

SpringerBriefs in Psychology

Psychology and Cultural Developmental Science

Series editors

Giuseppina Marsico, University of Salerno, Salerno, Italy;
Centre for Cultural Psychology, Aalborg University, Aalborg
Denmark

Jaan Valsiner, Centre for Cultural Psychology, Aalborg University,
Aalborg, Denmark

SpringerBriefs in Psychology and Cultural Developmental Science is an extension and topical completion to *IPBS: Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science Journal* (Springer, chief editor: Jaan Vasiner) expanding some relevant topics in the form of single (or multiple) authored book. The Series will have a clearly defined international and interdisciplinary focus hosting works on the interconnection between Cultural Psychology and other Developmental Sciences (biology, sociology, anthropology, etc). The Series aims at integrating knowledge from many fields in a synthesis of general science of Cultural Psychology as a new science of the human being.

The Series will include books that offer a perspective on the current state of developmental science, addressing contemporary enactments and reflecting on theoretical and empirical directions and providing, also, constructive insights into future pathways.

Featuring compact volumes of 100 to 115 pages, each Brief in the Series is meant to provide a clear, visible, and multi-sided recognition of the theoretical efforts of scholars around the world.

Both solicited and unsolicited proposals are considered for publication in this series. All proposals will be subject to peer review by external referees.

More information about this series at <http://www.springer.com/series/15388>

Emiliana Mangone

Social and Cultural Dynamics

Revisiting the Work of Pitirim A. Sorokin

 Springer

Emiliana Mangone
Department of Human, Philosophic and
Education Sciences (DISUFF)
University of Salerno
Salerno, Italy

ISSN 2192-8363 ISSN 2192-8371 (electronic)
SpringerBriefs in Psychology
Psychology and Cultural Developmental Science
ISBN 978-3-319-68308-9 ISBN 978-3-319-68309-6 (eBook)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-68309-6>

Library of Congress Control Number: 2017954321

© The Author(s) 2018

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are reserved by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, express or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Printed on acid-free paper

This Springer imprint is published by Springer Nature
The registered company is Springer International Publishing AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

Series Editors Preface

Interdisciplinarity in the Social Sciences Under Observation: Dissecting the Thought of Pitirim A. Sorokin

There are many good reasons to be proud of hosting Emiliana Mangone's book, *Social and Cultural Dynamics: Revisiting the Work of Pitirim A. Sorokin* in the SpringerBriefs series, *SpringerBriefs in Psychology and Cultural Developmental Science*. We are here to celebrate the link between psychology and developmentally oriented sociology—and Sorokin's contributions were major *tour de force* in twentieth century sociology.

This is, as far as we know, the only one international book to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Sorokin's death, one of the forgotten giants in the history of sociology. And yet, the book is not a mere tribute to his vast production. Instead, it offers a critical and actualized look at Sorokin's theories, with which only very few scholars are familiar.

The intellectual depth of this book surpasses the rigid disciplinary borders in our contemporary academic world. Mangone goes beyond these superimposed limitations and navigates with expertise the waters of other disciplines, first and foremost the always turbulent psychological ocean. Indeed, this book is an interdisciplinary dialogue that follows other examples of the same kind in our SpringerBrief series (Rayner 2017). Both biology and sociology are constructive interlocutors for psychology in its efforts to break out of the behaviourist and cognitivist straightjacket of the twentieth century and to establish its own domain of expertise. Sorokin's ideas—informed by his long life experiences in Russia and North America—make his intellectual efforts worthy of a careful analysis in our time.

Mangone makes an important contribution to a new look at Sorokin's ideas. She carefully documents how Sorokin went about creating sociological principles for understanding the changes of sociocultural systems. Since the declared aims of our SpringerBrief Series is to look at the developmental processes from different theoretical angles, Sorokin's unceasing quest for explaining the basic dimension of the sociocultural dynamics kept our "intellectual sympathy" and thanks to Mangone's

accurate work, we also found numerous points of convergence with Cultural Psychology and Sociology. According to Sorokin:

“We do not know any empirical sociocultural system or phenomenon which does not change in the course of its existence or in the course of time. In the whole empirical sociocultural world there has existed hardly any system which has remained unchanged. This observation is incontestable. The objection possible is that though change is unquestionable, it remains unknown to what it is due: to purely immanent forces of the system, or to an incessant influencing of it by a set of external factors” (Sorokin 1998: 241, added emphasis).

