Kliuchevskii once again expressed the idea that the level of historical research needed for the establishment of sociological laws had not as yet been achieved. He wrote: “The immediate task of historical research is not the determination of historical laws. It is not to elucidate the essence of the historical process but rather to clarify the method of its study as well as working out the possible limitations of historical knowledge”.157 Despite the fact that Kliuchevskii believed that a “triumph of history” would be to set down “a science of general laws” that explain “the mechanics of life”, he did not produce a sociology of Russian history.158

156 V.O. Kliuchevskii, Pis’ma, dnevnik, aforizmy i mysli ob istorii (Moscow: Nauka, 1968), p. 288.
157 Ibid., p. 289.
never put into practice his plan for a "historical sociology".\textsuperscript{159}

Since the late nineteenth century, much has been written about history, sociology and their methodologies. While it might be possible today to criticise Kliuchevskii for having poorly defined and developed his historical methodology, it cannot be denied that his ideas and thoughts on the subject expressed the concerns of the thinkers of his age. In attempting to show that his historical ideas were not founded on intuitive insights alone, Kliuchevskii stressed the sociological aspects of his methodology. By 1898 Rozhkov was convinced of Kliuchevskii's idea that a "triumph of history" would be to establish "a science of the general laws of the structure of human communities irrespective of transitory, local conditions".\textsuperscript{160} Rozhkov was more optimistic than Kliuchevskii about the possibility of formulating general historical laws and this optimism led him not only to Comtean positivist thought but to a reinterpretation of Russian historical development.

By the time Rozhkov had published his Master's thesis in 1899, his reputation as a skilled historian and a master of sources was established. He had such an ability to read and interpret historical evidence that even his most outspoken opponents would often

\textsuperscript{159} Ibid., p. 35.
\textsuperscript{160} Kliuchevskii, Sochineniia, Vol. VI, p. 61.
congratulate him for his superb mastery of the evidence.\textsuperscript{161} Like Kliuchevskii, for example, Rozhkov studied Kiev Rus' in great depth. Rozhkov painstakingly researched the available evidence, especially the \textit{Primary Chronicle} and \textit{Russkaia Pravda}. Following his master, Rozhkov was greatly influenced by Greek or Byzantine sources that refer to the Eastern or Southern Slavs as "barbarians" and describe their way of life as primitive.\textsuperscript{162} Like his master also, Rozhkov translated these sources himself.

Unlike Kliuchevskii, Rozhkov took his work a step further by attempting to derive from his history the sociological laws that both men considered essential to the historical enterprise. Following his mentor's belief in grand-scale sociological schemes, Rozhkov designed one. As R.G. Collingwood pointed out, throughout the nineteenth century historians who had spent most of their lives sifting through the evidence accumulating a vast wealth of facts were uneasy about the "ultimate purpose of this detailed research".\textsuperscript{163} Soon many were embarking upon what seemed to be the next logical stage in their programme, namely, the discovery of laws.\textsuperscript{164} This was precisely what Rozhkov set out to accomplish. Consequently, he designed a very stimulating and

\textsuperscript{161} For example, see: B.D. Grekov's comments in his work \textit{Kiev Rus} (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1959), pp. 46ff.
\textsuperscript{164} \textit{Ibid.}
original sociological scheme at the basis of which rested his set of laws of social dynamics and social statics.

In the end, Rozhkov's history, which was founded on the Kliuchevskii tradition, produced a veritable mountain of impressive details and a thorough interpretation of the primary sources. On the other hand, while his sociological theory, which was predominantly influenced by the positivist notion that the general laws governing the course of historical events can be ascertained, is original and stimulating, it failed to produce the results that Rozhkov wanted.

While Rozhkov believed that his sociological theory was hewn from the hard facts of historical material, this is not the impression gained when his works are read. He was unable to marry successfully the disciplines of history and sociology as he defined them. As a result, the historical and sociological features of his work appear as separate entities, each having not only its own goals but its own set of problems. The fact that Rozhkov could publish separately his sociological laws of social statics and social dynamics without the details of historical evidence is, to some extent, proof of this. In the end, Rozhkov's decision to schematise history, while it led to some fruitful classifications of phenomena, simply did not produce a

165 See: Rozhkov, Osnovnye zakony, op.cit.
structure or model that did justice to the complexity of the data he was analysing.

