'FROM TRUTH IN STRENGTH TO STRENGTH IN TRUTH': SOCIOLOGY, KNOWLEDGE AND POWER IN KYRGYZSTAN, 1966–2003

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a critical sociology of sociology in Soviet and post-Soviet Central Asia. It explores the construction of sociology as a field of knowledge, academic discipline and professional practice in Kyrgyzstan (formerly the Kirgiz Soviet Socialist Republic) from 1966 to 2003, focusing on the late and post-socialist project to transform sociology from a heteronomous to autonomous field of knowledge and practice. It draws especially on the sociology of knowledge and science to explore the localised processes through which social scientific knowledge and political power have been co-constituted on the imperial periphery. Through a comparative case study of sociology in Kyrgyzstani universities, as well as smaller case studies of 'public science' in the national press, it reveals how sociologists have negotiated a fundamental tension in the institutionalisation project—the separation of the production of sociological knowledge from the logic of political power, on the one hand, and their simultaneous association, on the other—to establish both scientific legitimacy and social relevance for sociology in the republic. The types of sociology that emerge from this negotiation—the positivist, applied–professional model and the post-positivist liberal–critical model—are interpreted not as inevitable consequences of the Soviet collapse, but rather the product of decisions made by sociologists within particular intellectual and structural constraints and through the lens of partial bodies of theoretical knowledge. The ascendance of positivist and empiricist sociology in the post-Soviet period is explained as a deliberate, if often extremely uncritical, attempt to reorganise the relationship between power and knowledge in Kyrgyzstani society and to democratise the latter. Finally, the dissertation demonstrates that academic debates about the possibility of scientific truth assume deep personal and political significance when conducted in the context of pronounced social fragmentation and inequality, specifically, in the contexts of authoritarianism and neo-colonialism.

Keywords: sociology of social science, sociology of knowledge, power/knowledge, Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan, boundary–work

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ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS & COMMONLY USED TERMS

AUCA	American University–Central Asia (formerly AUK)
AUK	American University in Kyrgyzstan (AUCA after 2002)
BHU	Bishkek Humanitarian University (formerly ILHS)
EVM	*Elektronno-vychislitel'naia mashina* [electronic machine for tabulating statistical data from questionnaire responses]
FPI	Frunze Polytechnic Institute
Goskomizdat	State Commission for Publication (USSR)
goszakaz	state commission (e.g., commissioned research)
ILHS	Institute of Languages and Humanitarian Sciences (later BHU)
Kirgiz SSR	Kirgiz Soviet Socialist Republic
KNU	Kirgiz National University (formerly KSU)
Komsomol	Communist Union of Young People
KSU	Kirgiz State University (later KNU)
KTU	Kyrgyz Technical University (formerly FPI)
MSU	Moscow State University
NISL	*nauchnaia–issledovatel'naia–sotsiologicheskaia–laboratoriia* (scientific-research–sociological–laboratory)
RSFSR	Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic
sbornika	collection of papers or essays
SSR	Soviet Socialist Republic
uchebnyi plan	instructional plan
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VUZ	*vyshii uchebnoe zavedenie* [higher educational institution]
zakaz	order or commission

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CENTRAL ASIA

From http://www.askasia.org/image/maps/cntasia1.htm

INTRODUCTION

In our state, sociology must be a science and not an ideology.
(Bakir-uluu 1997)

The study of the truth must itself be true. (Isaev in Sydykova 1998)

This dissertation, a critical sociology of sociology in Kyrgyzstan (formerly the Kirgiz Soviet Socialist Republic[1]), can be read on two levels. It is first and foremost an ethnographic case study of the institutionalisation of sociology in Soviet and post-Soviet society, with particular focus on the way in which conceptions of social scientific knowledge and truth have historically been constructed, legitimised and contested. As such, it contributes to contemporary debates about the development of social science in the former Soviet Union, Soviet and post-Soviet higher education reforms, and the comparative history of sociology. This local empirical study, however, also bears on three broader theoretical themes: the relationship between social and political domination and the project of science, the role of scientific knowledge in colonised and neo-colonial societies, and the relationship between power and knowledge in the formation of scientific disciplines more generally.

The dissertation integrates these empirical and theoretical dimensions by mapping the way in which shifting boundaries between power and knowledge have impacted upon the definition and development of social scientific knowledge and practice in Soviet and post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan. While recognising hegemony and continuity in the experience of Soviet sociologists, it challenges the notion that Soviet social science can be understood as a monolithic institution. It draws instead on scholarship about centre-periphery relations in colonised societies and recent developments in post-Soviet ethnography to explore the localised processes by which sociology actually became integrated into the exercise of political power in the imperial periphery, how it was legitimised in this context, and how and why it has been repoliticised during the post-Soviet period. It also demonstrates that academic debates about the possibility of scientific truth assume deep personal

significance when conducted in the context of pronounced social fragmentation and inequality, specifically, in the contexts of authoritarianism and neo-colonialism.

Truth, power and social science through the lens of Soviet sociology

The relationship between truth and power is central to the role and legitimacy of the social sciences in any society. Since the early nineteenth century, Western European social scientists have debated the extent to which the study of social life can be made 'objective' or 'scientific' and, simultaneously, whether it can and should be applied to social and political action. From Weber to Habermas, they have sought to reconcile an apparent contradiction between the quest for truth about social reality and the project to transform it. A number of approaches have emerged in lieu of reconciliation. Positivism, for example, reifies the boundary between truth and power by defining them as mutually exclusive. Critical theory collapses this boundary by asserting that the subjective and political nature of social scientific knowledge actually enables social scientists to construct a more holistic, if always contingent, truth. Although the debate continues, it has been institutionalised as a theoretical distinction between competing schools of thought: positivism, post-positivism, constructivism, critical realism, critical theory. The contours of contemporary social science are, in fact, drawn in large part along this boundary.

The example of Soviet social science offers an excellent illustration of how culturally contingent these epistemological parameters actually are—and exposes the extent to which they are influenced by concerns about the relationship between knowledge and power. The social sciences were among the most politicised fields of academic knowledge in the Soviet Union, deeply integrated into state and Communist Party domination and grounded in theories of social engineering and scientific development. Marxist–Leninist sociology, dominant in the USSR from the early twentieth century until the mid-1980s, blurred the boundary between truth and politics in a different way. While arguing that truth is always political, it also asserted this as a scientific epistemology (as opposed to positivism, which it defined as unscientific in its assertion of value neutrality). This, ostensibly, circumvented the tension

between truth and power in social science. As this dissertation demonstrates, however, many Soviet sociologists found this uncompelling in practice and sought to develop their own understanding of the relationship between political power and scientific truth.

The final disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 largely delegitimised the Marxist–Leninist philosophy of power/knowledge and spawned a quest for a new politically potent, non-political truth in the social sciences. In Kyrgyzstan, where sociology was institutionalised as part of a larger imperial project and has never been autonomous from political power or social planning, this has been characterised by the embracing of positivist, empiricist and applied social research, seen by many Kyrgyzstani sociologists as a radical corrective to the ideological politicisation of social science under Soviet rule. In addition, because sociology's organisation and raison d'être were heavily intertwined with the very institutions that were brought into question with the Soviet collapse, the social sciences were dislocated from their institutional and epistemological foundations and relocated within new hegemonic discourses of democratisation, development and westernisation in Kyrgyzstan. They have since therefore become prominent sites for the renegotiation of the boundary between science and power in the post-Soviet era.

The story told in this dissertation begins from the establishment of the first sociological laboratory in Soviet Kirgizia in 1966 and extends to 2003, but focuses on the 'boundary–work' done by sociologists to define the field of sociology during the late socialist period (1985–91) and in the decade following national independence (1991–2001). The title, 'from truth in strength to strength in truth,' is adapted from one of many articles on sociology published in the Kyrgyz press during the 1990s. It reflects growing public concern about the need to realign the relationship between social scientific knowledge and power in post-Soviet society; to wrest the privilege of knowledge production away from power elites and place scientific truth at the service of 'the people.' In the Kyrgyzstani academy, this imperative has been manifested in projects to transform the discipline of sociology from a heteronomous field of knowledge and practice into an autonomous one, or from a field of knowledge whose development is dominated by external socio-

political and economic forces to one that is self-producing and reproducing and which can exert influence in the political sphere.[2]

Although these projects assume different form and content in different institutional and historical contexts, there is a common denominator: they revolve around the need to negotiate a boundary between truth and politics which can enable social scientists to work within the competing, often contradictory logics of scientific legitimacy and social relevance, or between the production of scientific knowledge and its application. This negotiation is fundamental to the types of sociological theorising and practice which have historically emerged in Kyrgyzstan. The power/knowledge problematic is a key factor affecting the outcome of attempts to institutionalise and professionalise sociology in the republic, where a modernist ideal of scientific politics has long existed alongside of, and in permanent tension with, deep scepticism about the politicisation of scientific knowledge.

Following critical theories of knowledge production (Bourdieu 1975, 1988; Foucault 1980, 2001; Gieryn 1983; Mannheim 1936), this dissertation argues that the ascendance of positivism, empiricism and applied sociology in Kyrgyzstan, and by extension in other post-Soviet societies, must be analysed within the historical, socio-political and epistemological contexts in which the approaches emerge and are legitimised. They are, in the words of Thomas Popkewitz (1991: 24), 'the result of a conjunction—not of evolution or necessity;' not natural evolutions of knowledge, but the outcome of struggles to establish scientific authority and social relevance in highly politicised academic fields.

Overview of the dissertation

Part 1 of the dissertation (Chapters 1 and 2) lays out the theoretical context and framework by discussing the politics of sociology in newly independent societies and critical theories of power/knowledge in the sociology of social science. After describing the main problematic of the thesis—the two-pronged project to link sociology with legitimate power and distance it from illegitimate power in Kyrgyzstan—it demonstrates how critical theories of power/knowledge can be used to analyse how certain forms of truth arise and are contested in particular socio-historical contexts. It also introduces a

heuristic theoretical concept, 'boundary–work,' which is used throughout the dissertation to deconstruct how sociologists define the borders of legitimate scientific knowledge and practice. This section also explicates the methodology used in this research, including considerations of power and knowledge in the field.

Part 2 (Chapters 3 to 5) establishes the historical background for the study by providing a brief history of early Russian and Soviet sociology (1916-36) and of the development of sociology in Central Asia more specifically (1917–54). It posits three distinctive features of the discipline's emergence in Soviet Kirgizia which have been critical factors in its overall development: intellectual colonialism, academic dependency and orientalism/occidentalism. Chapters 4 and 5 comprise two narratives. The first details the establishment of the republic's first sociological laboratory and the rise of industrial sociology within the republic, and the second explores the transformation of sociology during perestroika. Both explore how and why Kyrgyzstani sociologists developed normative standards for 'good' and 'bad' sociology in order to negotiate competing loyalties to scientific and political value systems, and explores the impact that these categories had on the discipline's institutionalisation.

Part 3 (Chapters 6 to 9) is dedicated to the analysis of Kyrgyzstani sociology after national independence in 1991, with particular emphasis on boundary–work and the institutional contexts and consequences of its discursive practices. The chapters focus on the rise of 'national' sociology, as well as on divisions that have emerged within the sociological community since the collapse of the Soviet Union. By drawing on recent scholarship in the sociology of academic disciplines, it highlights the importance of local departmental conditions in these processes. Chapters 7 and 8 present an empirical comparative case study of the conceptualisation of sociology in two separate universities (the state-run Bishkek Humanitarian University and the private American University–Central Asia). The cases, chosen for their theoretical significance, explore how different conceptualisations of sociology are contingent not only upon institutional opportunities and constraints, but also on the type of boundary–work that sociologists do to enhance their professional agendas within local contexts. Chapter 9 departs from this local

institutional framework to analyse how boundary–work in sociology has been conducted in the mass media from 1989–2003.

Part 4 (Chapter 10) concludes the dissertation with a theoretically based, empirically informed framework for understanding the politics of social scientific truth in Kyrgyzstan and beyond. By mapping out the shifting boundaries of the field, it assesses how the negotiation of contingent boundaries between truth and politics impacted upon the conceptualisation, practice and institutionalisation of sociology in Kyrgyzstan. It also explores the implications that this study has for theories of power/knowledge more generally, and how it may facilitate an improved and empathetic understanding of scientific knowledge production in colonised and neo-colonial societies—including, but not limited to, former Soviet societies—as well as in 'western' sociology.

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UNDERSTANDING SOCIOLOGY AS
AN INTELLECTUAL AND POLITICAL PHENOMENON

The politics of sociology in newly independent societies

These questions are not unique to Kyrgyzstani society. Since the mid-twentieth century, concerns about the politics of social scientific knowledge have been particularly prominent on the intellectual landscape of newly independent states worldwide (Eisemon 1982; Fernandes 1967; Wagner et al. 1990). There are a number of reasons for this. First, social science is often perceived as a practical instrument for the realisation of broader social reforms and planning strategies which accompany decolonisation and national independence (Gendzier 1985; Hulme and Turner 1990). The form this takes depends on how notions of social reform are constituted, as well as on variations in schools of social scientific thought. In many of the anti-colonial movements of the 1960 to 1980s, for example, Third World sociologists often produced critiques of intellectual dependency and developed indigenous theories of colonialism, underdevelopment, and alternative approaches to national development (Ake 1982; Clinard and Elder 1967; Joshi 1995: 22). Kyrgyzstan, however, has had a different trajectory, as the intellectual foundations of Marxism–Leninism have been reconstituted as part of a 'new type of administratively-oriented knowledge' or scientific politics oriented toward the creation of a modern, post-Soviet, capitalist, liberal nation state, and as a scientific 'corrective' to the manipulation of definitions of social reality by power elites (Bekturganov et al. 1994; Ismailova 1995; Isaev 1995 Isaev et al. 1994e; Migration 1992). Regardless of its form, however, the close, seemingly organic association of social science with social reform in newly independent societies naturalises what is in fact a very complex relationship between social scientific knowledge and political power.

This relationship is further complicated by the fact that social science frequently assumes symbolic value as an indicator of modernisation and westernisation or, conversely, nationalisation and indigenisation (Pertierra 1997). The development of sociology in post-Soviet societies accordingly cannot be divorced from its broader associations with both western modernity

and national sovereignty and identity. For example, whereas claims to universal scientific authority (represented by 'western' or 'civilised' science) are often invoked to legitimise research methods or choice of research topic, Kyrgyzstani sociologists also refer to national specificity to appeal for social and political authority and professional relevance. Similarly, random sampling techniques are defined not only as 'objective,' but also apolitical and democratic. This characterisation of quantitative method is, in turn, associated with idealised images of 'western democracy' and contrasted to methods used by sociologists in what are defined as traditional, 'unscientific' and backward societies (Baibosunov 1993). In referring to each other's theories, methods and professional ethos as either 'European' or *aksakal*-like (a word meaning 'elder' in Kyrgyz and generally referring to the patriarchs of traditional society), for example, members of the Kyrgyzstani social scientific community reinforce symbolic parameters for the geopolitical scope of sociological knowledge in Kyrgyzstan (see, e.g., Bakir Uluu 1994; Ryskulov 1998).

Finally, as an institution endowed with responsibility for defining social reality, social science can be a site for elaborating and negotiating competing theories of society, and a potential source of legitimacy for translating these theories into practical programs for social change (Ake 1982; Bourdieu 1975: 36; Bujra 1994; Eades and Schwaller 1991; Gosovic 2000). The quest for scientific authority is highly visible in Kyrgyzstan's academic and media institutions, where vigorous debates about the definition and role of sociology have been integrated into discourses about national independence, revival and possibilities for development. Discussions of content and methods in Kyrgyzstani sociology, as well as its professional ethics and the organisation of social scientific teaching and research, are tied to deeper concerns about the fate of truth and role of social scientific knowledge in a society which believes it can and should restore the progressive promise of a scientific truth which has been hijacked by illegitimate power.

Sociology, knowledge and power in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan
The concept of power/knowledge in this dissertation refers both to the general relationship between social scientific knowledge and socio-political power as

outlined in the sociology of knowledge (Chapter 2), and to the more specifically Foucauldian theory that knowledge is to varying degrees constituted by power and implicated in establishing social discipline— including the intellectual discipline of the epistemological boundaries within and between academic fields (Danaher et al. 2000; Foucault 1978, 1980, 1989). In Kyrgyzstani sociology, this has historically been manifested as the convergence, and sometimes conflict, of two interrelated intellectual and professional projects. This first is to establish intellectual autonomy and scientific authority in a heteronomous field of power, and the second to establish social relevance for a discipline whose legitimacy is drawn largely from demonstrating scientificity and autonomy.

The issue first emerged during the 1960s, as sociologists attempted to reconcile dual loyalties to science ('truth') and the Communist Party ('politics') in the post-Stalinist period. The goal was not to establish autonomy for sociological knowledge, but rather to establish intellectual dominate within a heteronomous political field. Later during perestroika, as elsewhere in the empire, Kirgizstani sociologists redesigned themselves as social reformers and scientific counterweights to the 'distortions' of political leaders. At this point, the development of sociology became integrated with the movement to democratise the Communist Party and Soviet society. This involved a much more conscious movement towards scientific autonomy, albeit still within the general system of power in the republic.

After independence, the power/knowledge problematic re-emerged among social scientists who self-consciously aspire to transcend politics and yet to remain politically relevant in a society where 'the political' has come to symbolise unfreedom and ideological distortion and scientific knowledge has come to represent independence and objective reality. In each period, the absolute knowledge of social reality (sociology's purported object of study) is portrayed as a holy grail which has been denied to the people of Kyrgyzstan by power elites—but which could, if objectively apprehended, enable the realisation of social and political development.

Debates about the nature of role of sociology therefore figure prominently in both scientific and political life in contemporary post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan, and concerns about its 'ideologicisation' and 'de-ideologicisation' have

shadowed the field since 1991. While the discipline has been rather unproblematically promoted as a 'vital element of democratic societies' in both academic and public discourse (Isaev 1993; Isaev et al. 1996; Lokteva 1991), the very definition of sociology and its relation to politics and other academic disciplines are in fact ambiguous, controversial and highly politicised. This is visible at the level of official governmental funding and support as well as in popular discourses on social science, which are often oriented toward garnering political and popular legitimacy.

The Kyrgyz government's formal commitment to developing social scientific research capabilities, for example, is contradicted by its de facto inability to support research and educational institutions and by its continued suppression of critical research (Sievers 2003: 272).[3] Furthermore, the government's initial enthusiasm for sociological research plummeted as then-President Akaev tightened his monopoly on power during the mid-1990s.[4] As the director of a major sociological research centre in the capital city of Bishkek (formerly Frunze) remarked in 2003,

> when Askar Akaev came [to power] he had an interest in sociological research. […] But now we talk about the early Akaev and later Akaev. Now we already have the later Akaev and, to be honest, as I recall he is not very interested in public opinion. […] Now all this mass information works only for Akaev to show that everything is fine with us, that everything is in order.[5]

This trend is exacerbated by the economic reorganisation of the Soviet science and educational system according to 'market principles' that privilege capitalist-oriented disciplines such as management, marketing and business administration.

As socialist-based rationales for state-sponsored science and education were abandoned after independence, Kyrgyzstani sociologists began appealing for governmental and non-governmental support on populist and moral grounds. They argued that sociology could be organised to serve 'the people' and not a minority of the political and economic elite (Blum 1991; Isaev 1991a); that it is a 'path to development' (Isaev 1993, 1998a, 2003); that it can be a source of reliable information for people living through a period of great collective unease and insecurity (Bekturganov 1997; Blum 1990; Isaev et al.

1994e); that it can and should be employed in the service of human freedom and not social control (though it must be understood that these are not necessarily mutually exclusive categories in this context) (Isaev 1998a; Isaev et al. 1994e); and that it is possible to establish a national sociology which meets certain 'modern' and 'international' standards but that also accounts for the socio-historical specificities of Kyrgyz history and culture (Isaev 1993b; Isaev et al. 1994b; Ryskulov 1998).

Through this rhetoric, post-Soviet social scientists have elaborated a mission to rescue legitimate truth, as it were, from the abuses of illegitimate power; to transform the practice of power–writing–truth as ideology into one of social scientists–managing–truth as power. These symbolic and affective platforms, which have been central in recent movements to reform and institutionalise sociology in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan, reflect the intimate relationship between social science and conceptions of power, politics and truth. This relationship has shaped both the contours and boundaries of sociology as a field of knowledge and the particular forms of its institutionalisation in the republic.

The problem with no name

Despite its importance, and despite the fact that foreign governments and international organisations have invested considerable sums of money to 'develop' the social sciences in the region since the Soviet collapse, the power/knowledge relationship has not been subjected to substantial analysis either within Kyrgyzstani social science or in the more Anglo-American-dominated discipline of Central Asian Studies.[6] While sociology has undergone sudden and totalising structural changes in institutional organisation, funding and support, political orientation, social role and theoretical underpinnings, the causes of these changes and their implications for the future of the discipline have not yet been systematically investigated. Even less interrogated are the reasons why positivism and empiricism have dominated other possible conceptions of sociological knowledge in the post-independence period. Instead, the emergence and growth of any type of sociology in post-socialist space are often uncritically interpreted as signposts

or preconditions of independence, democracy, 'modernisation' and even 'civilisation.'

Foreign-produced reports on the social sciences in Central Asia (e.g., Glenady 1995; Council of Europe 1998) generally depict sociology as either a means to a predetermined goal (such as 'the transition to the market economy') or evaluate it as an end in itself without problematising it as an object of study. While they offer insight into the current conditions of the academy and social scientific work within the region, none provide theoretically grounded explanations of the relationship between the production of social scientific knowledge and effects of power in the region. Most begin with brief and often statistical overviews of the 'status of the profession' and quality of social research, and end by suggesting how these might be improved to meet 'world standards.' They seldom if ever ask critical questions about sociologists' ontological and epistemological assumptions, the role of social research, or the motivation and viability of the very project to institutionalise sociology as an autonomous science in the republic.

Domestically, while Kyrgyzstani social scientists have reflected upon the general development of the discipline since the late socialist years, it has often been framed as a debate of knowledge *versus* power (Blum 1990; Fanisov 1990; Isaev 1991; Isaev 1991a) or knowledge *for* power and sociology as a technique of power (Abazov 1989; Sorokina 1989; Tishin 1980). However, it has never been formulated as a problem of power/knowledge in the sense of exploring how these fields may be mutually constitutive, or how processes of institutionalisation have been shaped by attempts to differentiate them. Furthermore, few scholars have considered how recent social events have impacted on the organised forms of social knowledge they themselves use as tools to analyse this very reality.

The emergence and formation of sociology in Kyrgyzstan is instead framed almost exclusively as a problem of disciplinary institutionalisation; a functional process which can be measured quantitatively and qualitatively at the level of formal institutions. There is, for example, a great deal of discussion about when and where sociological laboratories and centres were established in educational, industrial and political institutions in the republic, when various decrees relating to social science were passed by the Communist

Party or Soviet government, when something was published or taught, or when a conference was held. Stages of institutionalisation are measured by counting the number of departments, students, associations and publications that exist in the republic (Isaev 1993; Ismailova 1995; Zarlikbekov 1998), enumerating functionalist indicators of its credibility such as how much legitimacy the discipline is afforded by political leaders and international donor organisations (Blum 1993; Isaev et al. 1993b), and drawing comparisons of indigenous sociology with the discipline in its more 'mature stages' of development in the US, France, Germany and Russia (Blum 1993; Isaev 1993).

The following excerpt from a newspaper article entitled 'Problems with the institutionalisation of our sociology' (Isaev 2000) represents the prevailing view on what factors facilitate the institutionalisation of sociology in Kyrgyzstan:

> As shown by the experience of other countries, the institutionalisation of sociological knowledge depends on the appearance of specialist–professionals, the achievement of a mature status, the formation of a particular infrastructure, a calling to support the reproduction and translation of knowledge, investment in scientific associations, and etc.

Missing, however, is an explanation of the underlying forces and factors that make these particular phenomena possible: deeper structural relationships between socio-economic forces and sociological theory and research, sociology's role as a 'branch of social technology' (Greenfield 1988: 99), the impact of international relations on Kyrgyzstani social science, the transfer of sociologists' dependence from the state to international organisations and *zakazchiki* (commercial clients), and epistemological issues such as the perceived relationship between truth and power, the role of social science in society, and notions of 'the scientific.'

Functional interpretations of the development of disciplinary knowledge are not unique to Kyrgyzstan; in fact, according to Wagner and Wittrock (1991: 3),

> the historical development of the social sciences is often seen in terms of a gradual liberation from traditional bonds which prevented them from realizing their full potential as producers of true, undistorted knowledge of society. The emancipation of

> social science is then regarded as a process of institutional autonomization to be accompanied by, and enhancing, scientific maturation in epistemological and methodological terms.

These narratives of linear and progressive liberalisation, however, obscure the processes by which different conceptions of truth are legitimised in society. In Kyrgyzstan, the imposition of a functionalist, linear theory of institutionalisation is made even more problematic by the fact that the model is an idealised amalgamation of socially specific cases in the history of social science (e.g., German, British, American, and French sociologies), which have been redefined as universal within a discourse of westernisation and sanctified by ideologies of modernisation.

This idealised model, however, is meaningful for many scholars in the region who believe the Soviet legacy per se to be the enemy of intellectual development and 'scientific sociology' to be its salvation. From this view, the way forward appears unproblematic: social scientific knowledge can and must be divorced from power and made objective, as it is assumed to be in the 'civilised countries of the world' (Sydykova 1998). In this logic, the purification of subjectivity and intentionality from scientific inquiry is an uncomplicated and historically proven answer to the power/knowledge problematic. It also reduces the threat of the re-politicisation of social science in post-Soviet society; it seems an obvious solution for scholars living in a society which defines itself as 'democratising.' Once considered the handmaiden of Soviet power, sociology has been redefined as a 'scientific' defence against the abuse of knowledge by opportunistic academics and elites, being democratic in its neutral methodologies and 'equidistant from all power structures' (Isaev 1998c; Isaev et al. 1994b). In this discourse, the presumed power of social scientific knowledge has shifted from being owned and managed by the *verkhnye* ('upper' or ruling class) to being directly accessible to the *nizhnye* ('lower' or people) by providing them with impartial 'information' that they can use to make personal and political decisions, and making political leaders accountable for their actions. This promise has acquired particular value in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan, where the breakdown of law and order, rise of corruption and informal networks, and widespread

collapse of public trust have created an urgent demand for 'true' and 'accurate' information about social processes.

However, many people—including social scientists—are uncertain about what sociology is, if it is no longer an empirical branch of Marxism–Leninism or 'bourgeois ideology,' as it was known during the Soviet period. They fear that its 'subjective' and unscientific status makes it uniquely susceptible to politicisation and ideological manipulation. At the same time, there is a widely held belief that sociology *does* influence social consciousness and actions, that it has 'a direct impact on the formation of public opinion' (Bekturganov et al. 1994); that, in the words of one sociologist,

> [t]he trajectory of planetary movement does not change depending on the progress of astronomers, but the level of sociological knowledge, as world experience shows, actually influences the direction and result of social transformation (Isaev 2000).

This dual perception of extreme ambiguity and immanent relevance has led to heated controversies about the viability and terms of sociology's very existence, and to struggles within the scholarly community to determine how it is defined. It has also led to the rise of what Herbert Marcuse (1964: 114) termed 'ideological empiricism,' or the methodological exclusion of the critical political perspective from empirical research.

The current predominance of positivist approaches to sociological research in Kyrgyzstan is in part a response to these demands for scientific certainty. It is also a reply to contemporary uncertainties about the role of knowledge in the society: what constitutes legitimate social knowledge and who qualifies as a legitimate knower, if and how this knowledge can be applied to political decision making and social development, whether social information is important for human development, and what the ultimate goals of a science of society—indeed, of that society—should be. In order to establish legitimacy for the discipline, Kyrgyzstani sociologists are pressed to prove that it is *not* susceptible to political perversion and that it *is* relevant to public concerns in Kyrgyzstan.

While portrayed in a post-Soviet context here, this can also be understood as a more general tension between establishing 'sociological relevance' and 'social relevance,' or between criteria used to measure the intellectual validity

of social scientific knowledge and those used to evaluate its societal significance (Joshi 1995: 82). A new breed of positivist–empiricist sociology, grounded in modernist philosophies of social science that are adapted to the Kyrgyz context, has become central in attempts to reconcile these dual demands. Like its Marxist–Leninist predecessor, the new sociology is defined as true, universal, objective and neutral; it is opposed to 'ideology' and 'politics' which are seen to be false, particular, subjective and interested. Since independence, 'sociology' and 'Marxism–Leninism' have swapped roles in the power/knowledge debate: what was once true is now ideology, what was once ideology is now true. What has been celebrated as a Copernican revolution in social science—its 'liberation from class ideology' and Communist Party domination (Isaev 1998c)—may also be interpreted as a more moderate shift in emphasis. In the quest for truth in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstani sociology the politics of truth are deliberately bracketed, not least of all because the sociology of knowledge has its roots in the Marxian tradition of ideology critique which has, since the Soviet collapse, been declared 'unscientific' among social scientists. The demise of Communist Party hegemony and Soviet rule over social science, as well as the subsequent decentralisation of power and the predominance of neoliberal ideologies, are thus taken to mark the end of the power/knowledge problematic in Kyrgyzstan.

However, the continuing intersection of sociology, knowledge and power means that the development of sociology in Kyrgyzstan and other post-Soviet societies must not be taken for granted as 'inherently progressive and truth-producing' as it is often presented in reformist discourse (Beliaev and Butorin 1982; Popkewitz 1991). Social science reform must be analytically defined as the practice of institutionalising new relations between social knowledge and socio-political power in both its epistemological and institutional forms (Ake 1982; Bujra 1994; Eades and Schwaller 1991; Gosovic 2000). The varieties of sociology that do or do not become ascendant within a society and the institutional relationships that are established between sociologists and other social actors and forces are important products and indicators of the cultural and political meaning of organised social knowledge within that society (Mills 1959).

