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

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Chapter Five
Rozhkov’s Laws of Social Statics
Figure 5.1
Rozhkov's Classification of Historical Phenomena

Psychological Phenomena

Political Phenomena

Social Phenomena

Economic Phenomena

Natural Phenomena
Figure 5.2
The Sub-categories of Rozhkov’s Historical Phenomena

**Social Phenomena**

- Distribution of economic goods
- System or technology production
- Forms of production
- Forms of landownership
- Predominant branch of the economy

**Economic Phenomena**

- Population
- Natural Wealth
- Soil
- Climate
- Relief

**Natural Phenomena**

- Extractive Industries
- Agriculture
- The Manufacturing Industry
- Trade or Exchange
Figure 5.2 Continued

Literature, Science and Philosophy

+ Art

Religion

Morals and Customs

Personalities and characters

Psychological Phenomena

Concept of power

Purpose of government

Structure of administration

Political Phenomena

Classes

Estates

Social Phenomena

Egoists

Individualists

Aestheticists

Ethical types

Analysts

Ethical individuals
After he had examined the Kiev Rus’ period, Rozhkov went on to examine Russia’s historical development up to the middle of the seventeenth century. He had planned to examine Russia’s history up to the beginning of the twentieth century but the events of 1905 and Rozhkov’s involvement in them prevented him from finishing his study *A Survey Of Russian History From A Sociological Point Of View*. Rozhkov’s grand plan was to demonstrate that the general pattern of historical development that he had uncovered for the Kiev Rus’ period held true for all other periods of Russian history (see figures 5.1 and 5.2). Once he had done this, he could then formulate laws on the basis of these generalisations. Rozhkov’s ultimate goal was to prove the universality of these laws by showing that they hold true for the historical development of every nation. This was the aim of his *magnum opus - Russian History In A Comparative Historical Interpretation (The Fundamentals Of Social Dynamics).*

*A Survey Of Russian History From A Sociological Point Of View* was never completed. Yet while he did not have the opportunity to publish his complete analysis of Russian history from the end of the sixteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth

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2. N.A. Rozhkov, *Obzor russkoi istorii s sotsialogicheskoi tochki zreniia*, 3 Volumes, (St. Petersburg & Moscow, 1903-1905).
century, Rozhkov did produce a summary of his sociological thought. Published in 1907, his study entitled *The Fundamental Laws Of The Development Of Social Phenomena (A Short Sociological Essay)* spelt out the laws that he believed governed social evolution. This source provides us with as complete a picture of Rozhkov's interpretation of Russian history as we have.

Rozhkov equated social statics with the study of social order and order for Rozhkov meant discovering the sequence of causality that he believed existed between phenomena. This chapter will show that Rozhkov believed the sequence of causality was governed by laws and he believed he had discovered these laws on the basis of his historico-empirical research. Furthermore, this chapter will demonstrate that Rozhkov's thorough classification of social phenomena was marred by his adherence to the notion of a strict one-sided conception of causality. Rozhkov's notion of causality was the source of several shortcomings which greatly weakened his theoretical positivist construction.

Rozhkov claimed that the classification of social phenomena was the first and easiest step of social statics. The second step was harder and more important because it entailed studying the relationship between phenomena and determining the order in which they influence each other. To complete these steps, Rozhkov

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believed that the study of social statics begins with an examination of the structure of a particular society at a given time. In other words, social statics studied the conditions of stability or equilibrium in society [obshchestvennoi zhizni].\(^5\) Using the analogy of society as a human being, Rozhkov’s social statics consisted essentially in examining the organs of society in the same way that an anatomist would examine the organs of a corpse.\(^6\) In a sense, social statics analyses society as if it were in a frozen state. It is the same as studying the conditions of equilibrium and stability in mechanics.\(^7\) The aim of social statics is to extract from the historical evidence a set of general laws that may be applied to all societies at various periods of their development.\(^8\)

Rozhkov always gave first place to scientific or analytical thought and, as he declared on numerous occasions, knowledge is scientific only “when the connection of separate phenomena becomes internal or necessary, that is, when an understanding of causality as the necessary sequentiality [posledovatel’nost’] of phenomena occurs”.\(^9\) The aim of any scientific system


\(^{9}\) *Obzor*, Chast’ I, Vypusk I, p. 5.
was the discovery of this type of sequentiality. Indeed, Rozhkov defined a scientific law \([nauchnyi\ zakon]\) as being the “establishment of a causal dependency \([prichinnaia\ zavisimost]\) between a whole series or group of phenomena not just between two concrete and separate phenomena”.\(^1\) The concept of causality \([prichinnost]\) is of vital importance to Rozhkov’s sociological explanation and, as he stated on several occasions, his was a positivist understanding of the term.\(^1\) He believed that “causality is only the inevitable and necessary sequentiality of two phenomena \([posledovatel’nosti\ dvukh’ iavlenii]\)”.\(^2\) In 1907 Rozhkov would add that when “two phenomena constantly produce the same sequence we have the right to consider the one that came first as the cause of the one that followed. Therefore, causality is the name given to the constant succession of phenomena \([postoianaia\ posledovatel’nost’ iavlenii]\)”.\(^3\)