So many “unquestionables” and “incontestables”—and yet sociology has had similar trouble in moving to a consistently developmental perspective in the half century since Sorokin’s death. Sorokin proposed a third possible answer: an *Integral* perspective that conceives the change of any sociocultural phenomena as the result of the combined external and internal forces. Yet the precise ways in which such combination functions remained unrevealed by him—and continues to be so until our time. Social systems are still viewed as they are (ontologically), rather than in their transformations. There are many descriptions of societal transformations, but no sociological or cultural psychological theory of revolutions has emerged (Wagoner et al. 2017).

The problem raised by Sorokin—that social phenomena exist as relations with environment—was not new in the history of psychology. William Stern (1935), for instance, in his personological account of the human mind sets the *present* boundary between the person and the world as the locus of synthesis of any kind of novelty. Nevertheless, what has been missing here as well as in most of the formal thought models in psychology (and in the social sciences at large) is the time perspective. This is a topic that may benefit from a new look at Sorokin’s efforts.

Sorokin made an attempt to introduce an historical and dynamic view of society. His monumental classificatory work about the ideological tendency of temporalism (focus on emergence and development) and eternalism in European society (Sorokin 1985) reminds us of the history of macro-scale societal changes over the centuries. Yet, the micro-scale analysis of the making of such changes remained beyond his scope.

In this vein, as Mangone shows in her interdisciplinary effort, Sorokin’s heritage has numerous resonances with what has been developed in the field of Cultural Psychology over the last decades and especially the shift from the epistemology of being to the *epistemology of becoming* in psychology (Marsico 2015; Marsico and Valsiner 2017; Valsiner et al. 2016). This focus on becoming is a central axiom that can open the door for reunification of the issues of memory and imagination as partners in the human progress. In addition, the claim of Sorokin for sociology as a generalizing science of sociocultural phenomena (see Chap. 2) reverberates in Cultural Psychology as the science of human being which develops through careful investigation of the phenomena under study, together with the advancement of high-level abstract generalizations.

Scientific knowledge, in fact, entails generalization that happens on the border of what is already known and what is not yet known.

As Prigogine pointed out:

Our time is one of expectation, of anxiety, of bifurcation. Far from an “end” of science, I feel our period will see the birth of a new vision, one of new science whose cornerstone encloses the arrow of time; a science that makes of us and of our creativity the expression of a fundamental trend in the universe (Prigogine 1996: 42).

Science is a passionate affair. Sorokin’s professional and personal life shows how the researcher and his “qualified guessing” is the primary source for any advancement in the knowledge construction. The contrast between being a political prisoner in newly established Bolshevik Russia waiting for his death sentence to be carried out (only to be converted to what was seen as even greater punishment—expulsion from his homeland) and his final years of local fights with fellow Harvard faculty—inmates of a different social enclave—was huge. Sorokin survived both—a tough man as he was. We wish the reader similar stamina to consider the sociological quest that Mangone sets up in her study of Sorokin’s legacy. We hope the reading of this Brief will be setting new horizons in the current scientific debates of science, society, and human psychology.

Aalborg, Denmark
August 2017

Giuseppina Marsico
Jaan Valsiner

References

- Marsico, G. (2015). Striving for the new: Cultural psychology as a developmental science. *Culture & Psychology, 21*(4), 445–454. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354067X15623020>.
- Marsico, G., & Valsiner, J. (2017). *Beyond the mind: Cultural dynamics of the psyche*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.
- Prigogine, I. (1996). Science, reason, and passion. *Leonardo, 29*(1), 39–42.
- Rayner, A. (2017). *The origin of life patterns—In the natural inclusion of space in flux*. New York: Springer.
- Sorokin, P. (1985). *Social and cultural dynamics* (2nd ed.). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.
- Sorokin, P. A. (1998). *On the practice of sociology*. In B. V. Johnston (Ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Stern, W. (1935). *Allgemeine Psychologie auf personalistischer Grundlage*. Haag: Martinus Nijhoff.
- Valsiner, J., Marsico, G., Chaudhary, N., Sato, T., and Dazzani, V. (Eds.) (2016). *Psychology as a science of human being: the Yokohama manifesto*. Vol. 13 in *Annals of Theoretical Psychology*. New York: Springer.
- Wagoner, B., Moghaddam, F., and Valsiner, J. (Eds.) (2017). *From rage to revolutions*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Acknowledgements

This book had a long preparatory study, yet took a relatively short time to be written. Like all the products of human intellect, it is not the product of the writer's endeavour only. It is my duty to thank those who variously contributed to the realization of this book. Expressing gratitude is always very difficult and making it publicly is doubly so, because I am afraid of forgetting someone and having no other opportunity to amend the oversight. Thanks to my father and brother for their moral and material support and special thanks to my mother for bequeathing me three basic principles of life: respect for humanity, trust and sharing (pooling together) ideas. In writing the latter acknowledgement, my only regret is that, due to her death before the publication of the book, she will never enjoy it.