As Central Asian writer Karybek Baibosunov has noted (1993), 'the so-called social sciences are enduring major cataclysms [as they are] freed from an ideological path and seek to raise influence on new trends.' It is also necessary to understand, however, how these upheavals are influencing the production of social scientific knowledge itself, and to critically evaluate the new ideological paths which have replaced the old. The two-pronged nature of the project—to *affiliate* power with knowledge (in the construction of communist society during the Soviet regime and in the realisation of capitalist reforms after independence) and to *separate* social scientific knowledge from 'illegitimate' power—makes it difficult to untangle the mutually constitutive relations between sociology and power at various stages of the discipline's historical development. Ironically, the study of knowledge, power and Kyrgyzstani social science is necessary not in small part because it is the relationship most often neglected in contemporary post-Soviet sociology itself.

2

THEORY AND METHOD:

THE CRITICAL SOCIOLOGY OF SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE

> What are the social conditions which must be fulfilled in order
> for a social play of forces to be set up in which the true idea is
> endowed with strength because those who have a share in it
> have an interest in truth, instead of having, as in other games,
> the truth which suits their interests? (Bourdieu 1975: 31)

Theoretical framework

This study draws on two related fields—the sociology of knowledge and the
sociology of social science—to establish a theoretical foundation for the
sociological analysis of sociology in Kyrgyzstan. The sociology of knowledge
opens up possibilities for examining the dialectical relationship between
existential factors and the production and legitimation of knowledge about
society, while the sociology of science offers analytical categories (e.g.,
boundary–work, heteronomy and autonomy) and comparative data with which
to explore the manifestation of this relationship in academic disciplines.

These fields encompass a wide variety of theoretical approaches. This
dissertation, however, is primarily informed by critical, post-positivist
approaches to knowledge production which view social scientific truth claims
as potentially contingent, negotiable and socio-historically specific, and
therefore in need of analysis as social phenomena in their own right.[7] Such
approaches generally take a critical view of the authority often bestowed
unquestioningly upon scientific knowledge, particularly when it is taken for
granted as naturally emerging or when it is used to justify certain social
positions and relationships. They are also methodologically sceptical of
arguments that truth progresses in a cumulative fashion according to its own
internal logic, and of foundationalist explanations for the legitimacy of truth
claims.[8] A post-positivist approach to the sociology of sociology does not
foray into the more general debate about whether sociology is a positivist or
anti-positivist science (see Ritzer 1992), but rather begins from the assertion
that it is the latter.

Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu's work is particularly influential in
this research because it offers coherent theoretical frameworks for analysing

the production of social scientific and cultural knowledge, specifically within academic disciplines. Foucault's inquiries into the historical construction of scientific knowledge, particularly psychiatry, criminology and the human sciences more generally, have exposed deep relationships between 'expert' knowledge and the exercise of power in society (Foucault 1967, 1973, 1985, 1989, 2001). He was one of the first modern social scientists to explore how and why people come to accept as natural truth claims that are contingent and political, and why we often take for granted classifications of experience which may under other circumstances have been otherwise contrived.

Bourdieu's work in the sociology of science and institutions of cultural knowledge production (universities, the arts, literature) begins from a similar assumption that 'the objective truth of the product—even in the case of that very particular product, scientific truth—lies in a particular type of social conditions of production, or, more precisely, in a determinate state of the structure and functioning of the scientific field' (Bourdieu 1975: 19). Whereas Foucault's work focuses on looking at how authoritative truths are institutionalised by nebulous and discursive power relations within society, Bourdieu's is more a social structure of truth: it looks concretely at how institutional structures and power relations—particularly class relations—within knowledge-producing institutions shape ultimate definitions of truth (see Bourdieu 1975, 1988, 1993). For him, 'the "pure" universe of even the "purest" science is a social field like any other, with its distribution of power and its monopolies, struggles and strategies, interests and profits, but it is a field in which all these invariants take on specific forms' (Bourdieu 1975: 19).

In the academic milieu that Bourdieu focuses on, the French academy, power relationships are manifested in efforts to monopolise scientific authority or competence. Here, the quest for scientific truth is inherently political even when not deliberately politicised:

> Every scientific 'choice'—the choice of the area of research, the choice of methods, the choice of the place of publication, the choice…between rapid publication of partially checked results and later publication of fully checked results—is in one respect…a political investment strategy, directed, objectively at least, toward maximisation of strictly scientific profit, i.e. of potential recognition by the agent's competitor-peers (Bourdieu 1975: 23).

As he later points out, the 'most disputed frontier of all is the one which separates the field of cultural production from the field of power' (Bourdieu 1993: 43). Bourdieu reintroduces critical normativity to the sociology of science by asserting that autonomous fields of cultural knowledge are superior to those which remain heteronomous, or subordinate to economic and political logics of practice. This is an example of Bourdieu's theory, reminiscent of Karl Mannheim's 'new kind of objectivity' (1936), that greater subjectivity in fact results in 'epistemological vigilance' and thus to more accurate social scientific knowledge (Bourdieu 1988: xiii, 1999).

Following Foucault and Bourdieu, it may be argued that the production and legitimation of social scientific knowledge is political, both in the way that contests for material and symbolic resources (including scientific authority) affect knowledge construction, and in the way that social scientific knowledge is politicised in its application. Applying these hypotheses to Kyrgyzstan, it becomes clear that questions about the institutionalisation of sociology are inseparable from broader concerns about how sociological knowledge and practice are legitimated and embedded in institutional power relations.

These questions will therefore be addressed through the framework of the critical sociology of social scientific knowledge, which can be summarised in the following three propositions. First, social scientific knowledge is not universal, objective or politically neutral, but contingent, historicised, existentially conditioned and political. Second, it disciplinary reform is not necessarily evolutionary or progressive. Rather, it must be seen as deliberate intervention into an existing situation, the normative value of which must always be determined through empirical analysis and theoretical critique. Ultimately, reform is a contingent response to social, political and economic circumstances, and 'to view…reform proposals as objective, disinterested plans for action is to obscure the social significance and political implications of the discourse that spawned them' (Pickel 1999; Popkewitz 1991: 2). Third, the construction and legitimisation of sociological knowledge are inseparable from beliefs about the ontological and epistemological nature of truth and its role in society, and these beliefs are continuously negotiated in the institutional settings of academic and professional social science as well as in

the public sphere. At the epistemological level, this process is manifested in debates over the definition of 'good' sociological knowledge and its proper boundaries with other disciplines, social practices and the field of political power. This includes a critique of the basic concepts that underlie sociological work in general—'truth,' 'objectivity,' 'science,' etc. At the institutional level, the process involves the creation of new sociology departments and research centres, scientific associations and groups, and conferences and projects, all of which forge alliances with and distances from the state, political parties, educational institutions, industry and, more recently, international organisations. Together, these activities provide the backdrop against which boundary–work may—and often must—be employed to define the meaning and boundaries of sociology.

Theory as analysis and critique

The critical sociology of social scientific knowledge is an alternative to the main theory of scientific knowledge production now prevailing in Kyrgyzstan. It is also partly a critique of this dominant discourse. The Kyrgyzstani discourse on the institutionalisation of sociology is based on a positivist theory of knowledge which maintains that there is a clear and ascertainable distinction between ideologies (distorted or mystified knowledges and false consciousness) and true, realistic and objective knowledge (Gieryn 1983: 783; Lincoln and Guba 2003); in other words, an unambiguous separation between knowledge and power. Social science—indeed, all science—is seen to belong rather unproblematically to the latter category. It is thus presumed that a 'good' social scientist can and must be free from all interested thinking, bias, and subjectivity. In this context, by dispensing with all ideologies, we can obtain a true and undistorted image of social reality, which can in turn be applied by 'experts' to make political decisions more 'scientific' and therefore more effective.[9]

Indigenous (Kyrgyzstani) theories of change in social scientific knowledge accordingly pay homage to the ideal of a 'mature' sociology in the likeness of Comte's (1975) social physics or Durkheim's (1938) sociological method, which can transcend the phenomenological subjectivities of politics and experience in order to contribute to the governance of both. Here, the

definition of 'mature science' is synonymous with 'autonomous science.' Although Soviet Marxism–Leninism was in principle opposed to what C. Wright Mills called 'abstracted empiricism,' Kyrgyzstani sociologists adhere to what Alexander and Colomy (1992: 30) call a 'positivist persuasion.' For example, they presume that 'a radical break exists between empirical observations and non-empirical statements.' This is one of the primary justifications for distinguishing between Marxist social philosophy and non-Marxist sociology in Kyrgyzstan: while the first dealt in 'speculative' theory, the second is seen to be empirical and to 'study life as it really is, without any ideology' (Nurova and Shaimergenova 2000: 5). Similarly, in the quest to de-ideologicise and depoliticise sociology, sociologists accept that 'the elimination of non-empirical referents is a distinguishing feature of the natural sciences and therefore a truly scientific sociology must follow suit if it is to assume an equally scientific stature' (Alexander and Colomy 1992). Sociology in Kyrgyzstan, it is argued, has 'its own methods of research and generalisation, but ideological stamps must not prevent its development' (Fanisov 1990). Finally, theories of disciplinary professionalisation are formulated around conventional models of knowledge development as linear, progressive and stable (e.g., Kuklick 1980: 202-203). The development of Kyrgyzstani sociology is then carefully measured against this universalised standard of 'mature' social science, represented during the Soviet period by sociological practice in Moscow and Leningrad, and today by sociology in 'the west.'[10]

The roots of this faith in the possibility of a genuinely scientific sociology extend equally deep into Marxist–Leninist theories of science in society and the non-Marxist positivist project to develop an existentially transcendent science of society. Ironically, while Soviet Marxist philosophers levied totalising critiques against positivism, they maintained analogous distinctions between 'scientific' and 'unscientific' knowledge. While positivism privileges empirical facts over theoretical supposition, Marxist philosophy began from the assumption that dialectical materialism was the most valid and reliable explanation for all social phenomena.

The intersection of these philosophies of science after independence in Kyrgyzstan has created a resilient set of intellectual parameters around

discourses on sociology. For example, positivist theories and empirical research methods are particularly attractive because they are said to enable sociologists to discover social 'laws' and 'regularities.' The integration of Marxism–Leninism and positivism is also visible in the metaphors often used to describe the role of sociology in the republic: assertions, for example, that 'sociology not only reflects, mirror-like, the actual status of things within the jurisdiction [of the powers-that-be], but is capable, like an x-ray, of illuminating the most complex worm-holes and chronic illnesses inside an organism' (Blum 1991). Similarly,

> sociological research creates a real picture of society, both of its individual problems and the entire situation. […] You could say that sociology is a mirror of society: it gives an accurate reflection, and you can't blame a mirror for [misrepresentation] (Fanisov 1990).

In the context of such correspondence or representationist theories of truth (Bourdieu 1991), objectivity—understood as the elimination of subjective factors from all stages of intellectual work and sociological research in particular—is seen as vital to the successful appropriation of 'social reality' and its potential as a tool for social change.

In post-positivist circles, this position may easily be interpreted as a resurgence of 'naïve positivism' (e.g., Fisher 1990: 5). Far from being naïve, however, the positivist vocabulary is also sometimes used by Kyrgyzstani sociologists to cloak otherwise 'dangerous' social and political criticism in a mantle of scientific neutrality, thus making them more immune to reprisals from the subjects of their research, which are often national power elites— after all, you 'can't blame a mirror' for what it simply 'reflects.' Given the deep theoretical moorings of the positivist position and its political function as a smokescreen for social criticism, critique of this first principle is often interpreted as an intentional or misguided attack on the legitimate authority of social science and even an assault on truth itself.

Emic interpretations of the politics of knowledge are illustrated well in the following vignette. During an interview, I presented a well-known Kyrgyz sociologist with two newspaper articles he had penned in recent years, one entitled, 'Who benefits from populism in sociology?' (Bekturganov et al. 1994) and the other 'A sociology of lies, or the lies of the sociologist?' (Tishin

et al. 1998) Each was part of a longer-running public debate about the proper relationship between sociology and politics, the importance of scientific method and the manipulation of data. The professor, a long-time campaigner for sociology in both the Soviet and post-Soviet periods, disagreed that these articles concerned the 'politics' of sociology. He emphatically argued that his contribution to the debate was *anti-political*; that it was an attempt to demonstrate how *other* people had politicised sociology and an appeal for science to be 'pure' and free from political influence. This direct association of 'the political' with illegitimate power and particular ideologies, and of science with truth, mean that the politics of sociological knowledge continue to go largely unexamined within the republic itself. By introducing the critical sociology of social scientific knowledge as an alternative approach, this dissertation aims to fill this gap and expose the epistemological, institutional and political foundations of sociology in Kyrgyzstan.

The sociology of knowledge

In contrast to the dominant theory of knowledge production in Kyrgyzstan, the sociology of knowledge takes foundational assumptions about truth and objectivity as its primary problematic. It seeks to explain how and why 'certain forms of truth come to prevail, and be challenged, at different historical moments' (Popkewitz 1991: 43); clarifies the 'conditions under which problems and disciplines come into being and pass away' in any society, particularly those experiencing great change (Mannheim 1936: 97); and inquires into the 'role of knowledge and ideas in the maintenance or change of the social order' (Wirth 1936: xxx). In the post-Soviet context, the primary questions about sociology from the perspective of the sociology of knowledge are not why the discipline has failed to 'mature,' or what measures are needed to make it 'world class' (Isaev 2000), but rather how these conceptions of maturity and standard developed and what accounts for the ascendance of orthodox positivism in what is widely presumed to be a post-positivist period.

The sociology of knowledge is a broad field, ranging from Karl Mannheim's (1936) classical study of the 'relationality' of individually (i.e., class) positioned knowledges to the 'new sociology of knowledge' that is

more *gestalt*-oriented in its focus on how whole epistemic apparatuses are created (Swidler and Arditi 1994: 306). Each of these approaches, however, begins from a central proposition that social thought 'has an existential basis insofar as it is not immanently determined and insofar as one or another of its aspects can be derived from extra-cognitive factors' (Merton 1996: 209). In other words, the sociology of knowledge is based on a constructivist epistemology. It asserts that much social truth is a social and political production, a cultural phenomenon—constructed, produced and negotiated, not simply discovered—and that the ideational world is not independent from the material conditions within which it is created (McCarthy 1996: 24). This holds equally true for lay knowledge and 'expert' opinion, science and common sense: all ways of knowing are 'political.' The sociology of knowledge thus calls for the absolute democratisation of ideology critique, whereby all positions and truth claims may become subjects for critical analysis (Mills 1963: 457).

This project demands that we rethink our understanding of both 'ideology' and 'truth' and make a heuristic shift from what the early twentieth century sociologist of knowledge Karl Mannheim referred to as a 'particular conception of ideology' to a 'total conception of ideology.' The former is defined as the 'more or less conscious disguises of the real nature of a situation, the true recognition of which would not be in accord with [one's] interests.' The latter is what he refers to as 'the ideology of an age or of a concrete historico-social group, e.g. of a class […] the characteristics and composition of the total structure of the mind of this epoch or of this group' (Mannheim 1936: 49). While the 'particular conception of ideology' allows for the possibility of an entirely autonomous body of knowledge, the 'total conception of ideology' rejects it and instead argues that even knowledge which has not been politically 'corrupted' may be considered heteronomous.

The total conception of ideology can also be understood as the logic behind Michel Foucault's episteme, 'the product of certain organising principles which relate things to one another (by classifying things, and by allocating meanings and values) and which, as a result, determines how we make sense of things, what we can know, and what we can say' (Gadamer et al. 2000: 16). Bourdieu's concept of habitus offers another way of

understanding 'total ideology' as a 'system of durable, transposable structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them' (Johnson 1993: 5). Even scientific knowledge, in other words, is consciously or unconsciously ordered. The key to understanding the institutionalisation of sociology in Kyrgyzstan lies partly in understanding the network of tacit, unexamined assurances which underlie it—the positivist conception of truth, the objectivist understanding of validity, belief in the possibility of scientific politics, and faith in the classical promises of modernity.

When taken to its logical conclusion, Mannheim's theory of total ideology critique means that we must subject even the foundations of social scientific knowledge to sociological analysis. For

> as long as one does not call his own position into question but regards it as absolute, while interpreting his opponents' ideas as a mere function of the social positions they occupy, the decisive step forward has not yet been taken. […] In contrast to this special formulation [of particular ideology], the general form of the total conception of ideology is being used by the analyst when he has the courage to subject not just the adversary's point of view but all points of view, including his own, to the ideological analysis (Mannheim 1936: 68).

In the words of Robert Merton (1996: 207), 'the sociology of knowledge came into being with the single hypothesis that even truths were to be held socially accountable, were to be related to the historical society in which they emerged.'

This rigorous theory of the existential conditioning of social scientific knowledge has a number of important implications for sociological inquiry in Kyrgyzstan. At the most immediate level, it compels us to examine the relational and contingent dimensions of all truth claims about society, including those which claim to be scientific or objectively value-free, including efforts to autonomise sociology. Significantly, claims to value-freedom may often themselves be explained through sociological analysis. Such radical reflexivity has also stimulated the development of a relatively young branch of sociological inquiry—the investigation, analysis, and critique

of social scientific truth itself. The sociology of social scientific knowledge takes social science itself as an object of sociological inquiry, which, like any other body of knowledge, 'cannot be adequately understood as long as [its] social origins are obscured' (Mannheim 1936: 2).

According to more contemporary theorists (Bourdieu 1975, 1988; Kuhn 1970), these 'origins' often include power struggles to determine what becomes accepted as true and legitimate knowledge, both within scientific communities and in the public sphere. We must therefore embrace the study of power and knowledge within the scientific field instead of seeking to escape it if we want to understand the meaning of social science in our societies. In Kyrgyzstan, this means shifting from the particular ideology critique of competing truth claims in sociology to a more holistic sociological analysis of the institutional, intellectual and political fields that these claims are embedded within.

Such reflexivity need not, as is often feared in Kyrgyzstan, signify surrender to the distortions of power and harmful subjective influences. It is better understood as a method for intellectual empowerment; as a way to reflect upon the partiality of privileged knowledges that often masquerade as universal and objective scientific truths. In the words of Mannheim (1936: 47), 'relativism and scepticism compel self-criticism and self-control, and lead to a new conception of objectivity'. And if we believe Bourdieu (1988: xii), this 'sociological critique of sociological reasoning' may in fact be the driving force behind the development of the discipline.

Extending the sociology of knowledge to Kyrgyzstan
Traditionally, the sociology of knowledge has been used to make sense of contradictory truth claims in historical periods where 'disagreement is more conspicuous than agreement' without falling prey to either absolutism or relativism, and in order to analyse the deep structural meanings of political rhetoric and ideology when these are naturalised in the public mind (Mannheim 1936: 5). It is particularly useful in circumstances where 'norms and truths which were once believed to be absolute, universal, and eternal, or which were accepted with blissful unawareness of their implications, are being questioned' (Blume 1974: 2-25; Wirth 1991).

This is an apt description of contemporary perceptions of post-Soviet Kyrgyzstani society, which are pervaded by images of chaos and crisis. In fact, sociologists often portray the society as a mystery, some *terra incognita* and therefore something dangerous; the reading public is periodically reminded in ominous tones that 'we do not know the society in which we live' (Blum 1993; Isaev 1991a). As one sociologist argued,

> in an independent Kyrgyzstan, as in other post-Soviet states on the eve of the twenty-first century, a new time has arrived, and with it new problems have emerged, which demand different ways of thinking and non-standard skills to resolve them. It has become necessary in our time to understand what is going on in society and with people, by which vectors and in what parameters social changes are being realised in the process of transition to a liberal economy and democracy, and what effects will come from multifaceted modernisation and national revival (Isaev 2000).

'The crisis,' as it is commonly referred to, is represented as a negative and undesirable phenomenon, something which was imposed by the Soviet collapse and which worsened considerably after independence. While early sociological articles (1990–93) chronicle the intellectual and political anxieties of perestroika (e.g., Isaev 1991, 1991a; Zhivogliadov 1990), those published after independence tend to be more critical of the severe poverty, heightened corruption, ideological anomie, and everyday violence that followed national independence (e.g., Bekturganov 1997; Isaev 1993b, 1993c; 2003) as well as the loss of public trust in knowledge-producing institutions such as the media and academy. The discrepancy between 'reality' and 'ideology,' or lived experience and official rhetoric, is a key problematic in sociological research conducted during this period. The sociology of knowledge is equipped precisely to deconstruct the politics of truth in such conditions.

In addition to the emergence of competing truth claims, however, there is also an effort to debunk certain existing norms and belief systems (e.g. 'the socialist way of life') and replace them with others (such as concepts of 'democracy' and 'the free market') which have not yet been clearly defined. This is most visible in discourses on 'the transition,' which, in opposition to 'the crisis,' is defined as a clear and determinate progression from a 'totalitarian' and 'communist' society to a 'democratic' and 'capitalist' one

(Isaev 1995; Isaev and Madaliev 1998; Isaev et al. 1994f). Sociologists sometimes also argue that Kyrgyzstan is making a transition from being a 'backward' and traditional society to a modern and 'civilised' one. 'The transition' is the optimistic counterpart to 'the crisis,' the ideological promise of inevitable things to come, the vision of the foretold future. Because the particular theory of development underlying images of 'Kyrgyzstan in transition' is evolutionary and teleological, democratic-capitalist transition is offered up as the most logical solution to the crisis of independence. It serves to dispel people's feelings of pessimism and disillusionment which in practice have translated into social apathy and political indifference; in fact, it even maintains that these reactions are 'normal' parts of depoliticisation and de-ideologicisation.

The emerging discourse of transition therefore compels us to seek explanations of consensus-building and creation as well as fragmentation and disintegration. Here too the sociology of knowledge can help us to understand the processes of knowledge construction and truth validation, for it asks specifically how certain forms of truth arise and are contested at particular historical junctures. This is vitally important in Kyrgyzstani sociology, where the uncritical rejection of one set of truths and assumptions (those of Marxist–Leninist sociology) and the uncritical acceptance of another (those embodied in discourses of positivist–empirical sociology) have intersected to create powerful new discourses of scientific sociology in Kyrgyzstan, and where emotive political symbolism attached to both philosophies presents obstacles to the critical examination of this phenomenon.

The sociology of social science

The sociology of social science, a sub-field of the sociology of knowledge, enables us to situate the general problems of the sociology of knowledge within the field of sociology itself.[11] The main premise of the sociology of social science is elementary: social science is a socio-cultural phenomenon and neither the organisation nor product of scientific work can be fully understood outside the analysis of its surrounding socio-political and cultural contexts or the internal organisation of intellectual activity itself (Blume 1974;

Bourdieu 1975: 19; Reynolds and Reynolds 1970). Within this general framework, there is considerable debate about the degree to which social scientific knowledge is socially determined or constructed and to what extent it may be autonomous. There is no central problematic in the sociology of social science. Instead, a variety of schools of thought address different problems and 'dimensions' of the field. These are often classified into often 'internal' and 'external' approaches (Cozzens and Gieryn 1990: 1-4; Shlapentokh 1987: 1).

Using a 'two-dimensional working model of social-scientific practice' adapted from Ram (1991), we can actually identify four different approaches to the sociology of science: intellectual–internal/external, social–external, social–internal and synthetic,[12] which differ according to the how they define relationships between different dimensions of an academic field, in this case, sociology. According to this model, scholarship in the sociology of social science can be categorised in the following way.

Internal–intellectual and *external–intellectual* approaches are concerned primarily with the cognitive substance of sociology. Internally, this includes predominant assumptions, theories, concepts and images of society, the intellectual or 'natural' history of sociology in a bounded location, and the internal development of disciplinary ideas. Externally, it consists of the 'cognitive or conceptual aspects of the scientific discipline which are "borrowed" from other disciplines [or from] *inside* the discipline but *outside* the boundaries of the local culture' (Ram 1991: 6, italics in original). The analytical categories used in this approach enable us to examine why different types of sociology emerge and to compare intellectual genealogies; it is similar in many ways to intellectual or conceptual history. Generally speaking, the intellectually focused approach presupposes, more than the other approaches, a greater degree of autonomy in the production of social scientific knowledge.

This approach has guided many different types of studies in the sociology of sociology. During the mid-twentieth century, for example, the rapid internationalisation of sociology led to increased interest in the epistemological particularity or universality of the discipline as a field of knowledge and practice (Clinard and Elder 1967; Fisher 1966; Lewis 1964;

Mazur 1963; O'Hara 1961; Whetten 1957). Similarly, the political radicalisation of the social sciences during the 1960s and 1970s spawned a large number of reflexive critiques of sociology that may also be considered internal or external–intellectual studies (Friedrichs 1968, 1970; Gouldner 1962, 1970; Horowitz 1968; Reynolds and Reynolds 1970).

Social–internal approaches, on the other hand, focus more on how 'the institutional and communal aspects of the sociological discipline' (Ram 1991: 9), such as the organisation of knowledge production, media and communication, training and socialisation, power relations, prestige, funding and processes of institutionalisation and professionalisation, affect knowledge production itself. Much of Robert Merton's work on the sociology of science (1996) falls into this category, as do Abrams (1968), Abrams et al. (1981), and Barnes (1948). It also includes recent ethnographic or 'laboratory' studies in the construction of natural scientific knowledge (Latour and Woolgar 1979; Knorr-Cetina 1981). Studies in this tradition are particularly interested in the creation and maintenance of sociology as a social institution (Cozzens and Gieryn 1990). Social–internal studies in the functionalist tradition are likely to analyse how scientific institutions may be organised so that truth will emerge; at its most radical, the social–internal approach concludes that 'the empiricist notion of truth *is* a fiction since it is not reality but the social system of science that selects valid scientific constructions' (Fuchs 1986: 138).

Social–external approaches to the sociology of sociology are similar to social–internal approaches in that they also reject the possibility of autonomous social scientific knowledge production and are interested in the influence of 'society in science.' However, this has less to do with the institutional structures of science itself and more to do with the relationship between science and other social institutions (e.g., politics, the economy, the family, etc.). Philip Abrams' *Origins of British Sociology* (1968) exemplifies this approach. Abrams suggests that a conjunction of institutional and intellectual factors created the conditions for the successful institutionalisation of sociology in Britain in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[13] While his study details many valiant efforts by individuals to define, promote and institutionalise the discipline, it is largely an investigation into their failure. His final verdict on the role of individual agency in the development

of sociology reflects the emphasis on structural forces that characterises many studies of society-in-science:

> [t]he history of ideas was shaped by [institutional resistances to sociology which sociologists alone could not break] and opportunities. What was needed for sociology to flourish in Britain was not a change of heart among Oxford professors but a social structure in which single political responses to social problems were less easily available and less plausible than they previously had been in Britain, and in which, conversely, social problems were more fundamentally problematic than they had yet been in British experiences (Abrams 1968: 153).

Social–external approaches also emphasise the 'science–in–society' relationship, or the role of social science in society (Cozzens and Gieryn 1990). Such studies primarily engage with 'the encounter between sociology and social groups and institutions, or between text and context' (Ram 1991: 9), the role of sociology in social stability or change and repression or liberation (Aronowitz 1988; Halmos 1970; Silva and Slaughter 1984), and the political and economic dimensions of the emergence of new or 'national' sociologies, particularly on the periphery of the scientific world system (Moskos and Bell 1967).

The relationship between the internal development of sociological theory and research and external social forces is particularly important in the study of sociology in newly independent societies such as Kyrgyzstan, where problems of intellectual colonialism, academic dependency, and the politicisation of scientific knowledge are compounded. The emergence and development of sociology in such societies therefore assumes a different character than in the western industrial societies that constitute the core of the scientific world system (Schott 1992). Accordingly, the sociology of social science within these societies addresses a number of issues that are rarely raised in mainstream studies. Although many prominent sociologists of sociology have neglected this point, a few have recognised its significance. Oberschall, for example, suggests that his model of the development of sociology in core–central countries was not necessarily relevant to the development of sociology in post-colonial societies. He argued that it was valid only in cases where there are 'a new role and discipline for which there are neither precedents nor sources of support outside the country.' However,

the diffusion of already established role and discipline to other countries, for example, the establishment of sociology in Asian, African, and Latin American universities, might have to include further variables and processes. The purposive adoption of an existing organizational model for a system of higher education and the provision of resources, both financial and manpower, from outside the country would have to be considered, among other things (Oberschall, cited in Filino 1990: 5).

Galtung (1971) and Alatas (2000, 2003) take this a step further to focus specifically on patterns of dependency and imperialism in post-colonial knowledge production. Galtung, for example, offers a 'structural theory of imperialism,' including 'scientific imperialism,' in which 'the division of labor between teachers and learners is clear: it is not the division of labor as such (as found in most definitions of transmission of knowledge) that constitutes imperialism, but the location of the learners, in a broader setting. The Center always provides the teachers and definition of what is worthy of being taught…and the Periphery always provides the learners' (1971: 93). More recently, Alatas has drawn on dependency theory to develop a less structuralist theory of intellectual colonisation and academic dependency that explores why 'globalisation' has increased rather than decreased intellectual dependency in some post-colonial societies (for more on academic dependency, see Chapter 3).

This is also important in Kyrgyzstan, where the relationship between the intellectual content of sociology and social, economic and political forces in Kyrgyzstani society is highly asymmetrical. The internal content and organisation of sociology here has been historically over-determined by external social forces and intellectual influences, while the larger social, political and intellectual fields have been only remotely influenced by the work of sociologists. In fact, one of the defining features of Kyrgyzstani sociology is the decades-long project to reverse this imbalance.