In Rozhkov’s opinion, as social phenomena are no different from natural phenomena, they are both subject to causal relationships. He believed that there were two major forms of causality in social phenomena. He wrote: “the phenomena of known social processes are either

\(^{10}\) Rozhkov, \textit{Osnovnye zakony}, p. 4. See also: Rozhkov, \textit{Obzor}, Chast’ I, Vypusk I, p. 5.
\(^{13}\) Rozhkov, \textit{Osnovnye zakony}, p. 4. The italics belong to Rozhkov. This notion of causality was explained in detail by J.S. Mill in his work \textit{A System of Logic} which Rozhkov used in his interpretation.
caused by other phenomena of the same process or are causally dependent on phenomena related to other processes of society".\textsuperscript{14} Rozhkov gave the following example to illustrate what he meant:

At any particular moment, a system of government may depend purely on political needs and interests but it may also be the result of a particular social structure, that is, of the struggles and interrelationship of the various classes and estates.

Rozhkov's belief that events of human history are connected according to some fundamental sequence, is of crucial importance to his conception of history and sociology. After all, he believed that the subject of history is "the historical process" or "the connected chain of factors".\textsuperscript{15} Social phenomena develop in conformity to a law [\textit{zakonomernost']}. He wrote: "Every moment of a society's development may be seen as an organically connected whole [\textit{organicheski-sviaznoe tseloe}]".\textsuperscript{16}

Rozhkov wanted to reduce the seemingly infinite variety of human histories to a fundamental sequence of events. He believed this sequence of events constituted the historical process and could be explained by laws of causality. Of course, a belief in causality does not require a rigid determinism. The notion of dialectics developed by Hegel represented one attempt to escape

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[\textsuperscript{14}] Rozhkov, \textit{Obzor}, Chast' I, Vypusk I, p. 5.
\item[\textsuperscript{15}] Rozhkov, "Uspekhi sovremennoi sotsiologii", p. 19.
\item[\textsuperscript{16}] Rozhkov, \textit{Obzor}, Chast' II, Vypusk II, p. 160.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
determinism while clinging to a belief in causality. For Rozhkov, causality meant a hard determinism which excluded chance from the historical process. Rozhkov could well have been the subject of Collingwood's reproach that: "if the task of history is supposed to consist in ascertaining general laws governing the course of historical events, it is expurgated of three factors which are in reality of high importance: chance or accident, free will, and ideas or the demands and conceptions of men".17

Ernst Cassirer has pointed out that: "the law of causality demands nothing more than certainty and determinateness in what happens; it says nothing, however, about one realm of events being in principle of a higher order than all others. Hence it is absolutely impossible to prove that all strict and actual causality must be of mechanical nature".18 Since Rozhkov, like Comte, was interested in discovering the fundamental sequence or succession of events, he tackled the problem of the hierarchy of phenomena. As early as 1898 Rozhkov drafted a hierarchical scheme of social development that allowed him to classify all social phenomena.19 Such a hierarchical view enabled him to locate social phenomena in their proper places and at the same time to determine the social hierarchy itself.

The combination of the belief in a fundamental sequence of events and a hierarchy of phenomena ensured that Rozhkov became a determinist *par excellence*.

According to Rozhkov, the classification of social phenomena was the first task of social statics and its "use, necessity and possibility cannot be doubted". He claimed that such a classification had already been established empirically by scholars who as far back as the seventeenth century had concerned themselves with questions about the relationship between man and nature. He classified phenomena in order of their increasing complexity and came up with a five-point scheme of the various factors that he believed determined historical development. Developing the notion of the constant succession of phenomena, Rozhkov declared that "each preceding category directly determines and influences the subsequent group". As this was a general law of social statics, all social phenomena conformed to it.

Rozhkov arranged his categories of historical phenomena in the following order:

1. the phenomena of nature [*estestvennye iavleniiia*];
2. economic phenomena [*khoziaistvennye iavleniiia*];

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21 *Ibid*.
3. social phenomena [sotsial'nye iavleniia], that is, the structure of society;
4. the phenomena of political life, that is, the structure of the government [politicheskie iavleniia]; and, finally,
5. psychological phenomena, or the phenomena of spiritual culture [psikhologicheskie iavleniia].