It is ironic that although Rozhkov accepted Kliuchevskii's statements about the need to establish sociological laws in history, Rozhkov's historical studies would suffer permanently from their commitment to this aim. Kliuchevskii's examination of historical laws is more tentative and less mechanical than Rozhkov's and his writings remain masterpieces of historical literature. Whereas Rozhkov's historical achievement is tainted by his over-ambitious determination to extract sociological laws from the facts and data he collected, Kliuchevskii continues to impress the reader with his research and the lucidity of his ideas.

Although Rozhkov did not reduce his historical research to a collection of statements that fitted neatly into a predetermined theoretical framework, his sociological scheme is based on an overly mechanical interpretation of history. This salient feature of Rozhkov's work is especially true of his laws of social statics and social dynamics. In Rozhkov's case, the mechanical nature of his sociological theory can be explained in terms of the positivistic programme that he adopted. Putting it more precisely, it can be explained in terms of the positivist theories and ideas that he borrowed from Comte and his followers.
Coser rightly suggested that Comte failed to specify the link between social statics and social dynamics and failed to show how these laws "operated concretely". The same criticisms may be made of Rozhkov's use of these laws. In Rozhkov's analysis, economic, social, political and psychological phenomena were mechanically superimposed on each other without providing a reason or explanation as to how they interacted. Rozhkov believed that phenomena behaved in a particular manner and he asserted, without justification, that this behaviour was explained by his sociological scheme and verified by the historical evidence he provided.

The fact that Rozhkov's sociological theory did not always succeed in convincing the reader of the merits of its interpretation of reality does not mean that his work in general is of limited use or unimportant. Rozhkov's work is useful and important in part because there often appears a dichotomy between his history and his sociology. It is this duality in Rozhkov's work which makes it so valuable. On the one hand, Rozhkov formulated a remarkable theoretical construction, which was formed as a result of his search for a scientific world view at a time when such searches were fashionable and, on the other hand, he had a great ability to scrutinise sources and to use them as the groundwork for the writing of history. While the two are not

166 Coser, op.cit., p.12.
successfully married, they are each important and of interest in their own right. This division between the writing of history and the writing of sociology is artificial. In reality, the two cannot be divorced, they exist in a symbiotic relationship.\footnote{M. Shaw, \textit{Marxism and Social Science: The Roots of Social Knowledge} (London: Pluto Press Ltd., 1975), p. 85. See also: T.B. Bottomore, \textit{Sociology: A Guide to Problems and Literature} (London: Unwin University Books, eighth impression, 1969), pp. 66-69 and Kaye, \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 1-3.} In Rozhkov, the division is much more apparent because of the influence of positivist ideas on his work. This was consistent with the new kind of historiography that arose late in the nineteenth century in Russia, which may be called positivistic historiography.

R.G. Collingwood, writing generally about the influence of positivism in the nineteenth century, wrote that positivists had their own notion of what natural science was. He continued:

\begin{quote}
They thought it consisted of two things: first, ascertaining facts; secondly, framing laws. The facts were immediately ascertained by sensuous perception. The laws were framed through generalizing from these facts by induction. Under this influence a new kind of historiography arose, which may be called positivistic historiography.\footnote{Collingwood, \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 128-129.}
\end{quote}

The purpose of such a programme was to elevate "history to the rank of a science" through sociology. As Collingwood pointed out:
The sociologist would thus be a kind of super-historian, raising history to the rank of a science by thinking scientifically about the same facts about which the historian thought only empirically.169

Rozhkov attempted to fulfil this ambitious positivist programme but in his "ecstatic worship of science we find much naiveté, and even blind dogmatism".170

Although today most historians are sceptical about the possibility of identifying laws of historical development, some of the best historians at the turn of the century were convinced otherwise.171 Many historians believed in the "positivistic principle that natural science is the only true form of knowledge, which implies that all processes are natural processes".172 Consequently, the "historical process" was "a natural process" and the historian's task was to discover "the causal laws connecting certain constant types of historical phenomena".173 The search for historical laws was the cornerstone of Rozhkov's attempt to develop a scientific history.

169 Ibid., p. 128.
172 Collingwood, op.cit., p. 175.
173 Ibid., p. 176.