The theoretically *synthetic* approach as defined in this study combines these approaches in various ways to explore more nuanced interrelations between the internal–external and social–intellectual dimensions of the field of sociology, particularly the co-constitutive relationship between social scientific knowledge and social structures and forces, and the socio-historical contingency of social scientific knowledge (as opposed to its determination by

or autonomy from internal or external forces). Such approaches, some of which are classified as 'structuration' (Hagendijk 1990) or 'critical realist' (Swidler and Arditi 1994) models, aim to 'overcome the dichotomies of externalism and internalism as well as of micro and macro accounts, while bringing historicity back in, in a manner which is sensitive to particularities, yet [does] not shy away from the theoretical commitment of social science' (Wagner and Wittrock 1991: 332; see also Cozzens and Gieryn 1990).

Bourdieu's (1988) critical study of the relationship between the structure of the French humanities and social sciences and the broader class structure in French society, and the relationship between the university, politics and intellectual life, is one example of this approach.[14] It is based on understanding the effects of the tension between the 'internal' and 'external' dimensions of social science, or what he calls the 'two principles of hierarchisation' in academic disciplines, heteronomy and autonomy. While maintaining that knowledge is produced through agency, Bourdieu emphasises that social structures condition academics' intellectual positions and professional strategies. He looks at how distinctions and hierarchies in the academic world serve not only to create boundaries and legitimate certain truth claims, but also explores their role in establishing power relations that determine who is permitted to participate in and evaluate intellectual work.

More recent studies of boundary–work in the development of scientific disciplines (Gieryn 1983; Gieryn et al. 1985; Good 2000; Kuklick 1980; Wright 1981) also place the relationship between social scientific knowledge and power at the centre of the analysis and seek to explain the complex relationships between institutional formations, socio-political and economic contexts, and knowledge production in the academic domain. These studies emphasise the role of both structure and agency in the production of scientific knowledge and have exposed inherent ambiguities, or strains, in scientific knowledge.

This dissertation uses the synthetic approaches of Bourdieu and Gieryn to explore the relationship between each of the dimensions of sociology in Kyrgyzstan. It focuses equal attention on intellectual developments in sociology, the internal structure of social science as an institution, and external factors such as political and economic forces. The intersection of these

dimensions is most visible in the boundary–work done to define sociology in post-Soviet society.

Boundary–work and the construction of scientific knowledge

The notion of boundary–work is central to the critical study of sociology in Kyrgyzstan. Boundary–work, or the 'rhetorical strategy of promoting particular ideologies of science' (Gieryn 1983) is an analytical concept used by sociologists of science to illustrate how scientific disciplines (and knowledge units more generally) are constructed, legitimised, transformed and broken down, both within scientific communities (Fuchs 1986) and in the public sphere (Gieryn et al. 1985). It builds on the theory that academic disciplines are socially constructed as opposed to naturally occurring, but extends it by exploring how and under what conditions they are formed and legitimised, by whom and with what intention, and how the definition of scientific truth is conditioned by the social and material relationships in which processes of validation are themselves embedded.

The primary assumption underlying the concept is that the borders of scientific fields (e.g., the definition of science, its distinction from non-science and pseudo-science, its alliances with or distances from other disciplines, and the differentiation between 'good' and 'bad' scientific practice) and the determination of scientific truth are not fixed or universal, but rather fluid and negotiated in contests for professional legitimacy, scientific authority, and material resources (Gieryn 1983). Boundary–work is often used in projects to professionalise academic disciplines, as well as in attempts to gain broader public or political legitimacy for certain truth claims or professional practices. Analysing boundary–work is essentially a way of understanding how and why knowledge is actually legitimised and contested, with a focus on the localised constituencies of people and institutions that have stakes in this process (Mulkay 1991). Boundary–work analysis, in other words, is an approach to deconstructing the politics of truth in social science.

The particular strategies employed in boundary–work differ according to the overall project of those involved and the goals they aim to achieve. Gieryn et al. (1985) argue that is used in three types of disciplinary projects: (1) when

members of a discipline want to *extend their authority* into domains claimed by other professions or disciplines, (2) when members of a discipline want to *monopolise* professional authority and resources and see other disciplines or practices as 'competitive' or rivals, and (3) when a discipline wants to protect its *autonomy* from outside encroachment upon its professional activities.[15] However, we can extend the notion of boundary–work to also include the cognitive distinctions, classifications, associations and categories that are used to order knowledge (ideas, perceptions and information) and make it meaningful. It can also be extended to the political work that is done to make symbolic distinctions between different types of knowledge and practice as part of larger political projects such as social movements, revolution, colonisation and decolonisation, and nation building.

Kyrgyzstani sociology is unusual in that the three main types of boundary–work (expansion, monopolisation, and the protection of autonomy) have often been conducted concurrently. In the 1960s, for example, academics promoting the establishment of sociology in Kyrgyzstan made conscious efforts to distinguish between the functions of sociology and already existing disciplines such as philosophy and historical materialism. Attempts to extend the authority of sociology into these fields assumed an integrative rather than colonial character, as sociologists asserted their prerogative over analysis of the empirical aspects of social reality which were implicit within but not addressed by other more 'theoretical' disciplines.

At the same time, however, other new disciplinary fields such as social psychology and scientific management were vying for this same privilege within the established Soviet disciplines. Sociologists therefore also drew distinctions between themselves and other newcomers, claiming that sociology was not only empirical but 'scientific' and holistic, and therefore deserving of exclusive authority over the empirical study of social life in Kyrgyzstan. This assertion of rightfully exclusive authority, however, was also contingent upon the public image of sociology, in particular the discipline's claim to scientific status and its presumed ability to transcend existential influences such as political power or personal prejudice in the pursuit of truth about 'social reality,' while being pragmatically relevant for legitimate uses of social and political power. The effort to distinguish sociology from already existing

disciplines and assert its superiority over competitors was therefore combined with an attempt to establish the autonomy of sociological research and its 'distance' from all illegitimate power relations in society, as well as from what contenders defined as 'dilettantes' and 'pseudo-sociologists' who presented threats to the legitimacy of the fledgling discipline.

Similar patterns of attempts to simultaneously expand, monopolise and protect the autonomy of sociology have remained consistent in the post-independence period. In Kyrgyzstan, the establishment, institutionalisation and professionalisation of sociology have been historically dependent upon both its autonomy and its social and political use value, thus necessitating the concurrent production of multiple types of boundary–work.

Boundary–work and the political economy of science
The notion of boundary–work as expansion/monopolisation/autonomisation is grounded in more general theories of the political economy of science itself. One is the 'market model of professionalisation.' Here, boundary–work is interpreted as a strategy for creating and monopolising new 'markets' for professional services in conditions where both material and social capital are scarce and in demand. What can sociologists do, for example, that statisticians, economists and politicians cannot? The popularisation and institutionalisation of a discipline are interpreted not as signs of the victory of truth or even professionalism, but rather as indicators of a successful occupational monopoly within a competitive market.

Gieryn et al. (1985) have applied this model to the institutionalisation of academic disciplines, demonstrating how the 'proper' relationship between scientific and non-scientific (in their work, religious) knowledge was negotiated in two public trials to establish whether creationism or evolution should be taught in US schools: the 1925 Scopes 'Monkey Trial,' and the 1981–82 McLean 'Creation Trial.' Both were cases of scientists struggling for power over the content of educational curricula, and both were instances of intense 'public science,' or 'rhetoric, argument and polemic [designed] to persuade the public or influential sectors thereof that science…is worthy of receiving public attention, encouragement and finances' (Gieryn et al. 1985: 392).[16]

Bourdieu's (1975, 1993) work on disciplinarity can also be seen as a study in boundary–work. He challenges the belief that the scientific field is structured in a neutral way that will facilitate the discovery of 'truth,' asserting instead that the collective acceptance of truth claims depends heavily on how resources, power, and legitimacy or authority ('scientific capital' as he calls it) are distributed among practitioners:

> [t]he scientific field is the locus of a competitive struggle, in which the *specific* issue at stake is the monopoly of *scientific authority*, defined inseparably as technical capacity and social power, or to put it another way, the monopoly of *scientific competence*, in the sense of a particular agent's socially recognized capacity to speak and act legitimately (i.e. in an authorized and authoritative way) in scientific matters' (Bourdieu 1975: 18, italics in original).

In this context, the successful establishment of a field of knowledge (or the prestige of individual scholars within a single academic community) depends not on its ultimate truth or utility, but on how convincingly its practitioners can argue that they, not their 'competitors' or those with alternative versions of the truth, offer an exclusive, relevant and legitimate view of the world. This ability to define and monopolise the scientific field is in turn influenced by the social positions of the actors themselves; the logic of scientific discovery is pre-politicised by its very position within and relation to larger structures of social divisions and power in society. For Bourdieu, therefore, power is a precondition of scientific knowledge, not an obstacle to it (see also Fuchs 1986). Confronting the power/knowledge issue directly, Bourdieu argues that 'the idea of a neutral science is a fiction, an interested fiction which enables its authors to present a version of the dominant representation of the social world, neutralised and euphemised into a particularly misrecognisable and symbolically, therefore, particularly effective form, and to call it scientific' (Bourdieu 1975: 36).

At this point Bourdieu's work crosses over into the second, more critical approach to the political economy of scientific knowledge: disciplinary institutionalisation as hegemony. Although this is still concerned with the ways in which academic disciplines are distinguished, defined and professionalised, it devotes particular attention to the political origins and consequences of these delineations and to the reasons why certain truth claims

are included or excluded from legitimate knowledge. While it still addresses the demarcation of boundaries between 'good,' scientific knowledge or method and that which is seen as pseudo-scientific, it also asks how these distinctions are implicated in larger projects of social control.

This approach is exemplified by Fisher (1990, 1993) in his work on the establishment of the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) and its creation as an organisation which he argues supported 'social science for social control.' In line with Gieryn (1983), Gieryn et al. (1985) and Camic and Xie (1994), Fisher defines boundary–work as 'those acts and processes that create, maintain, and break down boundaries between knowledge units' (1993: 13). He is particularly interested in exposing the deliberate conflation of existing disciplinary boundaries and the formation of a new generic 'social science,' which was created in large part to serve the needs of the American philanthropic and political elite.

However, Fisher goes a theoretical step further and reinterprets the concept through a Gramscian lens of hegemony and power/knowledge, arguing that boundary–work is in fact 'the production and reproduction of cultural hegemony.' He argues that while SSRC academics were able to negotiate the boundaries established by the organisation's elite sponsors, they were nevertheless constrained by them. Their work, therefore, was moulded to the political and social agendas of the elite. Fisher's focus is not the intellectual consequences of the boundary–work itself, but rather on the power relations which are mediated through it, and on explaining 'why power is attached to some ideas rather than others' (1990: 98). In this way, boundary–work analysis draws 'attention to the ways in which social forces are inscribed into boundaries' (Fisher 1990: 112). Fisher sees boundary–work less as a competition for professional resources, as do Bourdieu and Gieryn, and more as the exercise of hegemony, or the creation of 'ideologies that disseminate the consciousness of the ruling class and organize the consensus of the population in line with the existing social order' (1990: 102).

Boundary–work in Kyrgyzstani sociology
Approaches to boundary–work which bring together questions of academic knowledge and political hegemony are particularly useful for analysing how

the meaning of social scientific knowledge in Kyrgyzstan has changed as sociology shed its Soviet identity and was realigned with the rhetoric and realities of national sovereignty. They go beyond structures and power relations internal to the scientific field itself (the 'internal–social' approach) to look at how these are enabled or constrained by external factors, particularly, the demands of the political system.

This is particularly important in the history of Soviet social science. In the Soviet system, scientific authority was not exclusively a matter of academic communities or institutions. Many scholars were also members of the Communist Party, and scientific work was considered part of political activity. Similarly, because research activities were highly centralised, with the party ultimately making all formal decisions regarding funding and organisation, competition for symbolic capital such as professional prestige had a different meaning than it does in less centralised science systems where academics compete for individual grants, research ratings and the like. This was even more extreme in the case of Soviet Kirgizia, as the authoritative institutions responsible for bestowing legitimacy and granting resources were located at a geopolitical distance in the scientific and political centres of Moscow and Leningrad. The dynamics of boundary–work in Kyrgyzstani sociology in fact challenge Bourdieu's assertion that scientific authority necessarily 'owes its specificity to the fact that the producers tend to have no possible clients other than their competitors' (1975: 23) and that internal competition is not as important as external demand. In both Soviet and post-Soviet periods, social demand for sociology and the acquisition of external, often commercial support have been vital factors in the discipline's institutionalisation.

Thus, while the internal structure of the scientific field is a factor in the development of Kyrgyzstani sociology, its heteronomous nature makes the external science–society relationship extremely important. The scientific field must still, as Bourdieu argues, be understood as a 'locus of a competitive struggle' for scientific authority, legitimacy and resources. However, the field of sociology in Kyrgyzstan extends beyond the borders of scientific institutions and incorporates sites of political, economic and industrial power, as well as symbolic domains of collective identity. It is mapped differently, as

'the structure of the intellectual field of the social sciences varies considerably across nations [as they] have their roots in the specific intellectual, institutional, and political constellations under which "social scientists" have tried to develop discursive understandings of their societies' (Wagner and Wittrock 1990: 6).

Overall, studies of boundary–work offer useful models for analysing the history and institutionalisation of Kyrgyzstani sociology, which has been historically shaped by recurring debates over what constitutes 'good' and 'relevant' sociology, what reliable methodology looks like, whether social research should be funded and used by the state and/or foreign organisations, where sociology is located in relation to other social science disciplines (such as historical materialism and ethnology) and social practices (like market research and public opinion studies), and above all what relationship it is to have with politics (i.e. society's ruling 'power structures') and social power more generally. Sociologists in Kyrgyzstan have continuously sought to expand their legitimacy, monopolise the right to construct legitimate images of society, and establish themselves as suppliers of social information for the purposes of political decision-making and social development. The remaining chapters of this dissertation explore the effects that this has had, over time, on the intellectual and institutional development of the discipline as a whole.

Methodology: the ethnographic case study approach
As the sociology of knowledge and sociology of science seek to explore the intersections of knowledge and social forces, the empirical study of knowledge production is most effectively achieved through (1) historical and contemporary case studies of institutions where knowledge is produced and (2) an analysis of the discourses and practices by which it is formulated, legitimated and contested (Popkewitz 1991; Torres 1999). The latter are most clearly embedded in the former; here, in projects of social science reform that have occurred in a variety of institutional settings in Kyrgyzstan: the establishment of sociology departments, state and university-led programmes for curriculum development, the development of new research centres and agendas, the formation of professional associations, and the official and informal promotion of new disciplinary missions and identities for both

internal and public consumption. Such initiatives not only reveal the relationship between knowledge production and its institutional context, but also shed light on the epistemological foundations of knowledge construction and legitimation.

The dissertation thus includes both an historical overview of the emergence and development of sociology in Soviet Kirgizia, and case studies exploring its reconceptualisation and re-institutionalisation in post-Soviet academic and media institutions. The cases are based upon several different types of data: (1) primary and secondary institutional sources such as mission statements, minutes from faculty meetings, curricula and governmental resolutions relating to social science, (2) articles about sociology in the popular media and academic press, (3) on-site observations at the specified institutions and conferences, and (4) interviews with Kyrgyzstani sociologists.

These data are interpreted within broader historical and socio-political contexts, as 'to explain why new knowledge emerges and to account for the social effects of ideas, scholars need to pay careful attention to factors that directly affect the institutions and actors that produce and distribute knowledge' (Swidler and Arditi 1994: 322). Epistemologically, the cases reveal which theoretical schools and methodological paradigms have been dominant in Kyrgyzstan, who has advocated them, why and how they have been institutionalised, and if they have complemented or contradicted one another. From an institutional perspective, they illustrate the effects of the financing of social science research and teaching, its planning and administration, the production of didactic material, types of evaluation implemented, degrees of coordination with other governmental or non-governmental institutions, and types of training programs organised for sociologists in the republic.[17]

Institutional case studies: sociology in state and private universities
It has been argued that 'much of what affects how newly emerging disciplines are defined may be found in the early departments in which they emerged' (Small 1999: 659). The degree to which this holds true cross-culturally is, of course, contingent upon a great variety of factors, including the nature of 'departments' and the organisation of higher education in society. As will be

explained in more detail below, the institutional factor grew in importance in Kyrgyzstan after national independence.

There are currently three major departments of sociology in Kyrgyzstan: one in the Bishkek Humanities University (founded in 1993), one housed in the American University–Central Asia (founded in 1998), and one located in the Kyrgyz National University (founded in 1999). Smaller sociology departments or programmes have also been initiated in several other universities, including the Kyrgyz–Slavonic University, the Kyrgyz Architectural University, the Kyrgyz Technical University, the International University of Kyrgyzstan, Kyrgyz–Turkish Manas University, and the Atatürk–Alatoo University. In addition, there are a number of research centres in the republic now dedicated to sociological study, most notably the National Academy of Science's Center for Social Research.

This study focuses on two of the three major departments—the Sociology Department at the Bishkek Humanities University (BHU) and the Sociology Department at the American University–Central Asia (AUCA). These cases (Chapters 7 and 8) were chosen for their theoretical significance, based on the hypothesis that the institutionalisation of sociology in Kyrgyzstan has been shaped by different configurations of internal (domestic) and external (foreign) sources of funding and social capital, its relationship with state and society and its political and ideological orientations as manifested in departments of sociology.

In these categories, the BHU and AUCA departments could not be more different, although both consider themselves to be the country's leading sociology institution. The BHU department is the post-Soviet successor of a previous Department of Sociology and Engineering Psychology that had been established by the prominent communist academic and 'father of sociology' Kusein Isaev to replace a Department of Scientific Communism. The AUCA department was founded anew by one of Isaev's younger, more westernised students named Ainoura Sagynbaeva, who aimed to 'combine the best of sociological education from the Soviet and American systems.' BHU is funded, albeit very poorly, by the Kyrgyz state and is integrated into the national higher education system; AUCA is funded rather generously by the American State Department and Hungarian/New York-based Soros

Foundation and enjoys a degree of autonomy from the Kyrgyz Ministry of Education. The former employs almost exclusively 'local' instructors who teach primarily in Russian, while the latter is a mixture of permanent Russian-speaking local and revolving English-speaking foreign faculty. The BHU Sociology Department identifies itself with both the Kyrgyz state and the Kyrgyz people and thus promotes administrative and 'national' styles of sociology, while the AUCA department identifies with more universalistic values of 'enlightenment' and 'liberal education' and with a pan-American-European or 'western' sociological community and tradition. Unlike the BHU department, it is neither integrated into the state system nor seeking legitimacy from it. The departments' different faculty compositions and relations with the state also influence the organisation of undergraduate education at each institution. While BHU has consistently implemented a standardised national sociology curriculum, sociologists at AUCA have successively introduced new, non-standard curricula over the years.

In addition to these differences, the cases also reveal a number of common themes that stem from the overall structure and organisation of social science in Kyrgyzstan, its symbolic relationship with state and society, broader discourses and practices of modernisation and development, and debates about the proper boundaries between scientific truth and power. The case studies therefore provide an excellent opportunity to ascertain the degree to which 'internal' and 'external' factors are influential in the development of sociology more generally, and the extent to which we can speak about general trends in the discipline as a whole.

Finally, the BHU and AUCA departments are the professional homes of many of the individual sociologists who produce the public representations and ideologies of social science which constitute the basis for public boundary–work in Kyrgyzstani sociology and the discourse analysis component of this study. The cases therefore clarify how boundary–work within the sociological community has been shaped by its immediate institutional contexts.

Deconstructing public sociology: critical analysis of discourses on sociology

Moving from institutional contexts to discourses and actors, the second set of case studies (Chapter 9) focuses on public debates about sociology in the national press and professional debates about sociology published in academic texts. The analysis is based on a primary-source corpus of 65 academic articles on sociology published in Kyrgyzstan between 1965 and 2004 and 145 articles published in republican newspapers between 1989 and 2003, which address the nature, role, scope and methodology of sociology in the late socialist and post-Soviet periods. The corpus was selected from a more extensive body of materials gathered both systematically and opportunistically. It includes all academic articles catalogued as 'sociological' in the national library from 1965 to 2003, published and unpublished academic works obtained from individual sociologists, and the bulk of newspaper articles on sociology published from 1989 to 2003 and indexed in the national library and institutional archives. I have included as many articles from the original collections as possible while reducing the amount of factual and thematic redundancy in the texts, and have incorporated material which was excluded from official catalogues but that obviously belongs in the corpus.

Although this collection of texts is one of the most coherent on the topic to date, it should be seen as a working compilation rather than a complete archive. The main reason for this is that the corpus is comprised primarily of Russian-language articles and includes few articles about sociology published in Kyrgyz during the specified time period. While the Russian-language texts do provide a detailed and sufficient image of the field, they are not an exhaustive collection of the material on sociology produced in this multi-lingual society. This is not because Kyrgyz-language articles address entirely different themes or offer different pieces of information; by and large they do not. What distinguishes Russian and Kyrgyz-language writing in Kyrgyzstani sociology, particularly in popular publications, is less the content than the tone and rhetoric of the texts, the cultural symbols to which they make reference, and the ethnically-specific audiences to which they are addressed.

Language is a highly political issue in Kyrgyzstan, woven tightly into issues of race and ethnicity, class, and national and international identity. Because Russian was the scientific lingua franca throughout the Soviet Union

and has remained dominant in the urban Kyrgyzstani academy, nearly all sociological work which dates from the mid-Soviet period and much of that written during late socialism and in the early years of independence—including that written by and for ethnically Kyrgyz academics—is in Russian. By the mid-1990s, however, a discourse of 'national revival' had emerged in the humanities and social sciences, and a marginal group of sociologists began to promote the creation of a 'national sociology' and popularise sociology among the non-Russian-speaking populations of the republic. These factors led to a gradual increase in the publication of Kyrgyz-language articles about sociology in the regional and national press, which are, unlike most of the Russian-language texts, addressed specifically to ethnically Kyrgyz audiences (it is assumed, unfortunately more or less accurately, that most ethnic Russians do not read the Kyrgyz-language press), and are more likely to combine ethno-nationalist rhetoric with modernist scientific terminology.

The minimisation of Kyrgyz-language articles within the corpus of material used for this study means that the influence of ethnicities, languages, and nationalisms is likely to be underrepresented in the analysis. Despite this limitation, however, the corpus is a reliable data set for this study insofar as it represents the dominant discourse of social science in the republic, much of which is reproduced in Kyrgyz-language texts, and because it is the primary medium with which Kyrgyzstani academics of all ethnic backgrounds interact with each another and their wider public audiences.

There are other hazards of archival research in post-Soviet Central Asia. Like much archival material in Kyrgyzstan, the vast body of sociological work is fragmented and disorganised and must be pieced together like a nationwide jigsaw puzzle, the pieces of which are dispersed through homes, offices, libraries, archives, bookshops and even waste bins. For example, the 'national bibliography' division of the national library has two card catalogue drawers dedicated to sociology, in which a few anonymous librarians have diligently but unsystematically catalogued Russian-language newspaper articles that they subjectively classified as belonging in this category. This includes sociological studies and official reports, as well as articles on the politics of social science, its relationship to the state and civil society, the relationship between communism and sociology, trends in theory and method, and

intellectual personalities. Again, however, these catalogues seldom include Kyrgyz-language articles on the same themes, nor do they cover the entire range of newspapers, books and journals that have been produced in the republic.[18]

In another example, while it is possible to obtain records of academic meetings and official reports on science policy, many of the accessible sources are 'public-consumption' versions of texts that have insider editions buried deep within censored files.[19] In addition, a great deal of information about early sociological research and institutions was destroyed during the Soviet period. In the years immediately following independence, records that survived Soviet censorship often disintegrated along with the research centres and laboratories in which they were housed. Such materials are now dispersed among individuals, not all of whom are easy to locate or approach. Nevertheless, many people are willing to donate or sell books and articles that they have published, which are not available in bookstores or libraries. These materials do much to flesh out the historical skeleton that can be constructed from the publicly available body of information about sociology in Kyrgyzstan.

Reflections on power and knowledge in the field

This dissertation bears scars from familiar ethnographic pitfalls: culture shock, language barriers, problematic access to people and documents, strained rapport with interlocutors, role conflicts in the field, and uneven power relations between researcher and researched (Johnson 1975). While the bulk of my fieldwork was conducted from January to July 2003, the case studies also draw on preliminary research I carried out while working in the AUCA Sociology Department from 1998 to 2000. During this period, I was employed as a lecturer through the Soros Foundation's Civic Education Project (CEP) and for one year served as the department's Assistant Chair. The materials and observations that date from this period were therefore gathered under slightly different terms than those collected during my later fieldwork. This distinction is noted where it is significant for interpretation of the information presented, as is the researcher effect of my well established

relations at AUCA, my 'outsider' status at the Bishkek Humanities University, and my ambiguous subject positions as a woman and US citizen.

Scholars who have recently conducted fieldwork in former Soviet societies argue that there is 'something peculiarly post-socialist about the inevitable complexity of fieldwork relations' in these societies. They cite, for example, the indelible impact of Cold War ideologies on mutual impressions of researcher and researched, the as–yet–untheorised differences of everyday social organisation in non-capitalist cultures, the way that people in these formerly closed societies interpret the intrusion of foreign observers, and the ambiguous relationship between detachment and engagement in the post-Soviet field (Dudwick and Hermine 2000: 1-7). However, if we are to make meaningful sense of this collective experience, it is necessary to move beyond recognition of this phenomenon and theorise how the particular features of post-socialist ethnography are related to broader issues of power and knowledge in the history and politics of social science in the region more generally.

First and foremost is the problem of how to negotiate, if not deconstruct, the Orientalist and colonial subtexts of contemporary fieldwork in Central Asian societies. Some literature frames this problem as a post-Cold War clash between 'triumphant' Western capitalist researchers and disappointed and defeated Soviet citizens (Zanca 2000: 153). However, I suggest that it may also be linked to hegemonic structures of power and domination within Central Asian social science itself, many of which have been obscured by well-intentioned but misguided 'post-power' discourses of globalisation and international collaboration in recent years.

The people of Kyrgyzstan are self-consciously observed and evaluated, and therefore often wary of the motives and intentions of foreign researchers. This is particularly true for many of the more elite members of the society, including the sociologists at the centre of this research, for whom national independence brought not only institutional dislocation but also severe losses of economic privilege and social and cultural prestige. To many, the notion that Kyrgyzstani scholars were 'liberated' from the very social structures in which they were gaining status during the 1980s is a bitter irony. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the asymmetrical power relations between those

on the post-Soviet periphery and foreign researchers have become exacerbated by the emergence of new local and global hierarchies within post-socialist society. In many cases, scholars' work and professional identities have been simplistically recast as naïve, illegitimate and ideological—to use the word in its contemporary four-letter sense, 'Soviet.' Many social scientists who once saw themselves as the architects of a formidable empire now feel as if they have become targets for those aiming to dismantle its foundations, and that they, once the observers of their own society and guardians of the truth about social reality, have become the observed. This has obvious implications for research relations in the field, where interviews and textual analyses may also be seen as political engagements. The issue of colonialism is dealt with further in Chapter 3, while illustrations of power relations in social research are embedded in the institutional case studies.

Second, this research has been an exercise in comprehending and accommodating the vast theoretical dissonances that are often revealed between researcher and the researched. As foreign ethnographers of Central Asian societies have discovered, the success or failure of the interpretive endeavour depends not only on how well one can master the 'epistemic negotiations' that are vital for cross-cultural understanding, but also on how well the analyst comprehends the larger social and political contexts that ground the epistemologies and how well she 'answers not for the impartiality or replicability of her research, but for the situated knowledge she has collaborated with her informants to produce' (Adams 1999: 331).[20]

In this case, many Kyrgyzstani sociologists neither understood nor respected my desire to include them in this study. In addition to seeing it as a waste of time (most are abysmally paid and I could not afford to offer them material compensation for their participation), many did not find the project itself meaningful. Critical and feminist approaches to research—attempts to democratise the research process, include interlocutors as partners instead of objectifying them as 'subjects' and inviting participants to comment on one's tentative findings—were greeted with scepticism and sometimes hostility. Some were confused about why I would deliberately discredit myself by trying to minimise the authority bestowed upon me as a foreign 'expert.' In many respects, the dominant academic culture in Kyrgyzstan respects and

expects hierarchy and deference, expertise, and neutral objectivity; in short, it recognises as 'science' only that which I, coming from a critical post-positivist perspective, was deliberately bringing into question. Some suspected that the 'interactive' approach to research was some sort of manipulative and paternalistic experiment, similar to those conducted by international educational organisations which now specialise in 'training' local professionals. Some saw my project as self-defeating and even insulting to their attempts to establish scientific authority during a period in which, as Karl Mannheim once put it, all truth claims have become suspect, and therefore as a threat to their own professional legitimacy. A few people were even angry about the insinuation, however benign I initially imagined it to be, that their social scientific knowledge was in any way political and resisted being interpreted as political actors. Finally, some Kyrgyzstani academics distrust foreign researchers, whom they fear will steal their ideas and slander their reputations in prestigious English-language journals that they can neither access nor read. In short, I learned that while my methodological principles might be taken at face value in the relatively marginal circles of critical sociology, they were interpreted in a suspicious light in Kyrgyzstan and often cast a shadow on my relationships with sociologists there.