Rozhkov believed that of all the categories the first was the most general one. As is shown in Figure 5.1, natural phenomena comprised the least complex category while psychological phenomena comprised the most complex category. In accordance with his positivist scheme, Rozhkov placed natural phenomena, because of their simplicity, first in his hierarchical chain of causality. He illustrated this point thus:

Why, indeed, were the ancient Germans mainly occupied with extractive industry [dobyvaiushchei promyshlennost'iu] and cattle breeding [skotovodstvom]? Obviously, because there were plenty of unsettled spaces — forests teeming with wild animals and bees and pastures which could be used to feed the cattle. Taking into account the unusual scarcity of the population in the territory occupied by the ancient Germans, the territory which lies between the Rhine and the Elbe, we thereby explain the basic feature of the ancient German economic way of life, that is, the relative significance of the various branches of the economy.

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23 Ibid., p. 143.
Rozhkov was a great classifier and he divided each category of historical phenomena into several sub-categories. These divisions were placed by Rozhkov in order of increasing complexity and influence (See Figure 5.2). Consequently, he divided natural phenomena into the following five sub-categories:

1. the relief of the country or the structure of its surface;
2. the climate;
3. the soil;
4. the natural wealth (mineral, botanical and zoological wealth); and
5. the population (its quantity and distribution).

Such a list of categories and sub-categories is useful when it comes to organising and integrating phenomena into a simple framework which, in turn, permits the researcher to organise and make sense of the empirical data that has been collected.

Using this framework, Rozhkov produced several laws about natural phenomena. These laws included that the climate of a country was determined mainly by its relief and its geographical location; that the soil was dependent upon the climate and the relief of the country and that the natural wealth of the country relied on all

26 Ibid.
of these factors.\textsuperscript{27} We now know that soil does not depend primarily on climate and it is naïve to believe that the climate of a country depends primarily on its relief.

By 1907, Rozhkov was less concerned about geographical details and more concerned about how natural phenomena interact with human society. Relying on his faith in science and his theory of causation, Rozhkov produced the following laws of social statics:

1. Natural phenomena are only passive conditions and not active causes of social phenomena. Natural phenomena only assist certain systems of communal living, they do not create them.

2. The influence of natural conditions on society consistently diminishes in proportion to the development of social life \textit{[posledovatel'no umen'shaetsia po mere razvitiia obshchestvennoi zhizni].}\textsuperscript{28}

According to Rozhkov, geographical conditions do not and cannot determine human activity. Human activity is facilitated or hindered by natural factors but it is not determined by them. Rozhkov gave several examples to illustrate his argument. For instance, humans are capable of building towns in regions that experience extreme climatic conditions; irrigation makes it possible to grow crops in dry areas; and navigable rivers and lakes made trade easier between people separated

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., p. 159.
\textsuperscript{28} Rozhkov, \textit{Osnovnye zakony}, pp. 15 and 43.
by vast distances and hostile terrain. In short, human beings are not controlled by the forces of nature.29

As early as 1898, Rozhkov had described how, as technology improved, geographical factors, or the influence of nature, would diminish until they played only a very minor role. As he wrote:

We, who possess railways, steam-navigation, the telegraph and the telephone, now know that the size of a country is no longer important. Even in the economic field, which is closely allied with nature, the gradual weakening of the influence of nature can be observed.30

Rozhkov argued that even though primitive societies were strongly influenced by the forces of nature, they too were capable of challenging these forces. Early civilizations were capable of traversing huge mountain ranges to conquer neighbouring societies and were also able to settle in regions with harsh climatic conditions.31

In attempting to resolve the extremely difficult question of how natural phenomena influence historical development, Rozhkov argued that geographical factors only played a passive role on historical events and that an active cause had to be discovered elsewhere. The notion that a cause is something active presupposes an anthropomorphic and monist conception of cause which

30 N.A. Rozhkov, “Uspeki sovremennoi sotsiologii v ikh sootnoshenii s istoriei”, p. 20.
unilaterally determines or produces a result, and the result is seen as something inert and completely depending on its cause. If geographical factors played a passive role on historical events, then an active cause had to be found elsewhere.

Having placed natural phenomena first in his five-point classification of the various factors which influence social development, Rozhkov had to explain how natural phenomena were linked to the remaining factors, especially economic phenomena. Rozhkov's solution was to demonstrate that population linked natural and economic phenomena. Although Rozhkov placed the concept of population in the category of natural phenomena, he was convinced that it was more complex than the other natural phenomena. According to Rozhkov, at the basis of social reproduction is a "physiological instinct" which is always present.32

The existence of this fundamental instinct allowed him to place population in the category of natural phenomena. However, Rozhkov believed that the concepts of population growth and density could not be considered phenomena of nature. As Rozhkov wrote:

the point is that the density of the population in reality cannot be called a phenomenon of external nature. You see, although it is indisputable that the fact of birth has its own basic, physiological instinct, the real increase in the population is determined not so much by an

32 Ibid., p. 15.
abundant birth-rate as by the relationship between the birth-rate and the death-rate. Economic conditions introduce in an excessive birth-rate a merciless corrective in the form of a higher death-rate. Thus, even here natural conditions create the possibility of certain social changes but not the necessity of them; they influence them but do not give birth to them and, consequently, not only does the law of social statics, formulated by us, remain firm but it receives a new corroboration.33