Special thanks also to Jaan Valsiner, who accepted my request as visiting professor at the Niels Bohr Center for Cultural Psychology, the Department of Communication and Psychology, Aalborg University (Denmark). During my two months in Denmark, this book saw the light also thanks to the fruitful discussion during one of the "Kitchen Seminars" whose topic was one of the central chapters of this work. Thanks to my friend and colleague Pina Marsico who stimulated me—and at the same time "challenged" and "provoked" me—to write this book, and with whom I had a continuous discussion on many of its contents. But I also thank Pina for another reason. We share the same idea: great studies or writings are useless if you do not recognize the Other, because it means to be blind and not recognize the surrounding world and all its transformations. Pina has always recognized, and still recognizes, the other with great and profound respect.

Finally, I would like to thank all the staff members of the University Archives & Special Collections, P.A. Sorokin fonds, from the University of Saskatchewan (Canada) who always answered my requests for documents and clarifications on the references.

Contents

1	Prologue: The Reasons for a Choice	1
1	The Reasons for a Choice	1
2	Sorokin's Russian Period	3
3	Sorokin's American Period	4
4	A Journey with Sorokin	5
	References	8
2	The Boundaries of Sociology and Its Relation to Other Sciences	9
1	Sociology and Its Development as a Science	9
1.1	The Evolutionary Stages of Sociology	10
1.2	The Debate on Sociological Knowledge	13
2	Object and Boundaries of Sociology	15
3	The Interplay Between Sociology and Other Sciences	18
3.1	The Interplay Between Sociology and Psychology in the American Debate of the Last Century	18
3.2	Modes of Interplay Between Sociology and Psychology	21
4	Towards a New Scientific Awareness: Transdisciplinarity	23
	References	25
3	Integral Theory of Knowledge	29
1	The Dyad Knowledge/Reality	29
2	Sorokin's Sociology of Knowledge	32
3	The Integralism or Integral Theory of Sociology	35
3.1	The Systems of Truth	37
	References	39
4	The Society and Its Paradoxes	41
1	Social Universe and Interactions	41
2	The Construction of Reality and the Interactions (Social Relations)	45
3	The Paradoxes of Contemporary Society	49
	References	51

5 The Cultural System and the Social Problems 53

 1 The Cultural Universe 53

 2 Mentality of Culture (or Culture Mentality) 56

 3 The Superorganic (or Cultural) Phenomenon as a Social Problem 59

 References 61

6 Personality and Human Conduct 63

 1 The Personality as *Weltanschauung* 63

 1.1 Identity in Contemporary Society 65

 2 Human Conduct and Uncertainty 67

 3 Human Conduct, Trust, and Risk 68

 References 71

7 From Creative Altruistic Love to the Ethics of Responsibility 73

 1 The Creative Altruistic Love in Sorokin 73

 2 Beyond Sorokin ... the Ethic of Responsibility 76

 3 The Role of Social Sciences and Researchers 78

 References 80

8 Epilogue: Towards Integral Social Sciences 83

 References 86

Index 87

About the Author

Emiliana Mangone is Associate Professor of Sociology of Culture and Communication at the Department of Human, Philosophic and Education Sciences, University of Salerno (Italy). Since 2010, she is associated with IRPPS-CNR of Rome (Institute for Research on Population and Social Policies) and she is a Director of International Centre for Studies and Research “Mediterranean Knowledge.” Her main investigative interests are in the field of cultural and institutional systems, with particular attention to the social representations of relationships and knowledge as key elements to the human act, and in migration studies. She recently published the following publications: (with Emanuela Pece), Communication et incommunication en Europe: l'exemple de la représentation des migrants, *Hermès*, 77, 2017; (with Mohieddine Hadhri), Intercultural Complexity of the Southern Mediterranean: Arab-Mediterranean Perceptions and Outlooks, *Journal of Mediterranean Knowledge*, 1(2), 2016.