Finally, as a sociologist studying sociologists, I was constantly confronted with the problem of if and how to distinguish between 'objectivity' and 'engagement.' It demanded that I carve out some position on the relationship between representation, interpretation, analysis and criticism in my own research, and make some decisions about my political role within the society. Ultimately, I never resigned myself to the advice of a trusted friend, a young Kazakh professor, who advised me to enter into power relations or face exclusion from the academic community I sought access to. 'Be instrumental,' he said, 'use your power. That's how it works here.' In many senses, he was right. That, unfortunately, is rather 'how it works' there at the moment; power relations are an integral part of academic practice in Kyrgyzstan.

However, I decided—perhaps against all the rules of 'good' anthropology—that it wasn't how I would work there, because I did not want to be bounded by this fatalistic essentialism. I opted instead to maintain a

methodological faith in the possibility of democratising the research process, even in a hierarchical field, while attempting to scrutinise my own biases. As with all choices in fieldwork, this decision closed some doors and opened others, including to relationships with people and ideas that have been excluded from the traditional structures of academic discourse, but who are nevertheless playing major roles in the transformation of the social sciences in Kyrgyzstan. It even helped me earn the trust of some of my most sceptical contacts.

I have paused on these methodological problems not because they concern specific techniques of data collection or analysis, but because they have been central to the way in which I have constructed the relationship between theory, method, and practice in this study. In addition, they contextualise the research process within the political, cultural and economic forces that both inspired and constrained it.[21] These methodological problems are therefore incorporated as vital elements of the research itself, rather than being tacked on as auxiliary, post hoc concerns.

3

SOVIET SOCIOLOGY:

THE ROOTS OF ACADEMIC DEPENDENCY

Sociology first emerged as a field of knowledge in Soviet Kirgizia during what is known as the 'renaissance' of Soviet sociology during the 1960s. It was part of a more general re-emergence of sociology within the Soviet empire, which itself was part of broader reforms in Communist Party ideology and organisation (Remington 1988: 62). The politically embedded nature of Kyrgyzstani sociology, as well as its structural and cultural dependency on the Soviet centre, influenced how it was imagined, organised and institutionalised in the republic both before and after the Soviet collapse. In order to understand the historical development of sociology on the imperial periphery, it is therefore important to first understand the organisation and politics of sociology in the Soviet centre. As there are already a number of excellent studies of the history of Soviet sociology (Beliaev and Butorin 1961; Ivanov and Osipov 1989; Matthews and Jones 1978; Myrskaia 1991; Shalin 1978; Simirenko 1966; Weinberg 1974; Zaslavsky 1977; Zestov 1985), I will concentrate on those aspects which are significant for understanding the history and politics of sociology in Kyrgyzstan.

The rise and fall of Russian sociology, 1916-36

While the post-Stalin period is often described as the 'stagnation,' the two decades following Stalin's death in 1953 were nevertheless ones of considerable enthusiasm, debate and expansion in sociology throughout the Soviet Union (Simirenko 1969; Yanowitch 1989). Both the Soviet Sociological Association and a section for sociological problems in the Moscow-based USSR Academy of Science (later the Institute for Concrete Social Research [1968] and then the Institute for Sociological Research [1972]) were established under Khrushchev in June of 1958. This did not mark the birth of an autonomous discipline as much as it signalled an 'evolution' in the intellectual atmosphere of the times, which eventually facilitated the emergence of sociology (Beliaev and Butorin 1961: 429; Shalin 1990: 1019). In 1965, fledgling sociological groups at Leningrad University

joined forces to form the Institute for Complex Social Investigations. The first meeting of Soviet sociologists—many of whom claimed to have been conducting sociological research for several years already—was held in Leningrad in February 1966 (Simirenko 1969: 393). The Central Committee of the Communist Party organised its own Academy of Social Sciences during this period, and government ministries, newspapers and industries began to commission sociological studies on issues such as 'workers' discipline,' time budgets and labour management. According to historians of Soviet sociology, 'by the mid-seventies no less than six hundred centres of one kind or another were said to be engaged in empirical work in 120 towns throughout the country' (Matthews and Jones 1978: 8).

The intensive establishment of academic and scientific associations, sociological laboratories and research centres in universities, factories and educational institutions during this period was considered a 'renaissance' because it was a sharp contrast to the severe and systematic repression of sociological research during the two previous decades, when, as Weinberg (1974: 8) argues, 'sociology as an independent academic discipline virtually disappeared in the Soviet Union [and] Marxism–Leninism–Stalinism took its place.' In fact, sociology had barely emerged as a field of knowledge in Russia when it was suffocated by the repressive policies which followed the October Revolution; it was later redefined entirely within the framework of Marxist–Leninist theory and reified into an instrument of Soviet ideology.

Until the early 1920s, however, Russian sociology had enjoyed a short grace period in the new political system: the Russian Sociological Society was founded in 1916, a Sociology Department was opened in the new Institute of Psycho-Neurology in Petersburg, the People's Commissariat on Education approved the establishment of the Petrograd Socio-Bibliological Institute in 1918, and translations of European social theorists such as Spencer, Comte, Durkheim, Weber and Simmel were available in addition to the works of Marx and Engels. At this early stage of his political career, even Lenin believed that sociology might be instrumental in delineating the new Soviet republics, and in 1918 he founded a new Socialist (later Communist) Academy of Social Sciences to 'make a series of social investigations one of its primary tasks' (Matthews and Jones 1978: 3; see also Batygin and Deviatko 1994: 12; Urban

and Lebed: 19). For a brief period, 'the Bolsheviks seem to have believed, like their tsarist predecessors, that [sociology] favoured their cause' (Matthews and Jones 1978: 4; see also Shalin 1990).

Within a few years, however, fears that 'bourgeois' sociological theory would threaten the legitimacy of the fledgling political establishment led to a sudden change in policy regarding scientific and intellectual life. These heralded what Alex Simirenko (1969a: 6) calls the 'period of decline' in Soviet sociology. By 1922, the party had banned the teaching of sociology in universities and closed both the Socio-Bibliological Institute and the Russian Sociological Society. Sociologists such as Pitirim Sorokin (perhaps better known as founder of Harvard University's Sociology Department), whose work had become influential under the more intellectually liberal conditions of the early Bolshevik regime, were gradually suppressed by the party's increasingly authoritarian control over the academy. Sorokin left Russia that same year to escape the persecution that many of his colleagues had already been subjected to (Simirenko 1969a: 12). While empirical research continued on demographics, working conditions, family relations, the effects of propaganda and time budgets until the mid-1930s, the authorities' need to minimise exposure of the brutality and shortcomings of Stalinist policies put an end even to these narrowly defined studies. According to Matthews and Jones, the need for sociology, as well as its political possibility, came to a sudden end in 1936 when Stalin announced that 'society, having achieved "socialism," now consisted of two friendly and internally homogenous classes (the workers and the collectivised peasantry) with a "stratum" or *prosloika* of intelligentsia drawn from both classes but having no contact with the means of production itself' (Matthews and Jones 1978: 4).

With the 'society' question resolved, there was no longer a need for the academic study of society; only for its explanation and illumination through the lens of Marxist–Stalinist theory. Historical materialism became synonymous with scientific sociology. The small corps of sociologists practicing in the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic (RSFSR) and other republics was liquidated through dismissal, exile or execution by the 1930s (Simirenko 1969a: 12). The conflation of 'sociology' with Marxist–Leninist theories of society marked the beginning of a long struggle to delineate the

boundary between sociology and politics in the Soviet Union. Marxism–Leninism's hegemonic status as the foundation of all scientific knowledge, as well as its colonisation of other social sciences, laid the ground for future controversies about the definition and role of sociology in the region.

Social science in Soviet Kirgizia, 1917–54

Until independence in 1991, Kirgizstani social scientists generally adopted a Russo-centric narrative of the history of Soviet sociology, positing the 'Great October Socialist Revolution' as the precondition for their own disciplinary history. Uniquely Russian experiences were universalised into general 'Soviet' ones (Karakeev 1974). As one Kyrgyz scholar argued in the 1980s, the 'straight scientific and systematic study of Kirgizia began only during Soviet rule, when, among other socialist transformations, the culture of revolution was realised in the periphery' (Tabyshaliev 1984: 162). In fact, many Kyrgyzstani sociologists still refer to earlier periods of repression in the RSFSR when explaining the underdevelopment of sociology in the contemporary Kyrgyz Republic. Kusein Isaev, a communist–cum–nationalist sociologist and the controversial 'father of Kyrgyz sociology,' points to this in numerous interviews that he has given on the topic:

> Sociology had a difficult fate in the former Soviet Union. In 1922 Lenin rose up against this 'bourgeois' science. 122 scholars were banished from the country, sociology was accused of being a pseudo-science, and it became simply an appendage to Marxist–Leninist philosophy and scientific communism. […] Even now, sociology is not fully distinguished from philosophy (Baibosunov 1998; see also Isaev 1998c; Ryskulov 1998).

While this generalised history of Soviet sociology is often taken for granted in contemporary academic circles in Kyrgyzstan, it obscures the important fact that at this early stage, neither developments nor repressions in sociology in the RSFSR had a direct impact on sociology in Kirgizia or any other Soviet Central Asian republic. In fact, neither sociology nor the republics as we know them today existed at the time. In 1924, as the discipline of sociology was coming under fire in the RSFSR, the Central Asian republics were only just being carved into existence by the Communist Party in its *razmezhevanie* (demarcation) of administrative boundaries for the new

Soviet state (Gammer 2000: 128). What is now recognised as the republic of Kyrgyzstan was first established as the Kara-Kirgiz Autonomous Oblast in 1924, renamed the Kirgiz Autonomous Oblast in 1925, and declared the Kirgiz Soviet Socialist Republic in 1936 (Tchoroev 2002: 357). During the 1920s and 30s, the intellectual agenda in Central Asia was the development of basic literacy, not social science.[22] The Kyrgyz language was first inscribed at this time and its alphabet was changed twice, from Arabic to Latin in 1924 and again from Latin to Cyrillic in 1943 (Isaev 1999a). Although Soviet institutions of higher learning such as universities and filials of the Academy of Science began to appear in Kirgizia in the 1930s (Karakeev 1974) following the establishment of the Central Asian University in Tashkent in 1920 (Ali 1964: 91; Simirenko 1969a: 10); these were primarily oriented toward providing Soviet political education, not promoting indigenous teaching or academic research.

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, social science in Central Asia consisted primarily of Russian-led colonial 'expeditions' to the 'Muslim near abroad' or 'Turkestan,' as Central Asia was then referred to. Research trips were organised to gather information about the languages, customs, religious beliefs, productive capacities and political structures of the various ethnic groups living in the region, for the purposes of their more effective incorporation within the Russian, and later Soviet, empire (Tabyshaliev 1984). The research centres which were set up in the Kirgiz Autonomous Oblast in the 1920s, such as the Academic Centre and the Scientific Commission for the Oblast Branch of People's Enlightenment, were organised to support Russian-led research within and about the area, particularly its natural resource potential (Tabyshaliev 1984). At the same time, the Central Asian Bureau, Central Asian Economic Council and Central Asian Territorial Commission (1924) were all 'under Russian control and were directly responsible to the Central Executive Committee of the Russian Communist Party' (Wheeler 1966: 67). In 1928, Russian ethnographers A. Fersman and W. Bartol'd created a 'five-year plan for the complex study of Kirgizia,' including the coordination of various research groups and institutes in the republic for this purpose, in order to understand the territory's potential as a source of natural and labour resources (Karakeev 1974: 17). One year

later, another pair of researchers, F. Fiel'strup and P. Kushner, published an ethnographic study entitled *Mountainous Kirgizia: a Sociological Reconnaissance* (Karakeev 1974: 14).

The frequency and scale of field expeditions to Kirgizstan and other Central Asian regions increased during the 1930s as part of the effort to 'construct Soviet culture' in the area. In 1935, the USSR Central Scientific Commission issued a statement that such work 'allow[ed] for the significant and thorough illumination and clarification of the fundamental problems facing the national economy of Kirgizia' (Kul'turnoe stroitel'stvo, 1974: 21). Toward the end of this decade, the president of the USSR Academy of Science and member of the Committee on Filials and Bases argued that 'the Kirgiz Republic can no longer fulfil premises from the centre of various types of expeditions [if the] work is not attached to constantly operational filials of the Academy of Science in the regions.' The Kirgiz filial of the USSR Academy of Science was established several years later, in 1943 (Karakeev 1974: 28). While this was widely perceived as a major scientific development, it was also an immediate consequence of Russia's increasingly penetrative imperial ambitions.

The Soviet-led development of scientific research in Kirgizia entailed more than mere data-gathering; in fact, it pervaded the very theoretical foundations of social science in and about the region. For example, the debate to clarify where Central Asian pastoral-nomadic societies belonged in the Marxist five-stage categorisation of social evolution was

> by no means of merely academic significance…its solution enables us to sharpen our weapon of a correct Marxist understanding…it is relevant to the immediate practice of political struggle, the practice of class war both in the Soviet East and abroad, in the colonial Orient…the correctness of the practical work of the socialist reconstruction of the nomadic and semi-nomadic *aul* [mountain village] of the Soviet East depends on the correct theoretical solution of this problem' (quoted in Gellner 1988: 99).

The publication of such debates in regional newspapers and journals such as *Sovietskaia etnografiia* (*Soviet Ethnography*) contributed to the creation of a body of knowledge about Central Asian societies within the Russian and broader Soviet academic community. This may be likened to the construction

of 'the Orient' by British and European scholars in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; the production of a body of knowledge about the colonised created by the powerful (Said 1978), even when they attempted to study these subjects 'from the bottom up,' as did highly respected Russian ethnographers such as Bartol'd, Basilov, Snesarev and Abramson (Gellner 1988: 16). Tsarist-era research on Central Asian societies which focused on Islam and shamanism, traditional family structures, tribal kinship relations, patriarchy and indigenous folkways was used to justify the Soviet modernisation project in Central Asia. It was transformed into data which informed efforts to integrate the region economically and politically while promoting 'national traditions' in social and cultural life (Park 1972: 6).

The development of Soviet social science about Central Asia, along with the establishment of educational and scientific institutions in the region in the 1930s and 40s, has until very recently been interpreted in Kyrgyzstan as the first stage of modernisation and scientific enlightenment, and contrasted favourably to the scientific 'backwardness' of the Kyrgyz people prior to their incorporation into the Soviet empire. The opening of the Academy of Sciences in 1954 was celebrated as an 'historical event in the life of the Kyrgyz people, bearing witness to the growth of its economy, science and culture' (Ob uchrezhdenii 1962). This 'elder brother' narrative was a reflection of a more general phenomenon in which, from the 1950s to the 1980s, 'the idea that Russian colonialism was more progressive than the British and other colonial enterprises finally came to dominate Soviet historiography,' including the history of science and intellectual life (Tchoroev 2002: 360; see also Ali 1964: 92; Critchlow 1972).

Nesvetailov (1995: 66) offers another compelling explanation for this, arguing that there was no obvious discrepancy because even in the periphery, 'Soviet science perceived itself as being the center' of world science. Central Asian scholars who identified as members of the Soviet empire and not as part of an imperial periphery have therefore long rejected critical appraisals of this early period of social science in the region. They have been particularly resistant to its definition as 'colonial,' asserting that

> [t]he development of the social sciences in the USSR is a
> single, total process, to which scholars from the Central Asian

republics have contributed. […] We do not have 'central' and 'peripheral' science, but a single Marxist–Leninist science about society (Leninizm i razvitie 1970: 30).

Such sentiments remained commonplace in sociological texts well into the 1980s in Kyrgyzstan; here, there was no 'rebellion in the academy' against Russian domination in sociology as there was in the discipline of history during the 1960s and 70s (Allworth 1998: 72).

While it is important to acknowledge the significance of this identity for many scholars working in remote regions of the empire, it is also important to recognise that the history of Soviet social science was neither singular nor unproblematically progressive. The anti-imperialist union of equal nations was in reality a colonial empire based on a very strong and deliberately maintained differentiation between centre and periphery, in the organisation of science as much as in other social institutions.[23] While the form and content of Soviet-era Kirgiz and Russian sociology were similar, the conditions within which sociology emerged in Kirgizia were quite different from those in the RSFSR. Social scientists in Central Asia, for example, had even less intellectual freedom and much lower chances for occupational mobility (Critchlow 1972: 23) than their counterparts working in the Russian centre. This imbalance was not lost on one of the first Kyrgyz sociologists, now a professor of anthropology at AUCA, who draws clear distinctions between Kyrgyzstani and Russian-led research in Kirgizia prior to the 1960s:

> [T]here had been some investigations organised by Russian sociologists and they went to Issyk-Kul Lake [the country's largest alpine lake]. There were ethnographic and sociological investigations of, for example, rural life and relations between people, family and marriage relations, social relations, ethnographic relations of the inhabitants of the villages of Chichkhan and Darkhan. […] But these were done by Russian sociologists. And then our Kyrgyz sociologists were also involved in such investigations (Asanova 2003).

The assimilation of the history of social science in Kirgizia into the grand narrative of the Soviet 'civilisation' of Central Asia, the use of Soviet science as a yardstick of social development and national pride in Kyrgyzstan, historical amnesia about the repression of alternative historical narratives, and post-Soviet counter-reactions to each of these tendencies—all may be seen as consequences of the colonial logic of social science in Central Asia. The

history of sociology in Kyrgyzstan must therefore be analysed not in a narrow national context, but within the broader framework of the Russian colonisation of Central Asia and its continuation in the politics of Sovietisation, not least of all because many contemporary problems in the discipline of sociology, both intellectual and institutional, have roots in this unequal relationship.

The colonial logic of Soviet social science in Central Asia

There is no consensus about whether Central Asian societies in general and Kyrgyzstan in particular should be classified as 'colonial' or 'postcolonial,' whether the Soviet empire qualified as a colonial power, or whether we can draw fruitful comparisons between these and examples of other, more 'classic' empires such as the British and French (Clem 1992; Fierman 1990; Gammer 2000; Kandiyoti 2002). It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to fully explore this complex question. However, it argues that the organisation and culture of Soviet social science may be better understood through the lens of postcolonial studies and therefore borrows from this field a number of concepts and theoretical perspectives; namely, theories of intellectual colonialism, academic dependency, and orientalism/occidentalism. In the following sections, these perspectives will be used to explore the colonial logic of social science in Central Asia, particularly as it was practiced at the time of sociology's emergence in Kyrgyzstan during the 1960s and 1970s.

Intellectual colonialism

According to Alatas (2003: 600), intellectual colonialism is defined as the 'cultivation and application of various disciplines such as history, linguistics, geography, economics, sociology and anthropology in the colonies' to bolster the 'control and management of the colonised.' It is identified by six characteristics: exploitation, tutelage, conformity, the secondary role of dominated intellectuals and scholars, a rationalisation of the civilising mission, and the inferior talent of scholars from the home country specialising in studies of the colony (Alatas 2003: 601). Together, these shape what he calls a 'colonial mode of knowledge production' in colonised societies, which is maintained by direct support or pressure from the colonial power. As

sociology in Kyrgyzstan exhibited each of these characteristics during the Soviet period, is best understood through this conceptual lens.

Science and scientific knowledge occupied a central place in early Soviet Central Asian society. The Soviet authorities were eager to reign in both pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism in the region because they feared that cross-republican cultural and religious affinities might result in the emergence of a strong and challenging political alliance (Ro'i 1995). While there were other Islamic regions within the Soviet Union (e.g., among the Tatars and Azerbaijanis), Central Asia, and to some extent the Caucasus, were of particular concern.[24]

Because the use of brute force to quell the establishment of such alliances had historically met with violent resistance, imperial power was increasingly exercised through the control of cultural and intellectual life in Central Asia.[25] Although Soviet science was officially 'organized in accordance with the principles of true democracy and the broad development of creative discussion' (Paskov 1965: 2), it was practically organised to serve the economic and ideological needs of an expansive imperial state, and intellectually ordered on Marxist–Leninist theories of social planning and development. Its main purpose, as described by one enthusiastic advocate, was implicated in its centralised organisation:

> [t]he social sciences occupy an important place and vital role in the life of Soviet society. The whole proceeds along planned lines. The policy of the Communist Party and the socialist state is scientifically *based*; it rests on the *objective laws* of society and it is the primary task of the social sciences to reveal those laws and indicate the ways, forms and methods of applying them in the interests of the people. The social sciences help the Party and the people to formulate correct criteria for assessing the existing situation within and outside the country and to determine correctly the prospects for the development of society and the direction and methods to be adopted for practical human activity (Paskov 1965: 5-6, italics in original).

In Central Asia, control over intellectual activity was deemed even more necessary. First, it was integrated into a larger campaign to secularise and 'modernise' the once-nomadic tribes (forcibly settled through collectivisation during the 1930s); in Alatas' words, it was a way to 'rationalise the civilising mission.' Second, development was encouraged in academic disciplines

which would enable Central Asian economies to fulfil specialised functions in the Soviet system of national production and distribution. This was not only exploitative, but also gave local scholars 'secondary' roles in Soviet science, orienting their research interests towards the needs of the empire as a whole. Finally, Soviet authorities aimed to stifle dissent by bringing indigenous elites into the folds of metropolitan power through tutelage and the *korenizatsia* (indigenisation, or assignment of native elites to key posts) of academic and scientific life.

The institutions in which sociology emerged during the 1960s—the university, factory, Academy of Sciences and Communist Party—were integral parts of the Soviet state's politico–industrial–ideological apparatus. Knowledge production therefore followed the colonial model, and indigenous, self-sustaining scientific institutions did not develop in Soviet Kirgizia. Kirgizstani social scientists were directly responsible to Soviet and party authorities at the local, republican and all-union levels. They were dependent, both structurally and culturally, on the Russian centres of Moscow, Leningrad and Novosibirsk; on republican-level organisations such as the *Komsomol*, and on industrial enterprises for funding, resources and opportunities.

The integration of state and science had a decisive impact on how sociologists defined their professional role in Soviet society. According to V. Yadov, for example, then head of the sociological laboratory in Leningrad State University, 'the Soviet sociologist bears a special responsibility for his conclusions and recommendations. He is responsible not to a private firm but to the people, to the state' (quoted in Simirenko 1969: 394). Kirgizstani social scientists, however, were doubly subordinate: their deference to the Soviet state was compounded by the fact that it was also a colonising power. Intellectual and material inequalities were not only embedded in this relationship; they defined it.

The dissolution of the Soviet Union therefore had profound implications for the reorganisation of sociology and re-conceptualisation of its role in post-Soviet society. In Kyrgyzstan, this had two main dimensions: the breakdown of the centralised relationship between science and the state, and the decolonisation of periphery from centre. The loss of state funding and subsidies at a time of increased investment from western development

organisations laid the ground for certain features of academic dependency, namely, dependence on foreign media of ideas and investment in education, to develop (see Alatas 2003). Decolonisation and de-Marxification, concurrent with the influx of new ideas from 'the west,' created conditions for new intellectual dependencies to emerge.

The experiences of early sociologists in Soviet Kirgizia suggest that the centralised organisation and vertical control of scientific activity in the Soviet Union did not have the totalising effect on knowledge production that it is often assumed to have had. Chapters 4 and 5 illustrate that Kirgizstani sociologists interpreted the Soviet science system in various ways; they were often aware of its inherent inequalities and struggled to redress them through the strategic manipulation of state subsidies and the creative interpretation of Soviet ideology. The chapters also reveal that many academics did not fully subscribe to the technocratic model of state science and were pulled between loyalty to state and society, on the one hand, and to the quest for scientific truth on the other.

Nevertheless, the role of intellectual colonisation in the establishment of sociology in Kirgizia must not be underestimated. It shaped the development and underdevelopment of sociology in its organisation as a 'particular kind of sociology which is specific to a socialist society, its ideology and its political structure' (Beliaev and Butorin 1982: 419). This 'particular type of sociology' was technocratic, heteronomous and established as a colonial mode of knowledge production. Its institutionalisation was thus problematised by two phenomena: academic dependency and orientalist and occidentalist attitudes towards scientific knowledge.

Academic dependency and underdevelopment

Academic dependency, the child of intellectual colonisation, can be defined as a 'condition in which the social sciences of certain countries are conditioned by the development and growth of the social science of other countries to which the former is subjected.' (In the case of Soviet science, the term 'country' may be replaced with 'republic.') It develops when one social science community becomes dependent on 'the institutions and ideas of western social science such that research agendas, the definition of problem

areas, methods of research and standards of excellence are determined by or borrowed from [another]' (Alatas 2000: 603). Alatas (2003) identifies six characteristics of academic dependency: dependence on externally produced theories and ideas, on the foreign media of ideas (such as books, journals and conferences proceedings), on foreign educational technologies, aid for research and education, foreign investment in education, and demand for skills in the west, or brain drain. These dependencies often evolve after decolonisation, when the colonial mode of knowledge production shifts to a post-colonial or neo-colonial model.

Relations of dominance and dependence are common where there are divisions between centre and periphery. Contrary to assertions that there was neither centre nor periphery in Soviet science, a number of scholars have recently argued that the centre–periphery relationship was in fact one of its most prominent characteristics (Eisenstadt 1992; Nesvetailov 1995; Schott 1992). This is increasingly supported by Kyrgyzstani sociologists themselves. Mukanmedi Asanbekov (2003), a candidate of sociology[26] and current pro-rector for science at the Bishkek Humanities University, for example, argues that one of the main reasons for the 'crisis' in post-independence sociology is that

> [s]cience in Kyrgyzstan did not develop independently. Its financial base, structures, themes, theories, etc. were all directed from Moscow. Thus, when the Soviet Union collapsed, the entire science structure collapsed with it.

Identifying the precise relationship between Russian and non-Russian republics such as Kirgizia within the Soviet context is no easy task. Shils' (1988: 251) more sociological definition of centre–periphery relations therefore offers a useful way to conceptualise the relationship between Kirgizia and Moscow with regard to scientific and intellectual institutions:

> [t]he term 'center' refers to a sector of society in which certain activities which have special significance or functions are relatively more highly concentrated or more intensively practised than they are in other parts of that society and which are to a greater extent than are other parts of society the focus of attention, preoccupation, obedience, deference or emulation.

Kirgizstani scholars' relationship with the Soviet centre was one of academic dependence, which manifested itself in both structural and cultural forms.

Structural dependence involves material and institutional dependence, while a social science community may be considered culturally dependent to the extent that 'definitions of what should be studied and how (theory and methods), and criteria of desirable scholarly activity (role models and standards of excellence) are those of another national social science community where these are not shared by social science communities in general' (Lamy 1976). Developments in social science in Moscow and Leningrad during the 1950s and 1960s affected the way sociology could be defined and practiced in the periphery. Kirgizstani academics looked to Moscow to understand how to affiliate themselves with and/or distance themselves from other social science disciplines, organise scientific activities, and relate to industrial and educational institutions and the broader field of political power, as well as to ascertain what constituted legitimate 'sociological' problems to be studied.

In some cases, the centre came to Kirgizia in the form of Russian academics sent to establish scientific institutions in the republic. Until the 1980s, social scientists in Kirgizia emphasised the constructive role of Russian assistance in the advancement of indigenous scholarship, claiming that 'the process of the formation and development of the Kirgizstani intelligentsia occurred through the brotherly assistance of the Russian people: many scholars worked in Kirgizia, helping to establish national cadres' or 'thanks to the emergency assistance of the Russian people and the Leninist nationality policies carried out by the Communist Party of Kirgizia, it became possible for scientific workers—social scientists—to grow' (Alimova 1984: 36-37). The dependence of early Kirgizstani social science on Russian material and intellectual support is accurately acknowledged in these narratives. However, until late perestroika there was little critique of the political causes and cultural consequences of this dependency. For example, the 'national cadres' or indigenous elites produced through these efforts were often Moscow-oriented throughout their careers, and in the absence of stable indigenous sociological institutions they were dispersed to work as 'individual enthusiasts' (Isaev 1991b), labouring in isolation from one another or in small teams.

In other cases, Kirgiz social scientists travelled to the centre. In the 1980s, for example, the number of candidate and doctoral degrees in the social

sciences increased primarily as a result of educational exchanges in which Kirgizstani students were educated in Moscow and Leningrad, and Russian scholars travelled to Kirgizia for 'consultations' (Skripkina 1983: 17). However, exchanges between Russian and Kirgizstani social scientists did not result in the institutionalisation of a sustainable indigenous sociology primarily because they were fundamentally unequal.

It is often assumed, particularly within liberal theories of science, that state sponsorship for scientific work explains the heteronomous nature of Soviet science. It is important to recognise that financial support does not necessarily foster dependence or domination; after all, teaching and research must be funded from somewhere. It is therefore important to move beyond identifying the sources of sponsorship and examine its structural and cultural forms.

Institutionally, social science in Kirgizia developed according to definitions of social science that were developed in Moscow. This is illustrated in the history of the Kirgiz Academy of Science from its establishment in 1954 to the late socialist period. The creation of institutes of Languages and Literature (1928–54), History (1954), Economics (1956), Philosophy and Law (1959–64), and Eastern Studies or *Vostokovedenie* (1963) has been interpreted by some historians of science as a 'natural progression' of Soviet science and an indicator of Kyrgyzstan's 'national development.' However, it was an historically specific disciplinary ordering, which was tied to the political reorganisation of scientific and educational institutions throughout the USSR. By the time the Kirgiz Academy of Science was established, the USSR Academy of Science had already been restructured twice. In 1926 it was divided into two sections: mathematics and natural sciences on the one hand, and social sciences on the other (sociology being housed in the latter). In 1938 the 'social science' division had been dismantled and replaced by individual institutes of economy and law, history and philosophy, and literature and languages; sociology had been dissolved (Kazakevich 1944: 313).