Rozhkov believed this point was so crucial to his overall theory of history that he repeated it in his important work, The Fundamental Laws Of The Development Of Social Phenomena (A Short Sociological Essay). He wrote:

Is it possible to consider population density a natural phenomenon, a phenomenon of nature? Of course not! You see, although it is an indisputable fact that birth [rozhdeniia] has its own basic physiological instinct, real population growth is determined not so much by a high birth rate as by the relation between birth and death rates. Economic conditions make a cruel adjustment to excessive birth rates by way of a higher death rate.34

The most consistent reading of Rozhkov would suggest that he saw population as the bridge between natural and economic factors. Although the relief of a country, its climate, soil and natural wealth are features that can be considered independent of

33 Ibid. See also: Rozhkov, Istoricheskie i sotsiologicheskie ocherki, op.cit., p. 163.
34 Rozhkov, Osnovnye zakony, p. 15
economic, social or political factors, population is directly influenced by them. For this reason, when economic phenomena are placed second in the five-point scheme, an interrelationship is established between natural phenomena and the remaining four groups of phenomena.

For Rozhkov, the density of population together with natural conditions determined the "relative significance of the various branches of the economy". With this claim, Rozhkov's third law of social statics according to his *The Fundamental Laws Of The Development Of Social Phenomena (A Short Sociological Essay)*, we arrive at the central moment in Rozhkov's scheme of social dynamics.

There can be no question of the fact that economic phenomena occupy a central place in Rozhkov's theory of social development. They occupy second place in his hierarchy of factors that determine social development. This means that they are more complicated than natural phenomena but less complicated than the remaining phenomena. As with natural phenomena, Rozhkov carefully classified economic phenomena in order of their increasing complexity and dependency (see figure 5.2).

Classical political economy has distinguished three agents of production: land, labour and capital. Rozhkov incorporated and at the same time expanded the
classical notion. The threefold division of production became a fivefold one in which Rozhkov identified what he believed to be the most important economic relationships. He arranged them in order of increasing complexity and produced the following classification of economic phenomena:

1. the relative importance of the various branches of production [khoziaistva];
2. the forms of landownership [formy zemlevladieniia];
3. the forms of production [formy khoziaistva];
4. the system or technology of production [sistema ili tekhnika khoziaistva]; and
5. the distribution of economic goods [raspredelenie khoziaistvennykh blag].

By “forms of landownership”, Rozkhov was referring to the relations that people had to the land, that is, who owned it and why. The sub-category “forms of production” examined how labour was organised and exploited. The sub-category “the system or technology of production” examined how and to what extent labour and capital were exploited. By “the distribution of economic goods” Rozhkov was referring to the distribution of wealth in terms of the ownership of goods and capital.

35 Rozhkov, Obzor, Chast' II, Vypusk II, p. 143.
36 Ibid.
37 Rozhkov, Obzor, Chast' I, Vypusk I, p. 35.
38 Rozhkov, Obzor, Chast' II, Vypusk II, p. 143.
According to Rozhkov, the predominant branch of the economy determined the remaining forms of economic phenomena. In his opinion, there were four branches of production or economic activity. These were as follows:

1. extractive industry [dobyvaiushchaia promyshlennost’];
2. agriculture [sel’skoe khoziaistvo];
3. manufacturing industry [obrabatyvaiushchaia promyshlennost’]; and
4. trade or exchange [torgovlia ili obmen].

Rozhkov believed that once the branch of production that predominated had been determined, all the remaining forms of economic phenomena were also determined. As Rozhkov illustrated:

In the Kievan period of Russian history there prevailed a free or predatory form of land exploitation [vol’noe ili zakhvatnoe zemlepol’zovanie] which was the natural result of the predominance of extractive industry and primitive cattle breeding.

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40 Ibid., p. 16. As will be explained in the next chapter, Rozhkov believed that the products of "extractive industries" were obtained directly from nature and required very simple technology. Rozhkov may have been influenced by Marx's definition of extractive industries. Marx defined extractive industries as "industries in which the material for labour is provided immediately by Nature, such as mining, hunting, fishing and agriculture (so far as the latter is confined to breaking up virgin soil)". See: K. Marx, Capital: A Critique of Political Economy, Vol. 1, trans. B. Fowkes (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1976), p. 287. See also: F.G.G. Rose, The Traditional Mode of Production of the Australian Aborigines (North Ryde: Angus & Robertson, 1987), pp. 43-46 and J. Russell, Marx-Engels Dictionary (Sussex: The Harvester Press Ltd., 1981), p. 35.