The anti-space created for sociology in the mid-twentieth century Soviet academy meant different things in centre and periphery. In the RSFSR, the discipline became dispersed rather surreptitiously throughout a wide variety of

fields and professions, being 'merge[d] with history, economics, law, the work of the central statistical offices of the government, the trade unions and the budget planning authorities' (Kazakevich 1944: 313). Kirgizstani social scientists and intellectuals, however, inherited an institutional and conceptual architecture in which there was simply no space for sociology to emerge. Furthermore, they lacked the institutional memory that it had once existed as a semi-autonomous, if fledgling, field of knowledge. In the 1970s, sociological research was tucked away in the Institute of Philosophy and Law within the Academy of Sciences, along with research in philosophy, linguistics, biology and cybernetics, all of which was 'based on the positions of classical Marxism–Leninism on the role of human communication in material and spiritual production' (Karakeev 1974: 164). Marxist–Leninist theories of social structure and process, nationhood and nationality, stability and conflict, class, family, religion, and language—not to mention the definition of Central Asian peoples as 'primitive'—had been transformed into doctrines of scientific truth by the time the first social scientific institutions were established in Kirgizia. When sociology emerged a decade later within the pre-existing fields of historical materialism and scientific communism, it was shaped not by a struggle to exist despite them, but rather by the epistemological assumptions about science and society which it inherited from them.

Orientalism and occidentalism

This inheritance was legitimised not only by the professional ambitions of Kirgizstani sociologists who sought recognition from prestigious academic authorities in the Soviet centre, but also by institutionalised attitudes of orientalism and occidentalism within the academy. The sense of inferiority vis-à-vis the centre on the part of 'eastern' scholars and of superiority in the opposite direction had been cultivated through years of Russification in the region.

In his treatise on the hegemonic othering of non-western societies, Edward Said defined orientalism as a discourse that is used to construct and maintain colonial relationships and politico-cultural divisions between 'East' and 'West.' The 'essence of Orientalism,' according to Said, is the

'ineradicable distinction between Western superiority and Oriental inferiority' (1978: 42). He argued that scientific knowledge of 'Eastern' (i.e., Middle Eastern, African and Asian) societies was, until the mid-twentieth century, based largely on scholarship produced within the context of the European colonial project from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries in the discipline of Oriental Studies. The entire field was organised around the assumption that there is a clear distinction between 'us' (Europe, the West, familiar) and 'them' (the Orient, strange, exotic); of 'self' and 'other.' The result was the production of a rigidly dichotomous discourse which purported that 'on the one hand there are Westerners, and on the other there are Arab–Orientals; the former are (in no particular order) rational, peaceful, liberal, logical, capable of holding real values, without natural suspicion; the latter are none of these things' (Said 1978: 49). This, Said argued, not historical evolution, is how the West emerged as 'civilised,' righteously dominant and logical, and the 'Orient' was constructed as uncivilised, illogical and in need of colonisation (Said 1978: 38, 49).

Although Said's theory of orientalism was elaborated on the example of the British and, to some extent, Western European academies, it is also an apt description of the imagination of Central Asia in much Russian social science of the period (Allworth 1975: xxx-xxxi; Borozdin 1929). Even in Soviet-era literature, Central Asians were often represented as Islamic, tribal, nomadic, traditional, dirty, ignorant, and backward; a threat to modern culture and civilisation, and in need of development and enlightenment. 'It was assumed, in the mold of classical colonialist tradition, that the peoples of Turkestan, like other Orientals, could not represent and rule themselves' (Panarin 1994: 63).

Within this intellectual milieu, ethnographic and sociological studies about the region were designed to categorise differences between Russian and Central Asian cultures and aid in 'civilising' the latter through Russification. This not only enabled the more effective administration of the Central Asian region, but also contributed to the creation of an imperial hierarchy of region, ethnicity and language that later became embedded in the Soviet academy. Ultimately, the normative and naturalised differentiation between 'East' and 'West' led to the institutionalisation of a form of scientific racism which extended beyond the boundaries of Russian academic elites into the scientific

disciplines and into the collective consciousness of Central Asian social scientists themselves (Cavanaugh 2001). The construction of non-Russian ways of knowing as inferior was intertwined with the construction of Marxist–Leninist science and Soviet rationalism as superior. 'Orientalisms,' according to Restivo and Loughlin, 'are created out of a dialectic that also produces occidentalisms' (2000: 139). Until the 1980s, the Russian academy represented the epitome of western science and rationalism throughout the Soviet Union.

Pronouncements of *bratstvo* and *ravenstvo* (fraternity and equality) notwithstanding, the orientalist and occidentalist foundations of Russian social science in Central Asia were not eradicated by the 1917 Bolshevik revolution or by the evolution of the Russian empire into the Soviet Union. In fact, conceptions of Central Asia as 'backwards' became more hegemonic during the Soviet period precisely because they were defined as anti-imperialist, pro-development and democratic, and promoted images of the ideal (i.e., Russian) society as a universalised 'Soviet' one. By the 1930s, Soviet society as a whole had become the primary unit of analysis in social science as throughout the USSR, and the Kirgiz Republic assumed subordinate status as an anthropological site for exploring the local or 'national' manifestation of general trends in Soviet society. Central Asians were henceforth incorporated into grand narratives of enlightenment, modernisation, progress and emancipation as both subjects and agents, despite the fact that their agency was highly contingent upon their subordination.

Orientalism and occidentalism still remain central dimensions of social scientific knowledge about Soviet Central Asia, and because the republican academies were so highly dependent on Russian institutions of science and education, they also remain rooted in the foundations of Kirgiz social science itself. Russo-centric orientalism became truly hegemonic when it was finally declared 'scientific' in Marxist–Leninist theories of social evolution—after which point social science emerged in Soviet Kirgizia. Sociology appeared in the republic during the 1960s, at the height of the post-Stalinist 'renaissance' in Soviet sociology.

Contextualising the emergence of sociology in Kirgizia

Soviet histories of Kirgizstani social science assert that 'the beginning of the democratisation of society at the end of the 1950s and beginning of the 1960s facilitated the *ozhivlenie* (revitalisation) of the social sciences. […] Researchers in the republic began to develop new problems, lay down new scientific orientations and strengthen the connection between philosophy and practice' (Kakeev 1990: 38). However, the rapid growth of sociology 'offices' in academic and industrial institutions throughout the Soviet Union in the 1960s was not 'so much a tribute to the open-mindedness of the regime as a reflection of the official desire to make economic and social arrangements more efficient' (Hollander 1978: 375). The controlled reintroduction of sociology was integrated into the movement to de-Stalinise Soviet society and give a social and cultural face to economic development and industrialisation.

The economic and industrial reforms of this period had ideological as well as administrative components, and the 'new' sociology was implicated in both. Politicians and social scientists alike began to assert that the 'Marxist science of society' should play a key role in the scientific development of socialist society (Simirenko 1969a: 15). The need to give the Communist Party an ideological makeover and create a veneer of communication between authorities and the public gave rise to increasing interest in public opinion studies. 'Connected to information offices in many party committees [were] opinion polling services, nearly always using amateur sociologists. […] The breakdowns of occupation, age, party status, and such data [were] intended to help party speakers tailor their addresses more closely to their audiences' in workshops and factories (Remington 1988: 62). While the Communist Party is infamous for its repression of critical sociology during this period, the development of an infrastructure for empirical sociological research was in fact a party-driven process which revolved primarily around the need for strategic information about public opinion on party activities during a period of rapid industrialisation, and for 'scientific proof' that its reforms were successful (Matthews and Jones 1978; Tabyshaliev 1984; Tabyshalieva 1986). Sociology—then defined as empirical research conducted by historians, philosophers, economists and psychologists—was redefined as a 'scientific,

objective, comprehensive approach to social problems' (Simirenko 1969: 392).

In 1967, the Central Committee of the Communist Party began efforts to harness the potential of social science for industrial development, decreeing that disciplines such as philosophy (which then included sociology), economics, scientific communism, history, law, aesthetics, education and psychology should directly contribute to resolving social problems in Soviet society and challenging 'the anti-Soviet great-power ideology of Mao Tse-tungism' and American anti-communism (Mandel 1969: 42). In particular, the resolution 'On the Further Development of the Social Sciences and Increasing their Role in Communist Construction' (Hahn 1977: 36) specified that philosophers (and sociologists by implication) should study 'the relationship of objective and subjective factors in the development of society…the laws of social consciousness; the theoretical treatment of problems of the individual and the group, society and the state, [and] socialist humanism' (Mandel 1969: 43). Sociologists now tend to interpret such statements as historical evidence of increased recognition for their professional contributions to the improvement of socialist society—which they were, but only insofar as they made the party's power more effective. It was in the context of this technocratic demand for empirical data on the scientific management of diverse populations and the ideological need to legitimise increasingly invasive forms of social control that Soviet sociology was re-institutionalised during the 1960s.

The centralised organisation of Soviet science meant that the emergence of sociology in Kirgizia was driven by and responded to many of the same forces that compelled its re-emergence in the RSFSR: industrialisation, rationalisation, secularisation, political and economic administration and bureaucratisation, and re-ideologicisation. In fact, even when political power was partially devolved among the union republics during the 1960s, social science became more centralised (Bagramov 1987). As Alexei Tishin (2003), a mathematician who trained as a sociologist in Kirgizia's first sociological laboratory in the late 1960s, remembers,

> [a]t the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s there was
> powerful support to develop all spheres of life in Kyrgyzstan.

> In economics, they built new factories and production plants, organisations...and as it was in the economy, so it was in culture. [...] And thus, it was during this very time, during the ascendance of Kyrgyzstan, that sociology came into existence.

Isaev, too, recalls that 'this was the time of enthusiasm for sociology: positions for "sociologists" or "social psychologists" were introduced in industries, organisations, even *kolkhozes* and *sovkhozes* [collective and state farms]' (Isaev 1991a; Tishin 1998).

As the demand for information about discrete questions concerning social stratification, urbanisation, occupational prestige, and leisure and the family became more pronounced, empirical or 'concrete' sociology enjoyed a rapid revival in the Soviet Union (Lubrano 1977: 38).[27] However, it occupied an awkward position vis-à-vis ideological orthodoxy, as empirical research had long been dismissed as an 'unscientific,' 'bourgeois' and dangerous practice. Early Soviet social science was anti-empirical, and 'reliance on facts for interpretation aroused suspicion' (Greenfeld 1988: 109). Within orthodox Marxist–Leninist theories of social development, there was no need to analyse social facts; social change was lawfully determined by changes in the economic mode of production and one needed only to look to the only real science of society—Marxism–Leninism—to explain social phenomena. 'As far as the question of social change was concerned, social behaviour not congruent to that expected of the "new Soviet man" was dismissed as the "survival of a bourgeois mentality" which would gradually disappear of its own accord, under the conditions of full communism. [...] Sociology, in the Western sense of a science dealing with the study of discrete social behaviours and structures, becomes superfluous in such a context, if not faintly heretical' (Lubrano 1977: 37). During the 1960s and 70s there were therefore 'some major conflicts over the nature of the discipline, or more accurately, over how one approaches sociological enquiry in the context of Marxism–Leninism' (Lubrano 1977: 37).

Against this background, the practise of empirical research during the 1960s represented more than a change in party policy toward sociology. It also implied fundamental changes in the interpretation of Marxist–Leninist theories of society and their relation to political planning and administration. As it became clear that theoretical formulae could not be used to predict

economic and political problems or tensions within Soviet society, empirical research was re-branded as a 'science of prognosis' that could be used to 'forecast' things such as 'demographic and ethnic processes, urban development, the social effects of scientific and technical progress, changes in the social pattern of society and developments in public education, health and culture (Mandel 1969: 57). This type of research did not contradict the grand theory of Marxist–Leninist philosophy. Rather, it was seen as a technical supplement, useful for solving administrative problems as opposed to generating theories of society (Hahn 1977: 38). Theorising and empirical research, while inter-related, were considered autonomous practices that informed but did not intervene in one other.

> General sociology [historical materialism] equips concrete sociological research with the theory and method of approach to study these and other facts and processes. Concrete sociological research provides general theory with new facts and processes of social life. Thus, in order to scientifically develop theory, one must have a body of facts; in order to obtain a body of facts, one must be guided by scientific theory (Ruminatsiev and Osipov 1968).

The important role of empirical research as a bridge between Marxist–Leninist philosophy and Marxist–Leninist sociology is illuminated by Jeffrey Hahn's (1977: 38) definition of concrete sociological research:

> [i]t should probably not be equated with 'applied' or with 'empiricism' as used in the Western sense. Rather, concrete research deals with gathering and analyzing empirical data on specific social problems. However, these problems are conceptually linked together as the manifestations of social change in a given historical period (that is, through the conceptual framework of historical materialism). The acceptance of this unity of theory and research becomes an essential ideological prerequisite for the Soviet sociologist interested in doing empirical research.

The loosening of restrictions on empirical study led to a boom in academic and public interest in sociology during the 1960s. Ultimately, much of the data gathered about Soviet society in this period was deemed threatening to Brezhnev's regime, and sociologists endured a new wave of repression during the 1970s (Brym 1990: 207; Weinberg 1992: 2-3). The 1960s, however, were years of growth. They also marked the beginning of sociology as a field of

knowledge and professional practice—if not an academic discipline—in Soviet Kirgizia.

4

FIRST-GENERATION SOCIOLOGY IN KIRGIZIA, 1966–73

Founding narratives

The origins of sociology in Kyrgyzstan—when, where and why the field came into being as a field of knowledge, academic discipline and professional practice—are a matter of interpretation, the conclusion of which depends very much on how sociology itself is defined. The founding story of Kyrgyzstani sociology has become a matter of some contention since the republic's independence, when rival narratives of the discipline's development emerged in the project to construct a new disciplinary history.

Some academics, predominately those connected with the late Asanbek Tabaldiev, claim that his sociological laboratory, established within the Department of Philosophy and Historical Materialism at the Kirgiz State University in 1966, was the first sociological laboratory in the republic and that therefore he should be considered the 'founding father' of sociology. Those affiliated with Kusein Isaev argue that his laboratory, opened in the Department of Scientific Communism at the Frunze Polytechnic Institute in 1983, was the first and that he therefore deserves the title of 'father of Kyrgyz sociology.' Other post-Soviet critics of Soviet sociology, including Isaev himself and outside observers and younger scholars who are not invested in the personal contributions of either of these prominent academics, posit that 'for three decades, since the 1960s, sociology in Kyrgyzstan did not make any significant steps' (Blum 1993) and that opportunities for sociology to develop as an academic discipline only emerged gradually during perestroika and independence (Isaev 1998b; Isaev et al. 1994b).

Thus far, there has been no concerted effort among Kyrgyzstani sociologists to analyse how these narratives have been constructed, what they represent, or what they might reveal about the intellectual and social forces shaping the institutionalisation of the discipline; no attempt to place these narratives in a broader historical context that would shed light on how the epistemological and institutional legacies of Soviet sociology have influenced the development of the discipline in the post-independence period. These narratives therefore remain at the level of first-order experience, or what

Mannheim (1991: 50) refers to as 'immanent interpretations.' In addition, theories of scientific development as linear, internally lawful and progressive preclude the critical analysis of different narratives, instead interpreting them as deviations from a 'correct' historical trajectory. They are thus often presented as mutually exclusive and competitive: each is accepted by its advocates as an accurate portrayal of historical reality over and against more 'ideologically' or 'politically' motivated alternatives.

However, each narrative reflects a partial view of a greater historical whole. Discontinuities are also part of this reality and reflect deeper conflicts over the definition of sociology and its relationship with other social and political institutions. Conflicts emerge not only in rival narratives of the history of sociology in Kyrgyzstan, but also in the tension which arises between these narratives and second-order analyses which focus less on ascertaining the truth of the ideas or 'facts' themselves than they do on interpreting the webs of meaning within which they emerged and the political processes through which they were construed as significant. The goal of this chapter, as distinct from a disciplinary history, is not to simplify the narrative and make it coherent, but to explain why different narratives have emerged in the first place (Thompson Klein 1996: 205).

To some extent, different interpretations of the origins of sociology in Kyrgyzstan are spawned by a basic competition for material resources and professional prestige. As pointed out by Nurbek Omuraliev (2003), director of the Center for Sociological Research in the National Academy of Science,

> [n]ow there is a competition between the National University and Bishkek Humanitarian University regarding the preparation of specialists, and each one strives to show that they have had the best developments in sociology, that they have the best professors.

Demonstrating an institution's historical continuity is an effective way of establishing authority in a period of institutional crisis. Competition for students became fierce in universities when state policy shifted from socialised higher education toward a new 'market model' of education. In the absence of any effective standards for higher educational institutions within the republic, many Soviet-era lyceums and technical colleges reclassified themselves as universities and began recruiting students for new 'marketable' programmes

such as business economics, marketing and accounting. In universities subordinate to the Ministry of Education, as well as in those answering to private boards of trustees, departments of sociology are increasingly forced to demonstrate their viability by increasing their student intake.

In this highly competitive and largely unregulated educational environment, the need to establish the authority of sociological knowledge and expertise became a central part of projects to institutionalise the discipline and secure employment within individual VUZy. However, because the authority of one institution is here often enhanced by the de-legitimisation of another, an atmosphere of competition is envelops institutional identity construction. As Bekturganov et al. (1994) remarked in one newspaper article on the development of sociology, the hope of the discipline lies in sociologists trained 'at two parallel institutions by only a few scattered professionals' and that 'this separation…contributes little to the creation and development of sociology, and to the preparation of cadres for this prospective branch of knowledge.'

While conflicts over which institution or group of scholars may be considered the 'original' source of sociology in the republic are partially motivated by material needs and professional interests, however, they are also rooted in intellectual disagreements about whether the institutions and individuals in question were actually engaged in 'sociological' work during the Soviet period, whether their theories and methods should be considered legitimate contributions to the discipline as it is currently defined, and whether their work is relevant to contemporary Kyrgyzstani society. These debates are situated within more general ambivalences about the relationship between sociology and power structures in society, and by negotiations over what role the discipline is to play in the independent republic. Here, the word 'sociology' does not necessarily refer to the same set of ideas practices across time and space. Juxtaposing alternative narratives on the origins of sociology in Kyrgyzstan illustrates how the meaning of sociology has fluctuated throughout the history of the discipline in Kyrgyzstan.

This chapter concentrates on the establishment of the first sociological laboratory in the Kirgiz Republic.[28] It argues that while the work done in this laboratory exemplifies the colonial mode of knowledge production in Soviet

Kirgizia, the everyday experiences of the sociologists who worked there reveal that within this context there were more complicated localised responses to the political subordination of social science under the Soviet regime. Although the existence of independent interpretations of Soviet ideology and practice are highlighted, however, the chapter ultimately details a history of academic dependency and the establishment of political hegemony over social scientific knowledge production and practice during this period.

Tabaldiev and the 'first group of students willing to be sociologists'

During the 1960s, sociology was viewed as an extra-disciplinary research method which could be used to systematically collect information for political and administrative organisations; a technical branch of the social sciences. It was neither opposed to nor affiliated with existing academic disciplines, but incorporated as an auxiliary subject of interest into the Marxist–Leninist triad of social science: political economy, historical materialism and scientific communism. Against this backdrop, in 1966, Asanbek Tabaldiev organised what became widely known as the first sociological laboratory in the Kirgiz Republic. It was housed in the Department of Philosophy and Historical Materialism at the Kirgiz State University (KSU).

Many Soviet-generation academics who now work as sociologists in Kyrgyzstan were first trained in this laboratory, including R. Achylova, A. Ivakov, A. Tishin (then students or graduate-level researchers) and university instructors such as A. Karypkulov, S. Nurova, and K. Artykbaev. For many, it is the earliest institutional point of reference in the history of sociology in Kyrgyzstan. Tishin, now chair of sociology at the same university (now the Kyrgyz National University, or KNU), claims that the establishment of this laboratory marked the beginning of more than thirty years of sociological research in Kyrgyzstan (Tishin 1998), and Omuraliev (1997) attributes to Tabaldiev the creation of an 'entire school on the problems of the theory of nations and national relations.' Many of Tabaldiev's former students thus consider him to be the founder of sociology in Kyrgyzstan—a title that has become highly contested in debates about whether Soviet Marxist sociology should be included in the contemporary history of sociology in Kyrgyzstan (Bekturganov 2003).

Tabaldiev wore many hats. He was a well-respected scholar, former village school teacher, head of the Department of Marxist–Leninist Philosophy at KSU, and secretary of the university's *Komsomol* committee (Smanbaev 1986). The laboratory served a variety of educational, ideological, professional and *vospitatel'nye* (training or upbringing) purposes which reflected the integration of education, professional training, scientific research and industrial production in Soviet society.[29] Such laboratories played an important role in the development of Soviet sociology during this period as they provided spaces for research training that were not otherwise available in the official structures of science and education. Formal teaching of sociology was prohibited at this time, and there was widespread concern among sociologists throughout the USSR that this relegated the discipline to a 'voluntary' and unprofessional status. In fact, a series of Soviet Sociological Association meetings in 1969 were held under the banner 'from dilettantism to high professionalism' in order to address this problem (Simirenko 1969: 394). The expansion of laboratories such as Tabaldiev's, which were formed on a voluntary basis and required little material commitment from the state, was meant to ameliorate the situation.

Tabaldiev, a philosopher by education, aimed to elevate the intellectual and professional level of social research in the Kirgiz Republic. He thus organised the laboratory to combine training in sociological theory and research and set rigorous standards of academic conduct for his associates. He invited students and young teachers to attend a *nauchnyi krug* (scientific discussion group) consisting of bi-weekly meetings in the department, where they discussed everything from the classical works of Marxism–Leninism to new publications in social philosophy and sociology. These meetings seem to have extended beyond their ideological purpose and provided rare spaces of creativity in an otherwise moribund intellectual culture. Saida Nurova (2000: 14, 15), one of the first students to attend these meetings and later the first woman in Kyrgyzstan to be conferred with a doctoral degree in sociology,[30] says

> you cannot say working under Tabaldiev was easy: he gave
> much time, spirit and thought to his work and demanded the
> same from us. […] The discussions were heated and time flew

by unnoticed, as in all this there were elements of play and humour. […] The meetings began at 3:00 in the afternoon, after the end of lessons, and sometimes lasted until 9:00 or 10:00 at night.

Former members of the laboratory highlight these informal and creative aspects of the laboratory.

The extra-disciplinary status of sociological research

The composition of this study group or 'club' as it was sometimes referred to (Asanova 2003) reflected the interdisciplinary—or perhaps more precisely extra-disciplinary—status of sociology at the time. The field was diffuse in its early years, seen as a specialised field of interest as opposed to an autonomous discipline, and defined as a methodological approach to studying the empirical details of more substantive questions which were outlined in the officially sanctioned Marxist–Leninist disciplines (Simirenko 1969).

While some of Tabaldiev's students considered themselves 'sociologists' even at this early stage, they hailed from a range of disciplinary fields, including philosophy, history, historical materialism, political economy, linguistics and mathematics. Umut Asanova (2003), for example, now a professor of anthropology at the American University–Central Asia, was an English-language student at the time. 'I was very much interested in sociological investigations,' she says, 'and took part in those which were organised by the department…because in Kirgizia there had not been any preparation for teachers of philosophy, [and] they were all integrated from different specialisations.'

Similarly, Nurova wrote a doctoral dissertation on the regularities of the development of *malykh narodov* (minorities) under socialism. 'It was in effect about ethnosociology,' she says. 'But at that time this type of committee did not exist, and I therefore defended it as historical materialism and received a degree as a Candidate of Philosophical Science in Social Philosophy.' She asserts, however, that she had always distinguished between sociology and social philosophy. 'My candidate dissertation was on sociology when sociology did not have its own status. But when it gained its own status, I became the first doctor of sociology' (Nurova 2003). In other words, sociological research was neither allied with nor positioned in antagonism to

particular fields of social science during the 1960s and early 1970s. It was a widespread technical practice which had no official disciplinary status.

This 'invisibility' was reinforced by the association of the term 'sociology' with empirical or 'concrete' research. The operationalisation of the practice left little space for those working in sociology to carve out any sort of theoretical niche within existing academic disciplines in the Soviet academy. By the time Tabaldiev established his laboratory at KSU, the boundaries of sociology had already been determined by political doctrines and Marxist–Leninist theories of science and social engineering. Previously, and predominately in the RSFSR, there had been considerable struggles to negotiate the boundaries between sociology and politics, 'Soviet sociology' and 'bourgeois sociology,' and empirical sociological research and Marxist–Leninist theories of society. Once sharp borders had been drawn along these lines, however, subsuming Soviet sociology within political theory and practice and separating it entirely from other possible sociological traditions, negotiations about the meaning and role of sociology were limited to superficial debates about whether empirical research was or was not compatible with Marxist philosophy. As discussed in Chapter 3, sociology emerged from these negotiations as a purely empirical method for gathering discrete data on questions posed by the Communist Party and analysing them within a Marxist–Leninist theoretical framework. Soviet sociologists, most of whom were amateur researchers attracted to sociology from other disciplines, by and large attempted to mould sociology into boundaries already set by the political and ideological establishment, thereby making room for themselves and sociological research within the state and party apparatus.

The subordination of sociological research to the 'substantive' social science disciplines and to party doctrine was reflected in the selection of themes for empirical studies organised by the KSU laboratory and the organisation of such research. As part of their professional training, the diverse group of 'the first students willing to be sociologists' in Kirgizia also served as the labour force behind Tabaldiev's early large-scale field studies on ethnicity, family life and industrial management in Kirgizia, most of which remain unpublished (Asanova 2003).

Studies in industrial sociology

The emergence of *zavodskaia sotsiologiia* (factory or industrial sociology) in the 1960s and early 1970s provides an excellent example of how sociology was embedded within the dominant discourses of science and society in Soviet Kirgizia during this period. Former members of Tabaldiev's laboratory ascribe particular importance to their role in its development. They not only assert that studies of industrial management were sociologically interesting, but also that sociological research was vital to the development of industrial production during the 1970s. Tabyshalieva (1986: 329), one of Kyrgyzstan's first industrial sociologists, argued that

> from the middle of the 1960s, the results of social scientific research about the formation of agricultural plans were used to elaborate scientific bases for the accommodation of productive forces in the republic, to help economists help industries with production and increasing effectiveness. […] In the 1970s, scholars essentially expanded the spectrum of research linked to the planning and prognosis of the socio-economic development of the republic. The analysis of regional particularities in economic development, revealing backward sections and disproportions in social production and the preparation of general recommendations from scientific research collectives, supported an increase in the level of management of the national economy in the Kirgiz SSR.

Some of the first major sociological field studies carried out in Kirgizia were concerned with issues of industrial sociology. Asanova, for example, has strong recollections of working with other members of the laboratory to conduct research among workers at the Toktogul Hydroelectric Power Station at a time when the industry was expanding rapidly in the republic.[31] Her reflections reveal the culture of early sociological research, the hierarchical organisation of the work, and the interrelationship between political activity, industrial development and education and training:

> [w]e went, if you can imagine the car…it was open in the back…there were perhaps twenty or thirty of us, students and teachers, and it was very cold on the way from Bishkek to Osh [the northern capital city and the major southern city]…even in summer it was very cold in the heart of the mountains…And we investigated the mining plant and the international, interethnic relations there, because it was a very great plant, and perhaps as many as fifty or eighty nationalities were represented at work there….We had questionnaires, of course

prepared by the teachers….Me, personally, I enjoyed it greatly—to ask, to observe, and to write everything down. We were there for the whole month. And Asanbek Tabaldievich, he himself came and organised some meetings, [saying] please, do it this way, interview that way. And of course we were, how should I say it, perhaps not expensive, even cheap working power for interviewing, but even so it was some sort of school for us, a school of how to behave with people while interviewing them (Asanova 2003; see also Tishin 2000).

Industrial sociology in Soviet Kirgizia referred specifically to the collection and application of social information in the improvement of industrial management, production and labour discipline. Sociological researchers (mainly educated workers trained to conduct surveys) worked with factory managers, defining this partnership as a mutual responsibility to promote 'cadre development' and social politics. Their main role was to conduct surveys on worker (dis)satisfaction and recommend ways to improve working conditions in order to maintain coherence in the local workforce (Tishin 1988). By canvassing workers about their levels of job satisfaction, sociologists served managers, who were in turn expected to 'correct' their managerial policies in the people's interest.

This partnership also included developing strategies that would ensure minimal turnover in the labour force (Omuraliev 2003). As such, sociologists also assumed roles as scientific disciplinarians. Some served on what were called 'social cadres committees'—or, by workers, 'commissions for dismissals'—and were responsible for eliminating conflict within the workplace by either dismissing individuals or assigning leaves of absence if they were deemed 'dysfunctional' for the collective (Sorokina 1989). In his appeals for sociology to be taken seriously by the Communist Party, Tishin (1988: 63) issued a caveat, that 'the methods and results of sociological research [in industries] are not a panacea of all administrative "calamities," but merely a means that can be fully effective in the able arms of the administration.' This of course assumed the higher authority of this administration; the overall organisation of Soviet society, including inequalities in the distribution of industrial production on a national scale and the politics of social relations within the workplace, was not considered a valid

subject for sociological inquiry. In fact, as a purely 'theoretical' question, it was not considered sociological at all.

Industrial sociologists also assumed a number of 'ideological' duties. As Omuraliev (2003) recalls, 'even in industrial activity, they paid a lot of attention to what we call the sphere of *vospitanie*, and sociologists at that time were ideologically based.' Propagandising, agitating and political education were integral parts of a Soviet sociologist's professional activities. Industrial sociologists working in the Frunze Agricultural Machinery Construction Factory during the 1980s, for example, were primarily responsible for making recommendations for 'social development' based on centrally issued five-year plans and attitudinal surveys among the workers and then presenting the results of their surveys to the factory management and internal organisations. However, they also worked 'to influence, through all channels, the formation of a healthy moral–psychological climate' within the workplace and to improve communication among labourers. They targeted managers through the installation of a booth labelled 'Sociology into Production' located within the factory and created programs for the factory radio station and newspaper *Sel'mashevets* (*Agricultural Machine Producer*). 'By these channels,' argued one, 'we propagandise sociological knowledge and familiarise the collectives with the results of studies that have been conducted' (Vlasova 1989: 42). Such activities were justified with the belief that

> [s]ociologists in industry are called on not only to study public opinion, but [to] fundamentally form it during the perestroika of society. Factory workers' participation in sociological research brings about the process of democratisation; that is, their concrete participation in the administration of labour, production, living and the social life of the factory' (Vlasova 1989: 43).

This was the era of management science and social engineering, when Stalin's expansionist modernisation policies were being replaced with programmes for increasing the efficiency and stability of the country's enormous military-socio-industrial complex (Beissinger 1988). The new politico-institutional environment created new opportunities for social scientists to earn legitimacy, respect and financial support from the Communist Party and Soviet state, which invested considerable resources to

channel the administrative powers of scientific research into social planning projects. In Kirgizia, the party established a 'council for the coordination of scientific research' in 1968, organised a council for the 'coordination of research in the sphere of historical–party sciences' in order to link historians to 'actual problems' in 1975, issued a decree on 'increasing the effectiveness of scientific research in higher educational institutions' in 1978, and decided in 1976 to 'strengthen mutual ties of social, natural and technical science' with inter-sector, 'complex' research (Tabyshalieva 1984).

Despite the production of voluminous rhetoric about the need for scientific management in industry and the coordinated development of the social sciences, however, Kirgizstani sociologists often received little support from busy and uninterested factory managers and complained that only Communist Party committees assisted them in their work (Vlasova 1989). This lack of material or moral support, combined with increasing demands for sociologists to conduct research in the service of 'socialist construction,' created resentment on the part of those advocating the advancement of sociology as an academic discipline. Tishin (1980), for example, argued that sociology was stunted not because of anything inherent to the republic, but because Kirgizstani students were 'ten to thirty years behind' those trained in Moscow with regard to the latest technologies in mathematical modelling and sampling (then the most popular methods in industrial sociology). While political rhetoric advocating the new role of sociological research was effectively transmitted from the Russian centre to the peripheral republics, the material bases and intellectual capital for facilitating such a development were not.

Nevertheless, industrial sociology continued to expand in Kirgizia during the 1970s and early 1980s. By the 1980s, Kirgizstan boasted a number of large factories, some employing from 4,000 to 6,000 people (such as the industrial union 'Ala-Too' and the Lenin factory) and employed an ethnically heterogeneous industrial workforce of about 200,000 (Omuraliev 2003). After Tabaldiev was removed from his post at KSU in 1973 (discussed further below), Tishin continued the laboratory's work on labour management and lobbied for the further expansion of sociological services throughout national industry, arguing that factories were in need of 'highly qualified and

experienced industrial sociologists' because 'without them it [was] impossible to create or carry out the types of modern plans of social development for collectives' (Tishin 1980). During perestroika, he continued to assert that 'great projects and plans [in Soviet industry] are often not realised or experience difficulties, not for technological and economic reasons, but because people do not want to work in programmes which do not take their interests, demands, social particularities and local traditions into consideration' (Tishin 1988: 63). Like many sociologists in Kirgizia, he saw industrial sociology—and increasingly its methods for surveying the opinions of workers—as a logical way of closing gaps between the ideals of centralised planning, the constraints of local realities and the subjective experiences of Kirgizstani citizens.

The degree to which this work was embedded within the logic of power, however, is reflected in the conceptualisation of a cooperative project between sociologists from KSU and the Naryn Hydroenergy Plant (NGES), lasting from 1979 to 1985. The factory administration initially hired the sociologists to explore three questions: first, 'whether the basic contingent of hydro-builders would be preserved in the transition after the Toktogul plant was built in Kurpaiska;' second, 'whether outflow would increase with the opening of new industries in other cities;' and third, 'how workers and service people felt about particular conditions of the building of the hydroelectric plants: mountainous factors, distance, long daily commutes, etc.' (Tishin 1988: 63). The sociologists then reinterpreted these practical questions into a project entitled 'Problems of the stabilisation and securing of labour resources in constructing the administration of the Naryn Hydroelectric Plant in the conditions of the regional expansion of industry and pendulum migration.'

The title and interpretive framework of this project illustrate how the empirical study of social problems within industrial organisations was acceptable as long as it was conducted within the framework of Marxist–Leninist theory about the role, legitimacy and necessity of the institutional arrangements themselves. Discipline, satisfaction and indoctrination were not considered social problems *sui generis*, but rather studied in terms of how their 'incorrect' development was an obstacle to the realisation of efficient administration over production. The research, in other words, served

'therapeutic' ends; it was a means to better adjust workers' behaviour and attitudes within the factory setting. This has been described elsewhere in critical theoretical critiques of this type of research, insofar as

> [t]he therapeutic character of the operational concept shows forth most clearly where conceptual thought is methodically placed into the service of exploring and improving the existing social conditions, within the framework of the existing societal institutions—in industrial sociology, motivation research, marketing and public opinion studies (Marcuse 1964: 107).

The research, which was 'based on surveys of more than 2,000 workers, observations, interviews, document analysis and the analysis of information with mathematical methods and EVM (*elektronno-vychislitel'naia mashina*),' has been retrospectively portrayed as something which might have made a significant contribution to Kyrgyzstan's successful industrialisation had it been taken seriously by the Communist Party and republican authorities (Tishin 1988: 63, 1998). However, the NGES studies did not in fact contribute to the institutionalisation or development of industrial sociology in Kirgizstan. Restrictions on the publication of *The Builders of the Naryn Hydroelectric Plant* and poor visibility of sociological research in industrial and academic institutions meant that even during the Soviet period such studies were likely to be relegated to 'archives and cabinets' (Tishin 1988: 67).

Nevertheless, technocratic policies of scientific management, particularly within industry, shaped the field of sociology for years to come. In a 1973 report on a survey of worker satisfaction at eight industrial sites in Kyrgyzstan, Aldasheva and Nikolaenko made it clear that 'the data received from this sociological research [was] used to correct and rework existing plans for the social development of collectives in industries in Jalal-Abad [a city in the south of the republic].' They did not offer an analysis of worker dissatisfaction, but rather described workers' responses to closed–ended questions; in other words, first-order empirical data, translated into operational categories.

This type of 'therapeutic' research was a logical niche for sociologists to fill during this period. Critical approaches to sociological work were acceptable and sometimes even demanded within the limited confines of the

factory, collective farm and workers' collective, and its definition as a 'scientific' practice oriented towards technical administration was considered consistent with the modernisation of Soviet society. Empirical research which aimed to gather information about time and resource management in factories, working conditions and levels of job satisfaction and the effectiveness of various ideological campaigns on university students not only posed no threat to the party's hegemony over representation or to its political authority, but on the contrary aided its more efficient administration. By defining themselves as both scientific and ideologically committed, Kirgizstani sociologists began to stake claims for themselves within this Party-led movement to rationalise Soviet industry and its ideological apparatus. By the early 1980s they had, like sociologists elsewhere in the Soviet Union, 'established an identity as a specialist group in a position to legitimately influence social policy' (Hahn 1977: 34).

This identity, however, was dislocated from the reality in which they remained subordinated to political decisions made by Soviet authorities. Members of Tabaldiev's laboratory confronted this particularly during the course of their studies of national relations.

Research on national relations in Kirgizia

In addition to their work on industrial sociology, members of the early KSU laboratory also emphasise their highly controversial research on 'national relations' (read: ethnic relations) within the ethnically heterogeneous Kirgizstani population during the late 1960s and early 1970s (Tishin 2000). The durability of the official boundaries distinguishing legitimate Marxist–Leninist sociology from illegitimate bourgeois 'pseudo-science' was evidenced in the short lifespan of research on national relations carried out by Tabaldiev's students and colleagues.

Initially, the laboratory did not challenge the logic of the Soviet academy. It was subsumed within a department of historical materialism, supervised by a respected member of the party intelligentsia, constituted as an extra-disciplinary space for uniting students and teachers interested in empirical research and oriented toward the pragmatic study of problems in 'communist construction' such as industrial management and inter-ethnic relations.

Informal study groups on social theory were organised within the relatively flexible purview of Tabaldiev's own ideological work, which, given his political stature, he had some autonomy to oversee. The Communist Party supported the laboratory as long as Tabaldiev and other members did not challenge official definitions of sociology or overstep the auxiliary academic and political roles they had been assigned.

Tabaldiev's research on inter-ethnic relations in Kirgizia, however, tested these parameters. His long-term interest in the study of 'the national question' in the Kirgiz Republic was not particularly unusual; discussions of the 'nationalities' or different ethnic groups residing in the Soviet Union, processes of 'internationalisation' and the creation of a multi-national state were widespread in Soviet social science at the time. While nationalities policy had been on the Soviet social scientific agenda since the 1920s, Khrushchev's introduction of the '*sblizhenie-sliianie* [rapprochement-merger] theory of Soviet nationalities policy' in 1961 raised new questions about how ethnicity should be dealt with in social science. In Central Asia, where experiences of collective ethnic identity remained intact despite widespread Russification, the announcement of a 'new stage in the development of national relations in the USSR in which the nations will draw still closer together and their complete unity will be achieved' was met with some reservation (Rakowska–Harmstone 1972: 9).

As a communist philosopher, Tabaldiev was interested in how research into the 'national question' might enable researchers to recommend forms of conflict prevention in the future, including within Kirgizstan itself (Asanova 2003). However, he was critical of the way the issue was approached by the Communist Party, namely, as a set of ideological tenets to be confirmed by philosophers, historians, economists and scientific communists, as opposed to a theme about which critical questions could be raised and empirically investigated. He was resistant to using sociological data to legitimise what he considered the anti-intellectual and inflexible elements of Soviet propaganda, including the official party narrative of 'fraternity and equality among nations.' Nurova (2000: 18), for example, recalls that

> [w]hen I began my dissertation with citations from
> Khrushchev, he crossed them out and said that this was the

work of party workers who observed subordination, but that for aspirants, their scientific integrity is most important. If the citation was actually necessary, I could use it, but if it was used only to express loyalty, it had to be removed, which he did.

Tabaldiev was sceptical of asking ideologically driven questions about processes that he doubted were occurring locally in Kirgizia, and more interested in how empirical research could be used to investigate the complexities of actual social relations. According to his students, Tabaldiev was determined to understand whether 'there [was] *real* equality between nations, and how this real equality manifested itself in their lives, family life, street life, labour life, when they are working, etc.' so that existing inequalities within Soviet society might be redressed (Asanova 2003).

Here, first-generation sociologists made a distinction which later became blurred when Soviet-era science was denounced whole-cloth as illegitimate propaganda. In their view, Tabaldiev was an effective propagandist and agitator, but he was not an ideologue.[32] In other words, he engaged in what they defined as 'good' Soviet science, that which fulfilled the idealistic goals of socialist development, as opposed to reproducing the 'pseudo-science' of party *apparatchiks* who sacrificed scientific truth to pragmatic political power and who used the authority of fabricated scientific truth claims to disguise potentially explosive tensions and inequalities.

Unlike most social scientific work on ethnic relations in the non-Russian republics, Tabaldiev's research challenged party doctrine and invoked earlier Leninist theories about 'dualistic tendencies' in the development of nations. This theory, which in other contexts was hailed as a contribution to Marxist state theory and thus Marxist sociology (Kirgizskaia entsiklopedia 1982: 301), asserts that nations (or 'mature ethnic groups') of people encounter one in a dialectical relationship of assimilation and self-realisation, with the tendency to liberate themselves from oppression as well as to submit to the 'historical values of the past ruling systems' (Rakowska–Harmstone 1972: 8). While Tabaldiev's interpretation of this theory acknowledged the value of ethnic integration so celebrated by Soviet ideology, it also allowed for the possibility that separate national or ethnic identities might legitimately emerge. Thus, while there was nothing theoretically original about his application of Leninist nationality theory to Kirgiz society, Asanova argues that it was nevertheless

politically threatening to authorities who were at the time attempting to discourage the rise of nationalist sentiment in the Central Asian republics and construct a universalised Soviet society:

> [t]his was his great investigation, seeing two directions of international development. First some integration of relations within each other, [and] the second branch is the growing self-awareness, self-determination. These were the main ideas, how this integration occurs—the combination of inter-communication, interrelation and integration. And perhaps some kind of assimilation at some times […] assimilation to those nations which were more in number and stronger. Now we see there really was a kind of assimilation, because people assimilated their language, their style of life, clothes, and their behaviour and etc. *This is also a kind of invisible assimilation, when Kyrgyz people still began to speak only Russian, and just gradually forget their own language.* It is also a process of assimilation. So first of all investigating this branch of integration, how it occurred, *and the second, growing nevertheless—growing, with this parallel direction or tendency, the growing of self awareness. Who am I, what am I? Am I Kyrgyz, or who? And what am I doing as Kyrgyz?* (Asanova 2003, italics mine)

Tabaldiev published his doctoral dissertation, *Dialectics of two tendencies in the development of nations and national relations in Soviet society*, in 1971. However, *Sotsializm i natsii* (*Socialism and Nations*), a large-scale empirical study of ethnic relations in Kirgizia carried out and written up collectively under the auspices of the laboratory, never saw the light of day. Its censorship revealed the political boundaries of the great renaissance of Soviet sociology during the 1960s and 1970s.

According to students who participated in this research, had the book been published it would have dealt a devastating blow to the official party line that there was a peaceful, progressive *sblizhenie* and *sliianie* of ethnic groups in the Soviet Central Asian republics (Nurova 2001; Tishin 2000). Instead, it revealed and criticised both the strident Russification of the non-Russian population in Kirgizstan and exposed vast economic and social inequalities between Russian and non-Russian-speaking groups in the republic. It also documented a growing sense of ethnic consciousness among Kyrgyz communities, which was spawned not by 'ethnic narrow-mindedness' or 'chauvinism,' but by poverty and injustice.

These conclusions, however, were branded as 'anti-communist propaganda.' Any work which challenged hegemonic claims that 'the national languages [were] progressing rapidly under the conditions of freedom and complete equality of nationalities in the USSR' and that 'every citizen of the USSR is guaranteed complete freedom to speak, educate and teach his children in any language whatsoever' was treated as deviant and seditious (Tadevosian 1963: 44). This was particularly true in the realm of ethnic relations, as was later revealed: 'in practice the sphere of nationality relations has been put beyond criticism, treated as a zone of general harmony, while anything that doesn't fit into that harmony is tossed aside, branded as a phenomenon of bourgeois nationalism' (Bagramov 1987: 74; Karklins 1986).

Although Tabaldiev reportedly proposed amendments to the republic's nationality and language policies on the basis of this research, the study results were first 'corrected' by party leaders, then banned from publication, and finally, as with subsequent studies of ethnic relations in the republic, they disappeared altogether (Elebaeva and Dozhusunova 1991). Nurova (2000: 16), who worked on this project as an interviewer in the village of Chychkan (now Dzhenish), recalled why she felt the research was important and why she was so disappointed when it was censored:

> [a]t the time of the survey I attempted to clarify from one young Kyrgyz woman, who did not speak in Russian, why she wanted to educate her children in a Russian school. She answered '*kyrgyzcha on klassty butkondon koro, oruscha uch klass oido turbauby*' [he finished tenth grade in Kyrgyz school, but it was as if he had finished Russian third grade[33]] and it became clear. She went to Przheval'sk with her son to visit her brother in the oblast hospital. They were there for half a day, but could not find out which section their relative was in. They were beset upon by workers in white coats, most of them Russian, who did not know (and who did not want to know) the Kyrgyz language. […] And in fact, without knowledge of the Russian language at that time, it was difficult to work and study, let alone climb the professional ladder, and no one demanded knowledge of the other state language…particularly from Russians. […] A. Tabaldiev attempted…to change national and particularly language policies in Kyrgyzstan at the core. He thought the thesis that Russian had become the second mother tongue of the Kyrgyz was untrue and argued against it. […] But this point of view did not coincide with the officially declared approach, and thus many other problems,

including [those in] our book, were crushed. I always think
about this with serious pain.

While Tabaldiev's interest in both ethnic relations and sociology was typical
for social scientists of his generation, his combination of the two and desire to
conduct empirical studies of ethnic difference and inequality in Soviet Central
Asia were unusual and frowned upon by insecure and authoritarian party
officials. His was a 'path untaken in the republic' and, eight years after he
founded his sociological laboratory, Tabaldiev bowed to political pressures to
abandon it (Tishin 1998: 31).

The little institutional security Kirgizstani sociologists enjoyed in the
confines of the KSU laboratory was revoked when members of the group
began to associate normative values of patriotic social service and scientific
objectivity with 'good' sociology and corrupt political opportunism and
manipulation of empirical data with 'bad.' By challenging the political truth
claims of Marxism–Leninism with empirically based sociological ones and
presenting research results that suggested alternative and even critical answers
to rhetorical questions posed by the Communist Party about the state of ethnic
relations in the republic, the laboratory was stripped of its status as a
legitimate scientific institution.

The type of sociology developed here—critical of the status quo but
deferential in tone, working within the confines of Marxist–Leninist theory
and loyal to the ideological spirit of the socialist project—was labelled
'unscientific' according to political criteria. The final authority to judge social
scientific truth claims was situated not within the field of sociology itself, but
in the power structures of the Communist Party that it was embedded within.
Alternative interpretations of social reality based either on social theory or
empirical research could exist only as long as they were kept private affairs,
outside the boundaries of official Marxist–Leninist theories of society and
within the realm of the alter-reality which existed in parallel with Soviet
officialdom.

The dissolution of the first sociological laboratory
Some of Tabaldiev's students argue that such disappointments and frustrations
contributed to his untimely death at forty in 1975. Without speculating on this

assertion, it is obvious from the historical record and interviews with his students that immediately after he defended his doctoral dissertation in 1971, the Communist Party began trying to persuade him to abandon the laboratory and sociological research. In 1973, he was finally transferred to the Academy of Science, where he became chief editor of the party's *Kirgiz Soviet Encyclopaedia* (Nurova 2000). By some accounts, apparently excerpted from his personal journal, Tabaldiev was dedicated to this task and worked at it diligently until the day he died. He is purported to have written, 'who needs a person who has done nothing for his own people? I came to this work out of a precious honour and pride in my people, and therefore want to show that the Kirgiz are in no way worse than other groups' (Smanbaev 1986). While few of his former students would argue that the last assertion might be attributed to him, some take issue with official reports that his career move into higher party service was a personal choice. Nurova (2000: 18), for example, has argued that her 'teacher was torn away from the school that he had built with ten years of his life and, it seems to me, this was the second blow that Asanbek-agai [as his students called him] did not survive.'

The rise and decline of Kyrgyzstan's first sociological laboratory is portrayed either as a marginal event in Soviet sociology or the formative period in the history of Kyrgyzstani sociology. However, it must also be seen within the broader context of power/knowledge in Soviet sociology and through the lens of the everyday experiences of sociologists working on the Soviet periphery. The KSU laboratory was established during a boom of empirical studies during the 1960s. While it reproduced a narrow range of Marxist–Leninist concepts such as labour, class and cultural reproduction, it also produced some controversial evidence that social tensions were brewing beneath the society's ideologically crafted veneer. In particular, Tabaldiev's research on ethnicity revealed that 'national relations were not as *bezoblachno* [serene] as the party dictated.' Kuban Bekturganov, a philosopher who worked in Tabaldiev's laboratory and who is now an instructor of sociology at KNU, suggests that the studies simply exposed what was already tacitly known: 'What the party says, that's how it must be. But real life is different' (Bekturganov 2003). The exposure of the discrepancy between political ideology and social reality was not unique to Kirgizstan, and this eventually

erupted into a general crackdown on empirical research during the late 1960s and early 1970s, one that ultimately led to bans on sociological education and a purge of the leadership of the Soviet Sociological Association in 1972 (Matthews and Jones 1978).[34] In Kirgizia, this tendency manifested itself in the 'reorganisation' of the republic's first sociological laboratory.

Tabaldiev's reassignment signalled the end of his sociological career. The KSU laboratory survived throughout the 1970s under the leadership of Rakhat Achylova, one of Tabaldiev's students who defended a sociology dissertation in Leningrad (Asanova 2003). Other members of the laboratory, led by Tishin, continued their research on industrial sociology. Even today, students of the 'Tabaldiev School' remain influenced by his re-interpretation of the social scientific terms which were previously used to classify ethnic groups in the Soviet Union, such as *narodnost'* (peoplehood or nationality), *natsional'noe men'shinstvo* (national minority), *natsional'naia gruppa* (national group), and *etnicheskaia gruppa* (ethnic group) (Nurova 2001).

This theoretical tradition, however, has lost much of its meaning for late and post-Soviet generations of sociologists who are deliberately reoriented away from Marxist–Leninist theories of ethnicity and toward more 'western' notions of identity. In addition, much of the material gathered and produced during the laboratory's eight years of existence was lost in its eventual dissolution, its contributions to sociological knowledge in the republic relegated primarily to the personal memories and archives of these early researchers. As reflected in Asanova's (2003) regretful statement: 'there were a lot of…files, all these reports—but I don't know what happened. Where are the reports, all the reports we were reading. […] I don't know where these reports are, I don't know.' Unfortunately, there is very little publicly accessible information about the sociological studies carried out during this period. All that really survives of this early laboratory are the older generation's collective memories of a charismatic scholar whose life and death has come to symbolise sociology's struggle for existence in an authoritarian society.

At the time of his death, the Kirgizstani academic community acknowledged Tabaldiev's 'contribution to the history and theory of national relations and the training of scientific and teaching cadres,' the importance of

his many publications, his work in propagating 'political and scientific information among the masses' (Asanbek Tabaldiev 1975) and his status as a 'well-known specialist of dialectical and historical materialism' (Karakeev 1974: 86). However, the precise nature of these activities and his status as the republic's first 'sociologist' did not emerge until after Kyrgyzstan's independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. Since that time, however, the history of his sociological laboratory at KSU has been revived and reconstructed among Tabaldiev's former students, most of whom are now scattered throughout the republic's atomised departments, institutes and centres of sociology.

While in operation, Tabaldiev's laboratory was neither entirely stifled by ideological politics nor able to offer a space for truly alternative thinking in the social sciences. However, the attempt to combine empirical research with both social theory and social policy made it a site of struggle between the authority of social scientific knowledge and that of political power within Soviet society. The early studies which were banned in Kirgizia were not acts of 'resistance' to the official Soviet ideology, though it is tempting to interpret them in this way. Kirgizstani sociologists were not 're-emphasising the ancient roots of their communities and their cultural debt to traditional Islamic, especially Arabic and Persian influence, while downgrading the Russian contribution' during the 1970s, as were some Soviet historians at the time (Critchlow 1972: 21). In their quest for legitimacy and relevance, sociologists conceived of the discipline as a thoroughly modern science. Their work is an excellent example of 'the paradoxical fact that great numbers of people living in socialism genuinely supported its fundamental values and ideas, although their everyday practices may appear duplicitous because they indeed routinely transgressed many norms and rules represented in that system's official ideology' (Yurchak 2003: 5). Early Soviet Kirgizstani sociologists were above all frustrated by their inability to be accepted and legitimised by the ruling regime. This is evidenced by the tension they felt between loyalty to socialist ideals and frustration at being unable to employ the types of social scientific knowledge which they felt could help to advance them.

Some from this generation are therefore disturbed by the dramatic shift of loyalty from 'communist' to 'democratic' ideas (meaning not democratic ideas

per se, but the new anti-Soviet rhetoric of democracy). Asanova (2003) describes this as a 'great tragedy' and a betrayal. 'How did it happen,' she wonders,

> that we so quickly 'forgot' about the decades-long preaching of communist ideology that we believed in as the 'sole truth' and 'sole science'? Is it proper that, not having clarified these painful and core questions for ourselves, we have begun to elaborate a 'new ideology' as if the former one did not exist, as if those people who now so energetically take up the ideology of 'national rebirth' or, let's say, the ideology of the 'all-consuming market' did not also militantly struggle for the realisation of 'communist ideas'? (Asanova 1995)

While she is critical of the repressive elements of Soviet ideology and its deleterious effects on human creativity and expression, she also maintains respect for the 'great idea of equality' which was fostered during the Soviet period; for

> a society which is oriented to all social needs and for the whole society to be equal, society to be engaged in work, in jobs, no unemployment, etc. People are struggling for their work, for their interest, struggling for all these, I don't know, rights, freedom, dignity, etc. This is socialism.

She—herself the author of a doctoral dissertation in the sociology of the family that was rejected as 'bourgeois ideology' in Kirgizia during the 1970s—is one of the few academics to come forward with a serious critique of the lack of critical analysis of this phenomenal change.

In another example, despite the fact that the Communist Party blocked publication of the KSU laboratory's research on ethnic relations in Kyrgyzstan and 'only 1% of all research data was released in publications, papers and dissertations,' Tishin (2003) still holds that Soviet use and funding of sociology was superior to that of the current Kyrgyz government and foreign organisations which, instead of centralising research resources and investing in institution-building, commission individual research projects 'whenever they need something.' Kuban Bekturganov (2003), a member of Tabaldiev's laboratory and later director of the Communist Party's Centre for the Study of Public Opinion (established in 1983), continued to produce theoretical work about the study of public opinion in socialist society well into the early 1990s

despite the fact that it was seldom recognised by the political leaders to whom it was addressed.

While these academics challenged the conflation of sociology and ideology during the Soviet period, they did so in the spirit of that ideology. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, sociology was part of the Communist Party's broader 'hegemony of representation,' described by Yurchak (1997) as 'a system in which all official institutions, discourses and practices are always–already produced and manipulated from the center as one unique discourse.' The experience of early sociologists in Kirgizstan, however, reveals that localised interpretations of this discourse varied widely. While academics such as Tabaldiev saw sociological research as a valuable source of information about social problems which could be alleviated through more 'scientifically based' or at least empirically informed intervention, Soviet political authorities saw it as a potential threat to their fragile authority and to the integrity of their ideology. For Kyrgyzstani sociologists who emphasise Tabaldiev's contribution to the establishment of the discipline in the republic, this dissonance determined the fate of the KSU laboratory and the history of sociology in the republic. This particular narrative of the early history of sociology has therefore taken on epochal qualities in contemporary histories of the discipline, becoming a metaphor for the ongoing struggle of sociologists to negotiate the continuing tension between scientific truth and socio-political power.

5

THE NEW SOCIOLOGY AND PERESTROIKA
ON THE SOVIET PERIPHERY, 1983–91

Tabaldiev is not the only charismatic figure in the history of Kirgizstani sociology, nor is the story of his laboratory the only founding narrative in the discipline today. In 1983, a second sociological laboratory appeared in the Frunze Polytechnic Institute (FPI), after independence renamed the Kyrgyz Technical University (KTU). Members of this laboratory consider its founder, Kusein Isaev, the true 'father of Kyrgyz sociology.'

Sociology during perestroika and the perestroika of sociology

By the beginning of the 1980s, Marxist–Leninist sociology had become a visible, albeit beleaguered, part of the academic landscape in the Soviet Union. Although it was not institutionalised as an academic discipline or differentiated from the more 'theoretical' subjects of philosophy and scientific communism (Zaslavskaia 1989: 111-13), a disciplinary journal (*Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniia*, or *Sociological Research*) was founded in 1974, sociological departments were organised in republican academies of science, and centres for empirical sociological research employed several thousand people in factories, state and party organisations and schools throughout the USSR (Zaslavskaia 1989). However, increasing intervention from the Communist Party—including a politically motivated restructuring of the Institute of Concrete Sociological Research in Moscow in 1971 and the silencing, censoring and deliberate under-utilisation of empirical sociological research—meant that sociologists remained under constant pressure to conform to political imperatives while promoting the discipline as scientifically legitimate and socially relevant (Brym 1990: 208; Weinberg 1992: 3). These new pressures were coupled with widespread decline in support for sociological research and the USSR Ministry of Education's ban on sociological education in colleges and universities. During the 1970s, Soviet sociology thus entered into a state of suspended development.

This began to change during the early 1980s when sociologists who had been displaced from their official posts began working as 'constructive

dissidents,' producing subtle critiques of the state of both Soviet sociology and Soviet society (Weinberg 1992: 4). Even before Gorbachev's rise to power in 1985, the reform of Soviet sociology had become intertwined and identified with the transformation of Soviet society. During the early 1980s, there was a growing sense of urgency throughout the Soviet Union about the need to replace the hierarchical structure of the Communist Party and redress its increasing 'distance from the people,' which was creating tensions in society. This movement was to be pursued through a renewal of the 'distorted' aims of socialism, achieved by the active application Marxist–Leninist principles to all social work and analysis (Bekturganov 1990: 107; Ivanov 1988; Koichuev 1988: 5; Sherstobitov 1987: 5). As in other union republics, Kirgizstani social scientists, along with party propagandists and agitators, were called upon to eschew the dogmatism, redundancy and 'greyness' which was said to have rendered sociological theory and research impotent in the post-Stalin years, and to use their critical faculties to 'accelerate the socio-economic development of [the] country and further elevate the social sciences in Soviet Kirgizstan' (Sherstobitov 1987: 3).