41 Rozhkov, Obzor, Chast' I, p. 16.

The predominant branch of production therefore determined the form of landownership. In the example given, a predatory form of landownership [*zakhvatnoe zemlevладение*] meant that groups of people could occupy any field they wished or hunted wherever they wanted because land was open to free exploitation. Rozhkov believed that such a form of landownership was conditioned by the predominance of extractive industry.

The ways labour was organised and exploited, or what Rozhkov called the "forms of production" [*formy khoziaistva*], were also determined by the predominant branch of production. In Kiev Rus', for example:

There prevailed a family or domestic form of enterprise, with an almost complete absence of differentiation between capitalists and workers and almost without unfree labour. This was the result of that stage in the development of a natural economy when extractive industry plays the main economic role.43

Extractive industry, according to Rozhkov, required very little capital. It simply demanded the combined effort of all family members. A family unit could tackle a hostile environment in an isolated area. This meant that new areas could be discovered and developed and various families did not have to compete against each other for the same hunting, fishing and apiary areas as well as cattle pastures.44

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The fourth sub-category in Rozhkov's scheme, the technology of production, was more complicated than the preceding three elements of economic phenomena. As Rozhkov wrote:

the technology or system of production is formed under the influence of the three elements of economic life: the relative significance of the various branches of production, the forms of landownership and the form of production.\textsuperscript{45}

It must be remembered that the forms of landownership and the forms of production were determined by the predominant branch of production. Therefore, it can be concluded that the fourth sub-category, technology, was also determined indirectly by the predominant branch of production.\textsuperscript{46}

Rozhkov believed that technology was poorly developed in Kiev Rus'. For Rozhkov an economy based on extractive industry did not require any real technology. Most of the products were extracted from the environment by hand and with primitive tools. Cattle farming made use of the vast open spaces of the steppes.

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{46} It is worth pointing out that Rozhkov had always been ambivalent about the influence of technology on society. To use his metaphor, technology was an important link in the chain of economic phenomena but he was confused as to where in the chain this particular link had to be located. This confusion is reflected in the fact that in *Town and Village* Rozhkov was able to place "the system of production" in second position to the predominant branch of production while in his *A Survey of Russian History* it was in fourth position. See: N.A. Rozhkov, *Gorod i derevnia v russkoi istorii: (Kratkii ocherk ekonomicheskoi istorii rossii)* (St. Petersburg, 1902), pp. 5-7. In the first volume of his last major work, *Russian History* (1918), Rozhkov once again gave technology a higher level of influence.
The level of technology of extractive industry was primitive because land was acquired through seizure and occupation and because the domestic or family form of labour predominated.

Rozhkov did not possess the information available to modern anthropologists who have noted that societies based on the activities of extractive industry may be extremely rich although their wealth often comprised knowledge rather than artefacts. For Rozhkov, technology could not improve unless major changes took place in the other elements of economic life. For example, before a slash and burn system [podsechnaia sistema] could be changed into a three-field system, several major changes were necessary. Firstly, agriculture had to gain predominance over extractive industry; secondly, property in land [zemel’naia sobstvennost’] had to be established and thirdly, labour had to be organised, that is, a division of labour had to take place.

According to Rozhkov, the fifth and last category of economic phenomena, the distribution of economic goods, was the most complex of all. Generally speaking, Rozhkov believed that in primitive societies there existed a rough equality. This equality, he argued,

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disappeared as extreme inequalities developed and dominated later societies. The distribution of economic goods was determined by all the other elements of economic life. As Rozhkov wrote:

the distribution of economic goods is determined by the influence of the four elements of economic life: the relative significance of the various branches of production, the forms of landownership, the forms of production and, finally, its system or technology.

In describing the distribution of economic goods, Rozhkov identified factors such as the increase in land rent and the rate of increase of capital, wages and government taxes. He argued that all of these factors helped to explain the distribution of economic goods. He also claimed that they indicated the growth and extent of the inequality found within societies at various points of their development. In expressing these ideas Rozhkov was applying to Russian history a type of analysis that was commonplace among exponents of classical political economy in western Europe.

For Rozhkov, society and politics rested upon this economic base. Rozhkov expressed the dependency of social relations on economic conditions thus:

49 Ibid., pp. 39-40.
50 Ibid., Chast' II, Vypusk II, p. 150.
51 Ibid., p. 150. See also: N.A. Rozhkov, Evoliutsiia khoziaistvennykh form (St. Petersburg, 1905), pp. 4-5.
the social structure, that is, the division of society into economic classes and juridical estates [sosloviia], is formed as a result of the combined influence of the following economic phenomena: the relative significance of the various branches of economic labour, the forms of landownership, the forms of production and the distribution of economic goods.53

Rozhkov believed class to be an economic term. In his opinion, a person's class was determined by the position that individual occupied in the process of production and exchange.54 He believed a person's position was determined specifically by his or her occupation. For example, the landowner supplies land for production, the capitalist gives the monetary means and the equipment for production, the worker gives labour and the merchant transfers the goods from the hands of the producer to the consumer.55 Rozhkov claimed that these were economic groups or classes. Estates [sosloviia] on the other hand, were groups that had juridical status and thus special rights and obligations (see Figure 5.2).56