Gorbachev's economic and social reforms reinforced this renewal of sociological purpose. Academic and party leaders in Kirgizia invoked excerpts from his political speeches in appeals to revive theoretical sociology, citing that 'theory is necessary…not only for perspective of social and political orientation [but] literally for every one of our steps forward' (Sherstobitov 1987: 3). In 1988, the Central Committee of the Communist Party issued a decree 'on increasing the role of Marxist–Leninist sociology in the resolution of the central problems of Soviet society.' This decree, regarded by many as a catalyst for the development of sociology as an academic discipline, called for 'the necessary strengthening of sociological work in branches of the national economy and in industries, increasing the role of social development services in the quest for productive labour reserves, the decrease of cadre instability, the administration of social processes in workers' collectives, and the planning of their social infrastructures' (Vlasova 1989: 41).

New research themes began to emerge and sociologists supplemented conventional studies of political economy and nationality with inquiries into

health and social exclusion, new forms of social cooperation, housing and health, crime and substance abuse, gender issues, social movements, ideology and socialisation, youth and sub-cultures, and postmodernity (Weinberg 1994; Eades 1991). Older conceptions of social structure were gradually challenged, as were Marxist–Leninist critiques of 'bourgeois sociology' and western Marxism (Batygin and Deviatko 1994). As Gorbachev stated in 1988,

> many of Marx's and Lenin's ideas now get a new reading after they have been misinterpreted or ignored until recently. The creative power of a scientific and humanistic socialism is being restored to life after a successful struggle with dogmatism (quoted in Batygin and Deviatko 1994).

While Kirgizstani sociologists pronounced commitment to the new political and economic reforms, they also saw in these reforms the opportunity to establish the discipline and practice of sociology, as it had been defined in previous decades, in a new and more promising political context. The calls for more effective administration throughout the social system and the unification of scientific and technical resources toward this end provided ample opportunity for sociologists to present their empirical work as significant and valuable for Soviet sociology, while the invitation to criticism made it possible for them to re-market their hitherto 'dangerous' image as being perfectly suited to the new regime of glasnost (openness) in politics and science. For example, Tishin (1988: 62) argued that

> [n]ow sociology, like no other social scientific discipline, can effectively and actually realise the positions formulated by M. S. Gorbachev at the All-Union meeting of chairs of departments of social science: 'science and theory are indispensable where and when the usual skills of action don't work, when past experience and practical native wit no longer give the needed advice, when principally new decisions and non-standard actions are necessary.'

Perestroika enabled sociologists to lobby for better access to education, training and resources in the more highly professionalised centres of sociology in Moscow and Leningrad. By increasing the quality and usefulness of sociological research and teaching in Kirgizia, it was argued, the republic would hasten its transformation from a peripheral and 'backward' republic to a modern, autonomous and equal part of the Soviet empire. This, in turn, would subsequently raise the profile of academic sociology as a field of knowledge,

academic discipline and professional practice. The real or imagined possibility of a 'revolutionary renewal of Soviet society on the whole and in the union republics in particular' (Isaev 1991b: 32) raised hopes among Kirgiz sociologists that they would finally be able to control the 'structure, work, concepts, and financial organisation' of their field (Isaev 1991b: 34). They felt this would allow them to be more influential in developing policies which were relevant to social realities in Kirgizia and that respected 'national' traditions and ways of life, while still providing a 'modern' scientific alternative to 'traditional' models of society and social development.

In 1989, seemingly unaware of immanent upheavals in the Soviet social structure, sociologists in Kirgizia began to organise a Kirgiz Branch of the Soviet Sociological Association (Isaev 2000; Isaev and Bekturganov 1990).[35] Within this national framework, they also began planning new, locally based initiatives such as the Kyrgyz Union of Sociologists and a republican centre for sociological research (Isaev and Bekturganov 1990). While sociologists continued to work in industry throughout the 1980s, they also expanded their work in party organisations such as the *Komsomol* as the ideological offensive to promote sociology gained momentum. In 1983, for example, the Communist Party of Kirgizia organised a centre for the study of public opinion, which was to gather information about problems within the party and relay it to the relevant authorities (Bekturganov 1990: 106). Several years later, sociologists from KSU cooperated with members of the Moscow State University's journalism department and national and republican publishers (*goskomizdat*) to conduct a major study of the regional press (Tishin 1989). In this and the following year, the USSR State Committee on People's Education published a number of decrees granting universities the right to teach sociology and train sociologists (Isaev 1991b: 32).

At this time, the focus of public rhetoric on social science shifted from technocratic administration to 'criticism' and 'self-criticism.'[36] The social sciences were among the first targets of critique. Sociologists declared themselves poorly qualified for the social role they were expected to play in the further development of Soviet society, i.e., in facilitating more effective and efficient social administration. However, despite their assertions that sociology had assumed a new role for perestroika (Zaslavskaia 1989: 105),

neither this role nor the technocratic definition of sociology changed substantially during the late socialist period. The discipline was still dedicated to empirical research and associated almost entirely with service to state and party, as it had been since its construction as a Marxist science of society (Goldfarb 1990: 108). The waning of repressive policies toward social research, the invitation for sociologists to provide administrative bodies with 'truthful' and 'accurate' data that would enable them to create better plans, the use of sociological categories in social policy, the evaluation of Communist Party resolutions from the sociological perspective, and the chance to offer 'feedback' to policy makers did not facilitate the establishment of an autonomous academic discipline. Rather, these were attempts to improve the way that social information could be applied to further the interests of the power elite.

However, one crucial change occurred at this time in the relationship between sociologists and Communist Party authorities: Kirgizstani sociologists began to define themselves as an alternative power base within the socialist project.[37] Their role in 'assisting practice' (Zaslavskaia 1989: 117) was no longer defined as the mere 'scientific' confirmation of state or party decisions; serving the state no longer meant being subordinate to it. Instead, sociologists began to assert that they must play an active role in formulating political, economic and social policies and in analysing and criticising those which proved to be ineffective. Sociology became redefined as a guarantor of glasnost and perestroika, an 'objective,' 'scientific,' and thoroughly Marxist antidote to the anti-socialist abuses of power which had prevented sociologists from fulfilling their 'natural' role in assisting the planning, organisation and management of the ideal socialist society.

In Kirgizia, philosophers and scientific communists who had advocated the development of sociology as an autonomous discipline since the early 1970s made this new position clear in public as well as in the academy. Bekturganov (1990: 107), for example, published a number of polemical articles on the subject in the popular party monthly *Kommunist Kirgizstana*. In one, he stated that

> [w]e believed that the socialists would succeed in building this
> project, and accepted the technology with the principle that the

> bureaucratic party apparatus knows better how the system must look. Not surprisingly, with this pragmatic approach and dogmatic conclusions, they began to interfere in research in the social sciences and the study of public opinion if they did not confirm the acceptance of earlier theory. It was precisely this approach that forced social science into scholastic theorising and led to a crisis of the theory of scientific socialism.

Throughout the Soviet Union, academic elites launched a Marxist–Leninist attack against the Stalinisation and 'distortion' of social scientific knowledge in previous years, challenging state hegemony by using the government's own rhetoric of free inquiry. The most prominent of these was Russian sociologist Tat'iana Zaslavskaia who, in 1986, addressed the Soviet Sociological Association with a scathing speech on 'the role of sociology in addressing the development of Soviet society.' She accused social scientists of 'bringing up the rear of society' in their repetitive confirmation of Communist Party ideology and support for the status quo, and challenged them to initiate rather than follow policy in the new era of economic and political restructuring (Zaslavskaia 1989: 105).

Similar critiques soon appeared in Kirgizia as well (Kakeev 1990; Tishin 1988). In 1987, the chief editor of the 'Social Science' series of the Kirgiz Academy of Science's academic journal *Izvestiia akademii nauk* published an article on 'the highest mission of the social sciences' in connection with decisions made by the 27th Party Congress that the social sciences should play a greater role in Soviet society, particularly economic development. He urged social scientists to return to the spirit of Marxism-Leninism: the more actively Marxist–Leninist theory was applied to practical life, the more successful would be the socialist project. The following year, the vice-president of the Academy of Science's Division of Social Sciences argued that 'the scientific base of perestroika is Marxism–Leninism,' and that, because 'perestroika demands the creative alternation of the theoretical position of Marxism–Leninism through an analysis of modern social phenomena and ideological and economic decisions,' the necessity of social science was greater than ever (Koichuev 1988: 3). Promoting the value of scientific truth and struggling against its monopolisation rose to the top of the agenda in sociology (Tishin 1989: 4).

The perestroika of sociology in Kirgizia, however, also had more localised dimensions, specifically those related to the 'national question.' One was the emergence of a critical approach to the republic's relationship with the Soviet centre. Isaev (1998a) recalls that from the very beginning of perestroika, he 'felt…the collapse of the united informational space and already established methodological elaborations and literature, and struggled not to miss anything' that he could still obtain from Moscow and Leningrad. In addition, while Kirgizstani sociologists reiterated criticisms of the historically 'unscientific' approach to policy making and governance in the Soviet Union and the need for intellectual freedom (Isaev and Bekturganov 1990), they also began drawing attention to regional differences in Soviet society and calling into question fundamental tenets of its organisation (Isaev 1991b).

For example, a report on the first conference of sociologists in Kirgizia, published in *Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniia* in 1990, stated that

> [o]ne of the reasons administrative measures are not effective is the mechanical transferral of measures produced in other regions of the country to here. For example, in central Russia, particularly in the regions of Nechernozem'ia, where the rural population is aging, the call for young people to remain in their villages is fully explicable. In our republic, on the contrary, there is overpopulation and unemployment in the villages, and young people have limited possibilities to choose a profession or activities. In such conditions, slogans which were until not long ago part of our official ideology—'All graduates to the farm!' and 'Let the whole class stay on the kolkhoz!'—were deeply mistaken (Isaev and Niyazov 1990).

Moscow, however, interpreted these nascent differentiations as divisive. By the mid-1980s, party officials in the centre had become concerned that social science in the Central Asian republics not only suffered from 'all-union' afflictions such as the 'boring and dull repetition of truisms, fear of the new, and dogmatism,' but that it also exhibited specifically 'national' problems such as 'a narrow mindedness of problematics, departing from regional and all-union significance' (Sherstobitov 1987: 4). The privileging of 'national' analysis over class analysis and the glorification (or sometimes the mere mention) of national historical figures were seen as evidence of this tendency. In short, it was argued that 'at times, under the guise of national originality in

a number of scientific works, efforts are made to present, in idyllic tones, reactionary-nationalistic and religious survivals, in contradiction with our ideology, socialist way of life, and scientific worldview' (Sherstobitov 1987: 4).

Some sociologists in Kirgizia, however, were not convinced that the uncritical use of universal Soviet categories was an effective solution to the problem of regional underdevelopment in the social sciences. Isaev, for example, began to develop his notion of a 'national Kyrgyz sociology' during this period, arguing that social science was more politicised in Kirgizia than in other parts of the Soviet Union. 'This is because,' he claimed, 'the distortion and deformation of the social–theoretical heritage was more pronounced here than in the centre. […] Marxist–Leninist social science, having not arisen on Kyrgyz soil, lost its critical edge and revolutionary nature under the strong pressure of Stalinist ideology and repression' (Isaev 1991b: 30).

The sense that a 'one–size–fits–all' approach to the analysis and management of Soviet society had been detrimental to sociological understandings of life on the imperial periphery was heightened when, in 1990, disputes over the redistribution of property and position in the south of the country exploded into violent riots between ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbeks. Sociologists argued that the repression of critical research into ethnic relations and the ideological mantra that there were no ethnic tensions in socialist society had obscured the analysis, and thus the prevention, of such trends in the Kirgiz Republic (Elebaeva and Dozhusunova 1991; Nurova 2001), particularly as the party had censored studies which suggested that 'relationships between ethnic groups had been worsening for ten years before the 1990s' (Tishin 1998: 34). As perestroika progressed, the underdevelopment of sociology in Kirgizia became increasingly correlated with the underdevelopment of Kirgizstani society and the denial of national autonomy and identity.

Sociology at the Frunze Polytechnic Institute
These new intellectual and political orientations emerged first from within a new sociological laboratory at the Frunze Polytechnic Institute. Isaev, a prominent communist academic and party member, established the laboratory

in the Department of Scientific Communism, which he had founded and chaired in 1969 at the behest of Communist Party Secretary Togolokovich Murataliev (Abazov 1989; Group of Independent Sociologists 1993; Isaev 1998). In 1989, the laboratory was expanded into a Department of Sociology and Engineering Psychology in order to replace the Department of Scientific Communism, and in 1993 it was transferred to the Bishkek Humanitarian University (formerly the Institute of Languages and Humanitarian Sciences) to become part of the school's new Department of Administration and Sociology (later the Sociology Department), where it continues to operate (Isaev 1999b: 7).

Unlike Tabaldiev, Isaev is most renowned not as the founder of a laboratory, but for his role as an advocate for the institutionalisation of sociology in the republic and his efforts to create a national, specifically Kyrgyz, sociology. Like Tabaldiev, Isaev is a charismatic figure. During the Soviet period, he commanded significant authority both among his students and (barring a brief fall from grace in the mid-1980s) the Communist Party; he has been called 'one of the greatest scholars' of his time in the republic (Sagynbaeva 2003). Many of Isaev's former students credit him with the single-handed development of sociology in Kyrgyzstan, particularly noting his role in nurturing a group of well-trained 'cadres' for whom he organised educational opportunities in the best academic centres in the Soviet centre. He is also known as a staunch defender of the discipline in what continued to be a hostile political atmosphere. Ainoura Sagynbaeva (2003), the first chair of sociology at the American University–Central Asia and director of SIAR Bishkek, a major marketing and social research firm in Bishkek, says,

> I don't always agree with [Isaev] on a number of methodological questions. But his role in the establishment [of sociology] is very important, because of all the candidates of science which we have today, 90% are owing to him, during the Soviet period when it was only possible thanks to his authority. They were sent from Kirgizstan to study in Moscow, Leningrad, and Sverdlovst—to the very best schools of sociology. He did all of this. He went to the Ministry and made demands, I mean he stayed there and spent the night to demand. [...] He simply really wanted sociology to exist, so that there were specialists and so that these specialists received an education in good schools such as Moscow State University

[MSU] and the Institute of Sociology within the Russian Academy of Science—he sent them there. All this was his personal work.

Sagynbaeva's personal experience—a mixture of happenstance, curiosity and Isaev's intervention—was typical for young Kirgizstani sociologists of the time. While studying for an undergraduate philosophy degree in Kiev, she was attracted to sociology through short two-semester courses which were then just beginning to appear in universities in larger Soviet cities. She joined the FPI department of Scientific Communism upon her return to Kirgizia in 1986 because 'that's where they said there was sociology.' After working as an instructor and in the laboratory for three years, she studied at MSU to become one of the first Kirgiz aspirants in sociology. 'When I said I wanted to go to MSU, [Isaev] got me a place.' Similarly, Asanbekov (2003) recalls,

> [w]hen I became a sociologist long ago, it was by circumstance. After completing higher education where I studied as a historian, I could not find a job in my own specialisation. They invited me…to the sociological laboratory at the Frunze Polytechnic Institute. Professor Isaev was the scientific director of that laboratory. […] And thus I went to work there; there wasn't anything anywhere else and, little by little, I started to learn more about this science. I worked there three years. I earned my degree and defended my dissertation. I studied as an aspirant in sociology at the Russian Academy of Science in Moscow, then at the Academy of Science of the USSR, and thus I became a sociologist.

Isaev, he says, had the greatest influence on him. 'He always said, "come on, write; do some research, *tovarisch*…go here, go there; there's a conference, get an invitation to go"' (Asanbekov 2003).

Isaev's efforts to recruit and train sociologists were relatively successful during the late Soviet period not in small part because the discipline had gained a degree of legitimacy during perestroika. By the late 1980s, in fact, sociology was relatively well institutionalised in the USSR's major academic centres, and social scientists on the periphery were eager to benefit from and contribute to this trend. Although the FPI laboratory survived into the 1990s, however, Isaev's work contributed more to the popularisation of sociology in Kirgizstan than it did to its institutionalisation. This was due partly to the persistence of tensions between political and scientific responsibilities in sociological work, and to the continuing reluctance of political and economic

elites to loosen their grip on their ideological control of images of Soviet society. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Isaev and other sociologists (e.g., Bekturganov, Tishin, Achylova and Elebaeva) tried again to reconcile these tensions and the spectre of a more critical and analytical sociology appeared on the intellectual landscape. This development, however, remained embedded within the culture and structure of state science, and many of the early achievements of Isaev and his followers were abruptly nullified with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Disciplining sociology

One change which occurred during the 1980s and was maintained after independence was the redefinition of sociology from an extra-disciplinary practice to a semi-autonomous or autonomous academic discipline. The FPI laboratory was initially organised as a research unit within the Department of Scientific Communism and defined as an 'instructional–auxiliary– sociological–laboratory' (Sydykova 1998). As such, it fulfilled a similar function to Tabaldiev's laboratory, namely, the integration of sociology education, professional training and political service. During the 1980s, Isaev used this laboratory as a base for training the second generation of Kirgizstani sociologists, who, unlike those who joined the KSU laboratory in the late 1960s and 1970s, entered the field just as it was becoming a field as opposed to an extra-disciplinary practice.

While the teaching of sociology in VUZy was still discouraged by the Communist Party and nonexistent in the Kirgiz Republic, Isaev's laboratory benefited from the nascent movement to develop sociology education in the RSFSR. Frustrated with the republic's dependence on the centre, Isaev supported Soviet policies to increase the production of 'national cadres' in the Kirgiz academy. The FPI laboratory provided the first institutional base for his long-term project to create a critical mass of professionally trained, self-reproducing Kirgizstani sociologists who would be equally able to conduct empirical research, teach sociology in universities and contribute to the discipline's overall institutionalisation and professionalisation.

He also placed new emphasis on distinguishing sociology as an independent academic discipline, distinct from but compatible with scientific

communism and historical materialism. According to Sagynbaeva (2003), the laboratory's home within scientific communism was problematic for Isaev as he wanted to produce 'specialists who would actually be pure sociologists.' This distinction has led many Kirgizstani sociologists to consider this laboratory and not Tabaldiev's to be the 'first' sociological institution in the republic (Ibraeva 2003; Osmonalieva 1995). This is particularly true of Isaev's former students, the first generation of students who could systematically defend dissertations in sociology (albeit not in Kirgizstan), pursue academic careers as professional sociologists and take advantage of resources in newly established departments of sociology in Moscow and Leningrad during the second half of the 1980s. In fact, according to Isaev (2000), the institutionalisation of sociology in Kirgizia only 'beg[an] with the preparation of professional specialists in the scientific centres of Moscow, St. Petersburg, and other cities in the RSFSR, in which more than fifteen candidates of sociological science were trained in the 1980s and 1990s.'

The rhetorical redefinition of sociology as an independent field, however, did not significantly alter the political and administrative roles which had been ascribed to it in preceding decades. It was still imagined as part of scientific communism, in service to the broader political project of reforming and improving socialist social planning during perestroika. The FPI laboratory's organisation, thematic foci and social role remained dictated by economic and political forces in Soviet society.

Unfortunately, there are very few public records of the early work done in this laboratory; as with the KSU laboratory, much of our knowledge of it must be gleaned from former members, unpublished papers and dissertations (Nurova 2001: 379). Initially, research teams focused on topics of personal and professional interest to Isaev himself, such as the study of village life, rural–urban migration and the 'adaptation of Kirgiz youth to industrial work' in the republic's urban areas. He gradually expanded this scope to include studies in 'student life,' industrial sociology and (during perestroika) local elections. The laboratory also conducted commissioned studies for the Communist Party on inter-ethnic relations, party bureaucrats, how political leaders should communicate with people of different classes, and the reform of non-university based people's education (Blum 1990). In 1988, researchers

studied industries in the Tokmak and Chuy regions of the republic to ascertain whether people felt they were 'owners' of their collective property (Isaev and Bekturganov 1990). Such research anticipated the trend toward privatisation, which they continued to study until losing funding in 1994 after publishing a series of critical articles on the subject (see Chapter 9).

According to Isaev (1993a), from the time of its establishment 'there [were] many major changes in the status of this laboratory, the makeup of its staff, and also in the character and volume of scientific research.' These changes had less to do with the laboratory's success or failure as a research institution and more to do with the demands and expectations of the Kirgiz state, Communist Party and university administration. In 1988, for example, the laboratory was made responsible to the university's higher-level academic bodies such as the *rektorat* (administrative body of university officials and high-ranking academics) and scientific–technical council. At this time 'it was decided to transform the sociological laboratory into an institute–problem–scientific-research–sociological–laboratory (or NISL) called 'Social Problems of the Contemporary Scientific–Technical Revolution,' which was created to conduct research on the 'sociological problems of the preparation of engineering cadres and social problems of the scientific–technical revolution in Kyrgyzstan' (Isaev 1993a; Osmonalieva 1995). This laboratory, particularly its relation to both the university and political and economic apparatus, served as a model for the integration of sociological research into higher education well after independence (Isaev 1993).

While Isaev retained decisive control over the laboratory's organisation and activities (Isaev 1993a), his position in the party and belief that sociology should support the improvement of socialist planning meant that there was little tension between him and the administration over control of the laboratory. His early studies of rural–urban migration and everyday life in agricultural and industrial collectives posed no immediate threat to the party's authority. In fact, his ability to combine new discourses of democratisation with official party rhetoric on economic and social development secured the laboratory's survival during the mid-1980s amidst growing fears that the discipline harboured 'subversive' tendencies.

Sociology and social planning

During this period, Kirgizstani sociologists benefited from Moscow-led initiatives which encouraged the use of 'complex research' in social planning. During perestroika, discourses on socialist development shifted from productive economics to a more holistic conception of reform, which defined social and economic development as mutually enhancing. The new theoretical focus on the significance of 'the social' (ways of life, traditions and particularly 'public opinion') raised new questions about how it might be planned and managed in order to improve levels of economic development in the republic. This created space for sociologists to strengthen their presence in industrial institutions as well as to create new roles for themselves beyond factory sociology.

The proceedings of the 27th session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in 1986, as well as Gorbachev's speeches on the relationship between social science, social planning and development, figured heavily in shaping the development of policy research during this period (Tishin 1988; Tishin et al. 1989; Vlasova 1989). While the invitation for sociologists to participate in policy making was initially greeted with enthusiasm, the weakening of party hegemony over the intellectual content of sociological research through glasnost gradually enabled sociologists to challenge the ideological forms of these policies and advocate an even greater role for themselves in defining the meaning of perestroika.

Throughout this period, the FPI sociological laboratory remained firmly integrated into the administrative apparatus of state and party in Kirgizia, with many of its research projects conducted specifically on *zakaz* (commission) for governmental organisations seeking data to inform social planning. Like the KSU sociologists who had previously worked in cooperation with industrial managers, members of Isaev's research team were oriented primarily to gathering information obtained through quantitative research and making 'scientifically based' recommendations for administrative changes. In 1987, for example, Isaev led a team of researchers in a study to make 'recommendations for the social development plan for the *sovkhoz* [state farm] Stavropol'skii during the 12th Five-Year Plan [1986-90] and in the period to the year 2000' (Dzhangirov et al. 1987). This project was typical of social

research in Kirgizia during the mid-1980s: empiricist, loyal to Marxist–Leninist conceptual frameworks and oriented toward providing technical assistance to improve the effectiveness of the party's social and economic policies.

These characteristics were reflected in the project's research design, which was an exercise in gathering information that would allow researchers to 'develop recommendations and create a plan of social development for the state farm collective' (Dzhangirov et al. 1987: 14). In order to do so, the team surveyed 500 workers and pensioners living on the farm, asking them questions about their standard of living, working and living conditions, education, leisure time and personal activities, political work and general level of individual satisfaction. It then produced descriptions of the responses by using electronic statistical data analysis programmes. The results, which exposed poor living conditions and low levels of job satisfaction within the community, were then compared to studies of similar sites in the RSFSR, Byelorussia and the Baltic republics, and generalised to state farms throughout Kirgizstan.

The theoretical basis for this data-gathering task was drawn from a number of broadly non-theoretical sources, including the classic works of Marxism–Leninism, the Communist Party programme, materials from the 27th Congress of the Communist Party, the all-union law on state enterprise and decrees from the Central Committee of the Communist Party and Council of Ministers regarding 'the problems of development in the social sphere and the realisation of radical economic reforms.' The social health and stability of workers' collectives were ascribed a central role in this process as they were considered key to the viability of the material basis for these reforms (Sorokina 1989). The goal of the research, in other words, was to evaluate the extent to which social, material and cultural conditions within collectives were conducive to fulfilling the political and economic objectives of the Communist Party's next five-year plan. Again, it was therapeutic.

In many ways, the Stavropol'skii study reflects the continuation of sociology's role as a technical arm of Marxist–Leninist philosophy and party ideology in Kirgizia. While the team used data collection methods similar to those used by members of Tabaldiev's laboratory in their studies of industrial

management and national relations during the previous decade (i.e., questionnaires and structured interviews), the research itself was actually more politically and intellectually conservative in nature, seeking only to inform and not influence policy making (as Tabaldiev had intended).

However, it also revealed subtle changes in the status of sociological research during this period—in particular a thaw, or perhaps convergence, in the relationship between sociologists and the republican power elite. The mere fact that sociologists produced and distributed empirical evidence of social problems, dissatisfaction among workers, poor living standards on state farms, and low levels of education and political engagement (Dzhangirov et al. 1987: 30, 84) signalled a loosening of political controls on the discussion of 'negative' phenomena and a growing willingness to at least formally consider 'public opinion' and subjective experience as sociological 'data' (Dzhangirov et al. 1987: 15, 30). It also anticipated new connections between sociological research, public opinion and ideals of democratisation which were at the time only beginning to emerge (Abazov 1989; Toktosunova and Sukhanova 1990). As Isaev and Bekturganov (1990: 3) pointed out,

> in the years of repression, the bureaucratic apparatus of government laid down its veto on the study of all negative social phenomena and processes, the revelation of which could expose it in the people's eyes. They carefully concealed the negative aspects and intentionally circumvented acute problems of social policy, international relations, independent religiosity and etc., which demanded a principled and critical evaluation.

It was not until several years later that critiques of this white-washing would converge to form new discourses linking sociology with independence, democracy and truth-saying, thereby altering (though not fundamentally transforming) the definition and role of sociology in Kirgizia.

From the national question to national sociology

In 1989, the Department of Scientific Communism and NISL at the FPI were reconstituted as the Department of Sociology and Engineering Psychology (Isaev 1993; Osmonalieva 1995). This was a significant change in sociology's position within the system of academic disciplines. Instead of being subsumed within scientific communism or historical materialism, sociology was afforded

semi-autonomous status in relation to other disciplines such as engineering psychology (concerned with the social and psychological aspects of scientific management and social planning[38]) at the FPI or social psychology in a new department at the Kirgiz Women's Pedagogical Institute (Isaev 1993). The FPI laboratory continued to conduct studies on commission for organisations such as state farms and the *Komsomol*, and invested considerable energy between 1989–92 to strengthen the relationship between sociology and the latter (Sydykova 1998).

During this period, members of the laboratory also began carrying out non-commissioned studies on social issues related to Communist Party policy and perestroika and publishing the results in popular media outlets such as *Sovietskaia Kirgizia* (Soviet Kirgizia) and *Komsomolets Kirgizstana* (Komsomol Member of Kirgizstan). As perestroika progressed, these studies became more nationally oriented in character and increasingly included features unseen in previous decades, such as discussions of indigenous social problems caused by inequalities in the organisation of Soviet society.

As a prominent member of the Communist Party, Isaev remained loyal to the goals of rational social planning; however, he also rose to the challenge of democratisation and began to question the established relationship between sociological research, the Communist Party and political reform within the republic. He invoked the vocabulary of glasnost and perestroika to criticise the Russo-centric bias of many social policies applied to Kirgizstani society and capitalised on weakening controls over intellectual content to publish empirical data about problems in rural communities in Kirgizia. The FPI laboratory was one of the first institutions in the republic to make perestroika into an object of analysis and advocate that 'the necessity of including results from sociological research in social administration requires that [we] develop the problem of activating the human factor [in order to] realise the principles of social justice and the consolidation of socialist ways of life' (Isaev and Bekturganov 1990: 7). In the late 1980s and early 1990s, members of the laboratory began to conduct opinion surveys about various social and political issues (e.g., privatisation, local self-governance, Communist Party reforms) and developed 'ratings' for politicians standing in local and republican elections (see Chapter 9).

Other sociologists used this same rhetorical strategy, linking the development of sociology directly to political processes of socialist democratisation and economic programmes of market liberalisation. In 1990, for example, Bekturganov, then-director of the party's Centre for the Study of Public Opinion, argued that

> due to the disengagement of political power from public opinion and real life processes, the break between the political-economic structure and social expectations has not only not decreased, but continues to increase. We can only find a way if we concretely and, at the same time, complexly study and analyse the real complex situation by applying Marxist methodology. Only then can we make political and state administrative decisions that are oriented toward a democratic society, deepen the transformative process in civic and political life and realistically measure the forms and methods of administration in society. […] Quality and in-depth public opinion research would allow a more accurate and clear definition of the priorities and ideals of a reformed, human and democratic socialism. (Bekturganov 1990: 107-108)

Despite these subtle changes in orientation and emphasis, Kirgizstani sociologists nevertheless aspired to be more rather than less Soviet during the late 1980s. A survey conducted among those attending the first conference of sociologists in 1990, including members of the Academy of Science, Ministry of Education and sociologists working in the industrial sector, suggested that the majority were most interested in three major sub-fields within sociology: the sociology of nations (31%), economic sociology and the sociology of labour (26%) and the sociology of youth (20%) (Isaev and Niyazov 1990: 150).