It was Rozhkov's belief that both classes and estates were the direct product of economic conditions. Rozhkov opposed the notion put forward by the juridical school of thought which ascribed to the government a

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53 Rozhkov, Obzor, Chast' II, Vypusk II, p. 151.
54 Ibid., Chast' I, Vypusk I, p. 43.
creative role in the formation of estates and classes. Rozhkov, in other words, tended to side with Kliuchevskii's interpretation of the role of the state and opposed the notion of the state as developed by S.M. Soloviev. This point is illustrated clearly in the following statement concerning the origins of serfdom. Rozhkov wrote:

Serfdom of the peasantry \([krepostnoe pravo na krest'ian]\) did not develop as a consequence of state interests nor as a result of the will of the government. It also did not develop as a result of the influence of any political changes. Serfdom developed under the influence of the special combination of socio-economic forces.\(^{58}\)

Rozhkov claimed that each historical period was determined by the predominance of a particular branch of the economy. In accordance with this predominant branch of the economy, the social structure of that historical period was determined. Believing he had established a causal relation between the predominant branch of the economy and social structure, Rozhkov proceeded to identify the predominant branch of the economy for each period. The reader will learn more about Rozhkov's periods of history and the justification for them in Chapter Six. However, in order to understand


what this law meant historically, it is worthwhile illustrating Rozhkov's thesis.

Kiev Rus', it will be remembered, was the first period of Russian history. As with the first period of every country, society was unorganised and did not have classes or estates because it was founded on the basis of extractive industries.\(^5^9\) As societies evolved and the predominant branch of the economy changed, class distinctions and estate differences began to emerge and develop.\(^6^0\) This happened during the Appanage Rus' period when agriculture becomes the predominate form of production. In the Muscovite Rus' period, two major forms of social relations were created. Free estates came into being in those countries in which a money economy had arisen on the basis of a small, local market and gradually increased to cover a much larger, world market. On the other hand, serf estates were created in those countries in which a money economy was forced immediately to adapt to a huge market.\(^6^1\) Finally, in the period after the emancipation of the serfs, societies were characterised not by estates but by sharp class distinctions.\(^6^2\) This was because manufacturing industries predominated.

Rozhkov believed that societies simply conformed to this pattern of development. There is very little in


\(^6^0\) Ibid., p. 173. See also: Rozhkov, *Osnovnye zakony*, p. 66.

\(^6^1\) Rozhkov, *Osnovnye zakony*, p. 68.

\(^6^2\) Ibid., p. 69.
Rozhkov's analysis that deals with class antagonism or class struggle. This important feature of Marxist historical analysis is blatantly absent in Rozhkov’s writing and goes a long way to showing just how removed Rozhkov was from a Marxist understanding of history. As Soviet critics pointed out, social groups pass from one period to another as fixed entities or, to use Averbukh’s metaphor, “as chunks of granite”.63 Because of his commitment to his scheme of causality, social groups appear petrified. They are arranged in strict order from the highest to the lowest group and Rozhkov maintained that the highest group in this structure is the most powerful and richest group in society.

Rozhkov found the most obvious links in his social scheme to be between social and political phenomena. In his opinion, the ruling economic class strives to consolidate its position, both consciously and unconsciously through the seizure of political power. He claimed that every form of political domination \([\text{gospodstvo}]\) is an expression of class domination.64 So, for example, the free town \(\text{obshchiny}\) — Novgorod and Pskov — “were, in political terms, nothing other than the expression of the class supremacy of the boyar aristocracy”.65 This close connection between society and politics impelled Rozhkov to formulate the

64 Rozhkov, Obzor, Chast’ II, Vypusk II, p. 154.
65 Ibid.
following law about the origins of his fourth category of historical phenomena — political phenomena:

The means of administrative activity are created directly by social conditions (by estates and especially by classes) and also by the basic phenomena of economic life, that is, by the relative significance of the various branches of industry, by the forms of landownership, by the system of production and by the distribution of economic goods. All of this, first of all, affects regional administration and this in turn affects central and supreme administration.66

Rozhkov believed that a prerequisite for the existence of society is the existence of some sort of governmental power.67 Rozhkov therefore maintained that the study of power was the study of governmental or political phenomena.68 Rozhkov divided political phenomena into three groups (see Figure 5.2): (1) the structure of the means of regional, central and supreme administration; (2) the purpose of government [tsel' gosudarstvennago soiuza] and (3) the concept of power [sub"ekt vlasti].69 The last group, the concept of power, examines the principles on which power is based and who possesses that power.

These divisions were arranged in order of growing complexity. Rozhkov claimed that the structure of the

66 Ibid.
67 Rozhkov, Obzor, Chast’ I, Vypusk I, p. 65. See also: Rozhkov, Osnovnye zakony, p. 11.
68 Ibid.
69 Rozhkov, Obzor, Chast’ II, Vypusk II, p. 144. See also: Rozhkov, Osnovnye zakony, pp. 30-31.
means of administration was the simplest element of political phenomena. The regional means of administration were less complicated than the central and supreme means of administration. The purpose of government was more complicated than the means of administration and the notion of the concept of power was the most complicated element of political phenomena.\textsuperscript{70} As Rozhkov wrote: "In the concept of the purpose of a governmental union, the organisation of the means of government, class structure and the relative significance of the various branches of industry are directly reflected".\textsuperscript{71} "The notion of the concept of power", on the other hand, "is determined by the relative significance of the various branches of production, by the class principle, by the organisation of the means of government and by the real expression of the purpose of the governmental union".\textsuperscript{72}

Rozhkov asserted that the state evolved in the same way as classes, that is, it experienced four major periods. Rozhkov believed that in the first period of its development, the Russian state was characterised by a lack of organisation. This meant that its administrative power was rather weak and that the state mainly operated to favour the individual ruler. Rozhkov claimed that power was understood as something that belonged to individual family members.\textsuperscript{73} Rozhkov also claimed

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{70} Rozhkov, \textit{Osnovnye zakony}, p. 37.
\bibitem{71} Rozhkov, \textit{Obzor, Chast' II, Vypusk II}, p. 156.
\bibitem{72} \textit{Ibid}.
\bibitem{73} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 172-173. See also: Rozhkov, \textit{Osnovnye zakony}, p. 71.
\end{thebibliography}
that in the Appanage Rus’ period, that is, between the XIII and XVI centuries, administrative departments were formed. However, according to Rozhkov, the rulers of this period did not have a philosophy concerning the concept of power. A municipal-aristocratic republic and a votochina — feudal principality or kingdom [korolevstvo] were the two types of political unions that are formed in the second period of Russia’s historical development.74

The third period in the evolution of the Russian state, the Muscovite Rus’ period of the XVI and XIX centuries, was characterised by the formation of “fairly regular means of administration”.75 During this period, Rozhkov believed that the Russian government was guided by a belief in the “general good”.76 Muscovite sovereigns, for example, began to talk about “the business of government and people”.77 According to Rozhkov, the country’s rulers began to think in terms of the general prosperity of the people. A utilitarian principle permeated governments. Rozhkov claimed that it was around this principle that the Russian government began to develop its administrative departments.78 Rozhkov believed that the state, as a representative of all social groups, became the subject or holder of power and this belief replaced the former ideals held about the

74 Ibid., p. 173.
75 Rozhkov, Osnovnye zakony, p. 74.
76 Ibid., p. 73.
77 Ibid.
78 Ibid.
votchina. This change in emphasis, as Rozhkov claimed, led to the formation of two new types of political unions: autocratic monarchies and parliamentary government [parlamentskoe gosudarstvo]. The fourth period in the development of the Russian state saw the completion of the process that had begun in the third period. As Rozhkov succinctly put it:

this period is characterised by the organisation of proper and well-constructed administrations, by the adoption of the idea of the general good as the aim of society [obshchestvennogo soiuza] and by the idea that the bearer of supreme power is a representative of the entire union.

While Rozhkov believed that the state developed in a similar way to classes, he did not explain how classes influenced the state. The state was examined by Rozhkov as an organism that developed systematically and independently. He believed that over a period of time it eventually created its own network of organisational institutions in an attempt to satisfy the aim of the general good. Rather than viewing the state as an instrument of a very powerful, economically predominant class that manipulates the state to remain in power, Rozhkov believed that the state, once formed, was above classes. As Averbukh stated about this theory: “the state becomes a legal personality, the

79 Ibid. According to Pushkarev, a votchina was “any of various kinds of hereditary property, rights, or claims”. See: Pushkarev, op.cit., p. 181.
80 Ibid., pp. 74-75.
81 Ibid., p. 75. See also: Rozhkov, Russkaia istoriia, Vol. 1, p. 211.
highest subject of the law, which satisfies general interests".\textsuperscript{82} The state, in Rozhkov's opinion, was not the organisation of a predominant class but rather an organism that established a certain equilibrium between classes. He believed that a state was functioning properly when it had the common good of society as its main goal. Once again, the lack of influence of Marx on Rozhkov is apparent here. For Marx, the relationship between class struggle and politics is fundamental. For Rozhkov, such a relationship, to the extent that it existed at all, was unimportant.

Rozhkov's analysis of psychological phenomena, the last category in his classification scheme, occupied a very special and important place in his theory. Science, customs, religion, art and literature were all entirely determined by the "mental disposition" of society. The mental disposition of society was, in turn, represented by those individual types or characters that "with particular force and brilliance predominated in society".\textsuperscript{83}

Rozhkov believed that a society's spiritual culture included its moral concepts, its religious beliefs, its art, its literature and its scientific and philosophical ideas. He also believed that a society's spiritual culture was determined by all the other phenomena that preceded it in the hierarchy of social classification.

\textsuperscript{82} Averbukh, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 44.
society's spiritual culture was determined by the combined action of natural, economic, social and political phenomena. It was, Rozhkov claimed, the last product of the prevailing economic conditions and he expressed this idea very clearly in his final law of social statics:

The predominating psychological types in a society are created by the entire sum of the real conditions of social life, that is, by the economic way of life which is mainly made up by the relative significance of the various branches of industry, the forms of landownership, the forms of production and its system. It is also created by the social (mainly class) relations and by the political structure, that is, by the organisation of the means of administration, by the concept of the purpose of government and by the notion of the wielder of power.84

In his long article entitled "The psychology of character and sociology", Rozhkov gave his classification of the psychological types. Rozhkov believed that there were five basic psychological types: egoists [egoisty], individualists [individualisty], aestheticists [estetiki], people of an ethical mould [eticheskii sklad] and analysts [analitiki]. Rozhkov believed that another sub-category had to be added so as to include a "complex type of ethical individual" (see Figure 5.2).85 With this classification, Rozhkov believed that "all the main features concerning the psychology of

84 Rozhkov, Obzor, Chast' II, Vypusk II, p. 158.
85 Rozhkov, Istoricheskie i sotsiologicheskie ocherki, p. 257.
character are exhausted: everything of a psychological variety can be placed under one of the categories mentioned".86

Rozhkov argued that the five categories he used to classify historical phenomena were comprehensive enough to provide room for all forms of historical development and, at the same time, to exhibit the dependence of social consciousness on social being. Rozhkov believed his five-point scheme to be a "final synthesis", "a proper, well-structured system"87 that needed to be viewed systematically88 if the "general laws of the coexistence and development of social phenomena" are to be discovered.89 Rozhkov listed the various categories hierarchically and declared that his aim was to discover "to what extent these processes could be considered as internally independent and to what extent they rely on each other" in order to find the patterns of historical development that would allow prediction of the future.90

Rozhkov claimed that he developed his sociological scheme on the basis of empirical, historical data. He operated on the basic assumption that it was possible to discover and explain the laws that governed the

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86 Ibid.
87 Rozhkov, Obzor, Chast' II, Vypusk II, p. 142.
88 Rozhkov, Obzor, Chast' I, Vypusk I, pp. 6-7.
90 Rozhkov, Obzor, Chast' I, Vypusk I, p. 5.
development of society, after all, society developed as a single, integrated whole. As late as 1918 Rozhkov wrote:

[Society] unrolls itself with law-governed necessity [zakonomernoi neobkhodimost'iu] from economic conditions. The subsequent link in this chain we see in the social conditions, that is why in the sphere of social relations the foremost position belongs to the class structure. The natural continuation of this is the political structure, expressing the interests of the ruling classes and the spiritual culture, in which the psychological type is a unifying element.91

Rozhkov maintained that society evolved in a regular, law-governed fashion and just as it is possible to study the economic evolution of society so it is possible to study the psychological evolution of society. As Rozhkov wrote:

Class relations flow from economic conditions with a necessary and unchanging sequentiality [posledovatel'nost'] and since economic conditions are subject to evolutionary change, so class relations are not motionless but developing. Similarly, the state system is subordinated to class evolution and the psychology of a society is always in essence the psychology of its separate classes and once again they are not motionless but consistently and regularly developing. The psychology of each class is different at a particular moment in time. As well as this, the psychology of the same class differs in different time periods. All of these differences that appear in the history of the spiritual culture of different peoples.

are expressed in terms of the change in psychological types.\textsuperscript{92}

If the task of history is, as Rozhkov maintained, the discovery of general laws that govern the course of historical events then only that which is considered as typical or recurring is historically significant. As Collingwood pointed out: "the task of history, so conceived, is to establish certain social and psychological types of life, following one another in a determinate order"\textsuperscript{93} Collingwood's assessment of what he called "positivistic historiography" in late nineteenth-century Europe, is neatly exemplified by Rozhkov's historical and sociological theory.

In the final analysis, Rozhkov's laws of social statics correctly identified most of the important factors that need to be addressed if a comprehensive understanding of social development is to be achieved. His unique interpretation of the Comtean notion of social statics led to many profound and interesting questions and ideas. However, it is unfortunate that Rozhkov understood causality in such a deterministic fashion. In the end, Rozhkov's theory of history does not fully integrate and explain all the intricacies and subtleties of social development. The next chapter will examine Rozhkov's laws of social dynamics.

\textsuperscript{92} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{93} Collingwood, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 177.