A double-edged criticism of Kirgizstani sociology emerged at this conference. On the one hand, it was not sufficiently national in thematic focus; on the other, national traditions and 'backward thinking' prevented many social scientists from liberating themselves from the habit of reproducing dogmatic Marxist–Leninist platitudes. There was also considerable criticism of the 'rudimentary' institutional and intellectual state of the discipline, which, it was argued, had made little progress since the establishment of Tabaldiev's laboratory in 1966 (Blum 1990; Isaev and Niyazov 1990). Finally, it emerged that Kirgizia was the only republic still lacking a national branch of the Soviet Sociological Association. Isaev's

deliberations to create one began at this conference, and he was elected president of the short-lived endeavour.

Isaev's elaboration of a national 'Kyrgyz' sociology did not coalesce until after independence. However, the genealogy of his focus on the republic as a geopolitical unit of sociological analysis and sphere of political interest is evident in many of the publications produced by his laboratory in the years immediately preceding independence. The nation—now meaning the Kirgiz Republic and not the USSR—soon became a central feature of his own theoretical and empirical work and shaped the direction of research within the FPI laboratory. Additionally, his reputation as a social critic and member of the political opposition (the latter a title which he rejects, preferring to call himself a 'patriot–opponent') can also be traced to this period (Isaev 1998). In 1989, for example, he was interviewed by a journalist from *Sovietskaia Kirgizii* regarding his opinions on the 'national question.' Even more than Tabaldiev, Isaev (1989) has been critical of the unequal relationship between the peripheral republics and the Soviet centre and of the ideology of *sblizhenie* (merger), arguing that cultural, specifically educational achievements in the republic had been limited specifically because they 'excluded all concepts of national development and national pride.'

Instead of blaming this entirely on Russian dominance in the region, however, he criticised passivity within Kirgiz culture. He drew on the work of the republic's most renowned writer and public intellectual, Chingiz Aitmatov, comparing Kirgizstani intellectuals to the fictitious *mankurts*, semi-literate and incompetent prisoners of war who became mindless slaves after having their heads bound in camel skins (see Aitmatov 1983). In arguments echoing those of Algerian psychiatrist Frantz Fanon (1967), he also claimed that the 'national intelligentsia are drawn from the peasantry and quickly move to become bureaucrats, directed by the centre…they are good at mimicry and have rejected all things national to please the centre' (Isaev 1989).

Sociologists were not exempt from these criticisms (Blum 1991). Isaev advocated the development of national self-consciousness not as a challenge to the Soviet state, but rather as a new, non-Stalinist method for equalising political relationships within the multi-national Soviet Union. As he argued in an article published just before independence, 'especially in the Central Asian

republics, where economic backwardness combines with cultural particularities, bloody conflict has broken out. And it is here that sociology can and must render an invaluable favour, for it can prevent a society from possible social tension, give concrete recommendations and determine the path of their resolution' (Isaev 1991b: 27). In the years following independence, Isaev's insistence on the relevance and necessity of sociology rapidly evolved into a new discourse on a specifically national sociology (see Chapter 6).

The challenge to generalised Soviet sociology in Kirgizia

The 'bloody conflict' mentioned above referred to the week-long riot which erupted between two different ethnic groups living in the south of the republic, Kyrgyz and Uzbeks, in June 1990.[39] It was condemned by Soviet authorities as a 'terrible misfortune' and the result of young people 'giving way to their emotions and [being] stirred up by the ambitions of extremist-minded elements' (Appeal Central Committee 1990) among a 'people who, for centuries, [had] lived together in peace and harmony' (Appeal USSR Supreme Soviet 1990). Kirgizstani sociologists, however, interpreted the incident as a glaring indictment of structural injustice within the society and a consequence of years of denying the existence of ethnic tensions in the republic. It was also interpreted as part of a larger trend of violent demonstrations against political repression and economic dissatisfaction throughout the USSR (e.g., in Kazakhstan, the Baltics and the Caucasus). In an article entitled 'Toward the sociological study of the state of the internationalisation of raising young people,' Bekturganov (1991) argued that 'if ideological work in the sphere of national relations goes on without deep scientific analysis of the real situation of national processes, without an account of the opinion and mood of the representatives of various nationalities and peoples, then it will lead to the appearance of national egoism and arrogance, to national isolation and particularity [and] to dependent moods and parochialism.'

Regardless of how they were represented, the Osh events raised awareness that Kirgiz society was harbouring serious and unresolved problems, many of which could not be attributed to 'regularities' of Marxist–Leninist development in the all-union context or dealt with within the conventional theoretical formulae of Marxist–Leninist sociology. This was

just one of many cracks which had begun to show in Soviet pronouncements about the stability and high quality of life on the periphery. As the pace of social change increased at the Soviet centre, Kirgizstani society became less stable, with more public discussion of social problems accompanied by greater attempts from political leaders to deny them. Sociologists, particularly Isaev and his associates, began calling attention to these issues in the media and increasing demands that they be researched empirically.

While Kirgizstani sociologists remained heavily dependent on institutions in Moscow, Leningrad and other major Soviet cities for training and academic resources and continued to work within the Marxist–Leninist frameworks which constituted the bulk of their theoretical knowledge, they no longer aspired to orient this knowledge outward toward the abstract problems of a generalised 'Soviet' society. Being good Soviet scholars no longer meant emulating Moscow in every way; indeed, in some cases, it meant precisely the opposite. Isaev in particular turned a critical gaze on Kirgizstani society and, as a result, on the colonial-style organisation of Soviet sociology, which he argued had long prevented social scientists from genuinely understanding their own society.

By 1991, Kirgizstani sociologists had redefined their position within the Soviet sociological community. They argued that by attaining relative autonomy to engage in research about problems of republican as opposed to generalised 'Soviet' concerns and phenomena, they would be able to make more meaningful contributions to an increasingly pluralistic Soviet sociology as a whole. This new role in turn would allow them to muster greater support from the Soviet state and Communist Party, which they argued would consequently stimulate the theoretical and methodological development of sociology, as well as its professionalisation. This was justified by arguments that the slow pace of social change in Soviet Kirgizia was due to the lack of

> scientifically based revelations of the social levers and mechanisms, with the help of which we could involve various social groups of the population in perestroika. But this is possible if we give required significance to the development of sociology both at the level of each union republic, taking into consideration the specific conditions and local particularities, and on the scale of the entire country. […] (Isaev and Bekturganov 1990: 3)

The waning of generalised Soviet sociology in the Kirgizstan and the emergence of a more localised and nationally oriented discipline, however, was not initially associated with aspirations to autonomy from political institutions or separation from the Russian centre. Isaev, for example, realised that sociology in the republic would suffer from the decentralisation of Soviet science. On the eve of independence in 1991 there were still no fully independent sociological institutions in Kirgizia. Academics remained dependent on subsidies from the central government and the inconsistent flow of commissions for research from Communist Party organisations and sectors of the 'national economy' (e.g., factories and state and collective farms). While books and pamphlets on Marxist–Leninist philosophy abounded in university and public libraries, there was a paucity of literature on sociology, and even this was generally obtained by individuals travelling to conferences in the RSFSR and other more 'western' Soviet republics (or, toward the end of perestroika, even abroad). In addition, even basic information on new developments in the discipline was only available in the capital city of Frunze, not in rural regions. The Ministry of Education had stipulated that sociology should become a required subject for university students in the early 1990s (Isaev 1998b, 1998c), but only a handful of individuals trained in Russia and the Ukraine were qualified to teach undergraduate sociology and universities were slow to implement courses. In early 1991, therefore, the recognition and support of national sociological communities within the broader framework of a reformed Soviet sociology held enormous promise for sociologists in Kirgizstan. The immanent collapse of the Soviet Union, however, did not.

Kirgizstan's second-generation sociology into independence

Unlike many institutions, the FPI Department of Sociology and Engineering Psychology survived the late Soviet period and independence. Several years later, Isaev was invited to a professorship at the Bishkek Humanitarian University and in 1993 the FPI sociological laboratory found a new home in the new Department of Administration and Sociology at this university. The department soon became recognised as a base for the professional training of sociologists in the republic, with Isaev claiming to have trained fourteen candidates by 1995—a claim which was later disputed by sociologists from

KNU (Osmonalieva 1994). Isaev continued to conduct research about conventional topics such as the adaptation of rural Kyrgyz youth to urban life and increased the frequency of the laboratory's public opinion studies on political issues like privatisation, many of which became more critical as the country's politico-economic situation deteriorated. He says of this period, 'outwardly, all seemed fine—who would have expected that today we [would] not have the means to exist?' (Sydykova 1998)

In 1994, the *nomenklatura* (wealthy private patrons with political status) who sponsored the privatisation studies withdrew their funding for political reasons, and the laboratory lost the resources to conduct large-scale surveys about this and other topical issues. Since that time, it has made continual appeals for support in the media and at academic and development conferences (Isaev 1995; Isaev and Ibraeva; Isaev et al. 1996, 1996a, 1997). Sociological research at the Bishkek Humanitarian University now depends heavily on the procurement of grants and awards by individual faculty members or state commissions, private patrons and international organisations.

On the one hand, Isaev's persistent efforts to institutionalise sociology throughout the Soviet and post-Soviet periods made him an easy target for criticism—particularly from other sociologists formerly associated with Tabaldiev's laboratory at KSU—of opportunism and hypocrisy. Tishin et al. (1998), for example, question the authenticity of his academic qualifications by pointing out that that he 'was head of a department of scientific communism for twenty-four years and defended his doctoral dissertation [there], and only after the collapse of communism did he become the "father" of sociology.' On the other hand, many sociologists in the republic, particularly those associated with the FPI laboratory interpret Isaev's willingness to change his intellectual and political positions as a positive good. From this perspective, he is a role model for the development of pluralistic approaches to sociological thinking. 'Kusein Isaevich really worked on the development of sociology in Kyrgyzstan,' says Nurova (2003). 'He studies all contemporary concepts and paradigms of sociological theory in France, England, Germany, and America. He thinks that we need to create our own sociological theory.' While few other sociologists actively support his project to establish a specifically national sociology (as Gulzat Botoeva [2003] put it,

'maybe a national *association* or some kind of group of sociologists…but a national *sociology*—I don't think so'), his decades-long crusade to institutionalise the discipline provides them with a point of reference with which to understand their own historical identity—an emerging identity which was abruptly ruptured in 1991 with the declaration of Kyrgyzstan's independence from the Soviet Union.

6

ONE SOCIOLOGY OR MANY?

THE LOCALISATION OF SOCIOLOGY IN KYRGYZSTAN

The impact of independence on sociology

In August 1991, the Kirgiz Soviet Socialist Republic severed its attachment to the Soviet Union and officially became the sovereign Republic of Kyrgyzstan. Independence was widely unanticipated and largely undesired. Nevertheless, it was publicly celebrated with as much enthusiasm as if it had been won through popular struggle. Two months after Gorbachev was removed from power, the new Kyrgyz president Askar Akaev, who had previously been a staunch supporter of the Soviet state, gave a speech to the United Nations General Assembly, saying, 'now that the centre has collapsed under the weight of the crimes it committed against its own people, there is no holding back the will of the republics which have found their freedom in a bid for political and economic independence' (Akaev 1991). Sociologists clambered onto the bandwagon, asserting that 'in the conditions of an independent Kyrgyzstan, […] the possibility for the gradual development of a national sociology appeared' (Isaev 1998b).

Independence did indeed alter the trajectory of the discipline's development, though not necessarily as expected. The disintegration of the Soviet Union transformed the entire intellectual, cultural and political context of social science in the communist bloc and required a massive overhaul of the structure and organisation of the disciplines in each of the constituent republics (Eades 1991; Weinberg 1992, 1994; Batygin and Deviatko 1994; Kurti 1996; Skvortsov 1993; Tishkov 1998; Ruble 1993; Zaslavskaia 1989). In Kyrgyzstan, it initially created a sense of increased intellectual and academic freedom. Epistemological orthodoxies of scientific communism were dismantled as sociologists engaged openly with other schools of thought. For example, Isaev (1991) recalled that 'trips across the border, the study of works of foreign authors and of [his] compatriots, and books that were not accessible before' led him 'to conclude that Marxism is only one branch of social thought. There is a wealth of other views in the world.' He instructed his colleagues: 'open up for yourself once again Kautskii, Trotsky, Bukharin,

Rykor, Chinov, and you will understand how poor and one-sided our own vision was. […] Unfortunately, we did not only have a false consciousness, but in principle an unscientific one.' The notion of pluralism in both theory and politics was elevated to a new level of virtue (Isaev 1999b: 8, 2000; Kydralieva 1998: 171), and sociologists were ostensibly free to develop new theories of class, culture, stratification, power and social change in Kyrgyzstani society.

However, given the long-term hegemony of Marxist–Leninist philosophy and the paucity of alternative theoretical frameworks or scholarship in the republic, this freedom *from* intellectual monism did not immediately translate into a freedom *for* something else. As Isaev (1999f) later pointed out, 'when the Soviet Union collapsed and the sole scientific knowledge of Marxist–Leninist history made the sociological approach seem useless, the social sciences began to suffer from uncertainty.' The major sociological specialisations—the sociology of nations, economic sociology, the sociology of labour and the sociology of youth (Isaev and Niyazov 1990: 150)—were grounded entirely in Marxist–Leninist theory, and data accumulated in these areas were organised in Marxist–Leninist categories of analysis. This entire intellectual architecture was categorically delegitimised through its very association with the Soviet past and its incompatibility with emerging neoliberal discourses of society and social change. Kyrgyzstani sociologists were thus left with few conceptual resources for teaching or research. Bekturganov et al. (1994) argue that 'Kyrgyz sociology does not yet have its own requisite theoretical–methodological equipment that corresponds to local conditions' and that 'therefore, no one can intelligently explain the processes going on in the country.'

With little access to new, non-Marxist Russian resources in sociology, many sociologists turned to *zapadnaia sotsiologiia* (western sociology). Independence did not usher in a new era of intellectual confidence in Kyrgyzstan, and while the Soviet project was abandoned, many academics continue to defer to Russia and, increasingly, 'the west.' As Nesvetailov (1995: 61) points out, referring again to the centre–periphery organisation of Soviet science, 'the major specific trait of the periphery is its dependence on the center. This position has been retained by the former republics of the

USSR. The only change has been the center's address: instead of the Soviet structures in Moscow, the address has become the world centers of scientific activity.' The orientation to this new centre of 'world sociology,' as it is called in Kyrgyzstan, has been unquestioningly embraced as the optimal model for the development of sociology as an academic discipline (Baibosunov 1998; Isaev 1993).

Intellectual re-orientation is also visible in the types of theory which have replaced Marxism–Leninism and become ascendant since independence, and in the desire to 'internationalise' indigenous sociology so that it meets 'world standards.' According to Tishin (1998: 34), 'the Marxist–Leninist theory of nations and national relations was refined with new worldviews by L. Gumilev, V. Mezhuev and V. Tishkov. The ideas of Max Weber, E. Biatra and K. Nurbekov received wide circulation. […] Sociologists in Kyrgyzstan paid special attention to the views of English researcher E. Gellner and American sociologist S. Huntington.' Functionalists such as Parsons, Merton and Smelser are extremely popular among sociologists (Isaev and Abylgazieva 1994; Isaev, Akmatova and Shashembieva 1996). While postmodern and post-structuralist traditions are virtually absent on the intellectual landscape, Bourdieu, Habermas and Giddens receive increasing attention (Baibosunov 1998). Elebaeva and Dozhusunova (1991) have introduced *konfliktologiia* or conflict studies, which integrates American conflict resolution studies with Soviet conceptions of ethnic relations and provides a context for studying the 'environment and genesis of international contradictions…as well as their links with other types of contradictions and the ways and methods of eradicating international conflict.' Theories of the 'third way' are combined with the more familiar convergence theories of Sorokin, Aron and Bell (Isaev 1993c); Huntington's theory of the 'clash of civilisations' merges with Sorokin's theory of cyclical history (1993c) to develop 'Eastern' or 'Asian' theories of development; and Beck's 'risk society' is used to theorise and criticise the social consequences of Soviet environmental policies in Kyrgyzstan (Isaev 2000). Isaev (1997) has also drawn comparisons between Popper's and Gandhi's theories of the 'open society,' challenging the predominance of the first 'western' theory and recommending more attention to the latter 'eastern' one.

These externally produced social theories are not adopted undiscerningly, and their meaning is often influenced by existing epistemological frameworks. For example, structural functionalist theories are often applied to traditionally Marxist–Leninist themes such as class relations, marriage and the family, and national relations (see also Isaev 2000). In their discussion of the middle class in industrialised capitalist economies, Isaev and Abylgazieva (1994) argue that the 'systematic functioning of all spheres of society depends on three ingredients: intellect and specialised knowledge, a material base, and the ability to direct personnel and lead people's activities. […] In industrialised capitalist countries the part of the population that fills this function is the middle class, located between the elites and workers (highers and lowers).'

Similarly, Isaev, Akmatova and Shashembieva (1996) frame their analysis of social value in Parsonian terms, defining values as 'generalised goals and means of their achievement, fulfilling the role of fundamental norms. They support the integration of society, help individuals realise their socially approved choices of behaviour and life-significant conditions.' In an even more obvious intersection of functionalism and Marxism–Leninism, Shaidullaeva's (1992) candidate dissertation on the 'structure and function of the modern Kyrgyz village family' aimed to 'clarify and analyse the particular structures and functions of the modern Kyrgyz village family on the basis of concrete sociological and statistical data' while adhering to 'methodological principles' such as are dialectical principles, connections and developments, the historical and logical, the objective and systemic, and the general and particular.'

The intellectual 'crisis,' as this limited theoretical pluralism is often referred to in post-independence publications about sociology, has been compounded by the disintegration of the Soviet science structure. According to Ibraeva (2003), the Soviet collapse led not only to the disintegration of Kyrgyz sociology's emerging structure and raison d'être, but also to 'the collapse of traditional links with great Russian educational institutions, limited access to Russian literature on sociology, the stagnant isolation and decline of standards and quality of diplomas for candidate and doctoral degrees that are defended either here or in Kazakhstan.' Sociological research centres in schools and factories dissolved, their personnel being scattered throughout the

republic. Many prominent and accomplished ethnic Russian scholars left the country; many others left the nearly defunct academy in search of livelihoods elsewhere. For those that remained, opportunities to conduct sociological work became increasingly constrained after Soviet subsidies for research and education were withdrawn; the Kyrgyz government has given only token support for scientific activities since independence (see endnote 2). The virtual cessation of state funding for teaching and research compelled Kyrgyzstani sociologists to seek support from other sources, particularly the many foreign and international organisations which flooded the country immediately after independence. Sociologists cite lack of support 'from anywhere' for teaching, research, publication or travel as one of the main obstacles to institutionalising the discipline in the post-Soviet period (Asanbekov 2003; Blum 1990, 1993; Isaev et al. 1993b), and the 'marketisation' of sociological research is seen as both a blessing (No borders 1999) and a curse (Baibosunov 1993; Isaev 1996a; Tishin 2003).

Although they also struggled to secure funding during the Soviet period and could do so only for applied or 'practical' research as opposed to theoretical studies (Isaev 1991a; Zhivogliadov 1990), many managed to work on commission for industrial enterprises, Communist Party organisations and groups, and the state administration (Bekturganov 1990: 110). In 1988, for example, the Institutes of Economics and Philosophy and Law under the Kirgiz Academy of Science 'switched to working on *goszakazy* (state commissions) for the government of the republic, on a variety of problems that have important national significance,' including drug addiction and the internationalisation of *vospitanie*. Similarly, in 1990, plans to create a republican centre for sociological research were based on the 'principle of serving the *zakazchik-ispolnitel* (commissioner–user)', specifically the state and Communist Party (Isaev and Bekturganov 1990: 8). The then-president of the academy asserted that 'today, for academic science, state commissions are the most suitable forms of linking science to production. Government control of the work and confirmation [of its completion] with a special state receipt guarantee strong planning discipline' (Koichuev 1988: 8).

There were also criticisms that this method of funding sociological research further restricted sociologists' already limited intellectual and

scientific autonomy. The trend toward *goszakazy* was also a trend toward greater dependence on and alliance with the Soviet state and Communist Party. One journalist argued that '[g]iven that there are no [autonomous sociological] institutions in the country,' sociologists had two choices: either to offer their services to industry 'all in the hope for a crust of bread,' or, 'for those who value independent thought and freedom of scientific enquiry, to set up [their] own cooperative and fill orders from industries, organisations and institutions on contract' (Blum 1990). Nevertheless, just prior to independence, the *goszakaz* system was for the most part viewed as a progressive development in the institutionalisation of Soviet sociology in Kirgizia.

The break with these constituencies and the demise of the Communist Party as a political and economic force in Kyrgyzstan therefore translated directly into the total loss of sociology's funding and clientele. This vacuum was filled almost immediately by a new, wealthier client base: international donor and governmental organisations. Since the early 1990s, foreign governments and international and non-governmental organisations have invested 'many millions of dollars' in reforming social scientific research in the former Soviet republics (Ruble 1999). The sponsorship of organisations such as the Open Society Institute, USAID, The Eurasia Foundation, UNESCO, Save the Children, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the MacArthur Foundation, the International Labor Organization and others has enabled Kyrgyzstani sociologists to conduct research in otherwise impossible conditions (Ablezova 2003; Bitkovskaia 1996; Blum 1993; Ibraeva 2003; Isaev 1993a; No borders 1999; Osmonalieva 1995; Sagynbaeva 2000). These organisations have become, in fact, the primary sources of funding for sociological research in Kyrgyzstan today.

Dependence on these new clients or *zakazchiki*, as they are called, has an underside as well. Many of the limitations placed on intellectual autonomy by the Soviet state and Communist Party are reproduced by the new clientele. While the organisations often promote values of democracy and the 'open society' (and capitalism by implication),[40] their relationship with Kyrgyzstani sociologists is often anything but egalitarian. Not only general topics of research, but also specific research questions and research design are often

prescribed in advance. Local sociologists are hired to gather data through surveys and interviews which are then analysed and published—often in English and in the form of institutional reports as opposed to scholarly papers—outside the country (Asanbekov 2003). Kyrgyzstani sociologists generally have no right to use this data for their own research purposes (Ablezova 2003; Nurova 2003; Omurkulova 2003).

Furthermore, because there is little protection of intellectual property rights, there is limited knowledge sharing within the post-Soviet sociological community. While some attribute this to secretive hoarding habits acquired in 'Soviet times' (Ablezova 2003), there is also a more immediate concern that competing groups will 'steal' questionnaires and research methods and thereby gain advantage in securing grants and commissioned research projects from international organisations. For example, when the country director of the US International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX), attempted in 2001 to set up a national database for sociological questionnaires, study results and data sets, she met with great resistance from sociologists who were 'very territorial about data and only wanted to sell it' (Omurkulova 2003). The government, for its part, did not want to establish such a database through an American organisation. As a result, post-independence sociology in Kyrgyzstan has become highly commercialised and commodified.

Some veterans of both the state and market commissioning systems have even deeper reservations about the potentially subversive politics of institutional affiliations between national sociological research and international organisations. Isaev (1998), for example, thinks that

> [w]e are in a rather interesting situation. For the past five to six years, foreign foundations have been financing many of the research projects by our local group of sociologists, aimed at gathering data on public opinion. They never publish their research results. Meanwhile, they have managed to gather strategic information, which our government and state institutions are unaware of. This implies that other countries have learned about our country's strengths and weaknesses, our market and economic potential, and how we think and what we think about. The ultimate threat, I believe, is in this phenomenon (see also Isaev 2003; Sydykova 1998).

The marketisation of sociology has affected teaching as well as research in the independence period. Although the formal ban on teaching sociology in

Soviet VUZy ended in 1988, the Ministry of Education did little before 1991 to incorporate sociology into the university curriculum. After independence, numerous departments of sociology sprang up in colleges and universities in the republic's capital. Some, such as those in the Bishkek Humanitarian University and the Kyrgyz National University, are given meagre support by the state, while others such as the Sociology Department in the American University–Central Asia are funded by foreign governments or private donors. For the most part, however, there is low investment in institution building projects and many donors prefer to sponsor individual professional 'training' programmes for sociologists. This has left many of the republic's scholars, particularly those who do not speak English, without substantial means of support for work within universities. The universities themselves are competitive rather than cooperative, each promoting its own model of sociological education in an attempt to attract students in the new market–oriented system.

The proliferation of departments, programmes and research centres, however, has also led to concerns that poorly qualified instructors are producing academically incompetent graduates, who in turn assume positions in amateur sociological research companies, compete for valuable contracts with international organisations, and deliver misguided information about society to the public. Soviet-era concerns about the detrimental effects of 'amateur' sociology on the discipline's professional status have been exacerbated by the decentralisation of training, standards and resources in the independence period, particularly as many sociology courses were still taught by philosophers, historians and scientific communists (Isaev 1998c). To this day, despite years of effort, there is still no attestation commission qualified to grant doctoral degrees in sociology in Kyrgyzstan, and the few candidates who can afford to travel are forced to defend their dissertations in nearby Kazakhstan or in Moscow (Baibosunov 1998). Although many instructors have gained further training in sociology through either self-study or grants to study abroad, the shortage of professionally qualified sociologists means that they are often asked to teach over and above their own abilities (see Chapters 7 and 8).

In short, early enthusiasm about the promises of independence for sociology in Kyrgyzstan has been tempered by concern about the deleterious consequences of the decentralisation and commercialisation of a discipline that had been institutionalised as part of a centralised, socialised empire. The decades-long struggle to institutionalise sociology as a technology of both the state and Communist Party, and its rehabilitation during perestroika as a discipline dedicated to both scientific truth and political commitment, were abruptly severed in 1991. Kyrgyzstan's independence from the Soviet Union did not automatically translate into independence or autonomy for sociologists, but rather into new forms of cultural and structural dependency that are being negotiated within an entirely new set of conceptual frameworks and institutional arrangements.

Despite the many challenges facing sociologists in Kyrgyzstan today, however, there is an almost unilateral consensus that the discipline can and must play an active role in 'the transition' of Kyrgyz society from 'totalitarianism and communism' to 'democracy and capitalism.' It should, according to its advocates, 'help advance the goals set by the government and president for the creation of a free, democratic and civilised society' (Isaev 1991a), provide 'accurate information' in order to stem the flow of destabilising 'rumours' in society (Migration 1992), serve as a 'believable source of social information for making decisions or correcting the political behaviour of leaders' (Isaev et al. 1994b), 'strengthen the scientific basis of politics' (Isaev 1995), 'facilitate the skilful administration and development of society on the whole' (Isaev 2003) and 'analyse and differentiate politics contemporary to us, not leaving the sphere of the production of political products only to individual politicians, and in order to escape from symbolic, yea, even the outright manipulation thrust on certain points of view' (Isaev et al. 1997a).

Thus, as in the Soviet period, a tension between truth and politics appears at the centre of sociologists' efforts to institutionalise and professionalise sociology as a field of knowledge, academic discipline and professional practice. The institutional, intellectual and political legacies of Soviet social science have mingled with new, post-Soviet discourses of both sociology and the nation to shape the contours of this negotiation. Factors such as a

collective disavowal of sociology's technocratic and ideological role in Soviet society, the contemporary demand for sociology to be 'practical' and 'relevant,' scepticism about the effects of illegitimate power on knowledge, faith in the possibility and promises of scientific sociology, and professional competition for access to the highly competitive and unstable pool of resources available for sociological work have intersected to create a new context for the production of discourses about the emergence, development and future of sociology in Kyrgyzstan. In this context, the question of whether independence demands a new 'national' sociology is high on the agenda.[41]

National sociology in Kyrgyzstan: myth or reality?

The creation of a national Kyrgyz sociology, or at least a sociology that is responsive to the needs of the Kyrgyz people, is portrayed as a uniquely post-Soviet project.[42]   However, this obscures the fact that sociology was historically a 'national' science in the republic. From the 1960s–80s, Kirgizstani sociologists considered themselves members of the larger Soviet academic and political community—albeit one unevenly developed in centre and periphery—and explained the success or failure of efforts to institutionalise sociology in Kirgizia within a broad, inter-republican framework (Alimova 1984; Leninizm i razvitie 1970; Skripkina 1983; Tabyshaliev 1984). By and large, until the 1980s they did not interrogate the primary unit of analysis—the Soviet Union as a whole—which framed sociological work. In Kirgizia, they thought of themselves as part of a Soviet sociological tradition; the concept of *otechestvennaia nauka* (national or patriotic science) communicated both geographical and political meanings of Soviet nationhood. While this may seem incompatible with ethnically based post-independence conceptions of 'national' identity, it must be understood in the historically specific context of sociologists' earlier conceptions of Soviet nationhood.

By perestroika, however, the validity of Soviet national identity was brought into question by social scientists who exposed differences between the content and organisation of their work and that of sociological research being done in the Russian centre (see, e.g., Isaev 1991b). Emerging discourses of ethno-nationalism within the Soviet Union and critiques of centre–periphery

inequalities disrupted the conflation of republican and national identity in Soviet sociology. Whereas Kirgizstani sociologists once criticised themselves for being too 'backward' to 'catch up' with their Russian colleagues, they now blamed disciplinary underdevelopment on their institutional and intellectual dependence on the Russian centre (see Chapter 5; Isaev and Bekturganov 1990; Isaev and Niyazov 1990; Vlasova 1989). They began to ask what insights from a specifically 'Kirgiz sociology' could contribute to Marxist sociology on the whole, and questioned how the development of national sociology was inhibited by dependent development and democratic centralism within the academy. At this time, they also began to conduct research on more republican-specific issues (e.g., internal migration) as opposed to more general pan-Soviet problems.

After independence, the image of an autonomous Kirgiz Soviet sociology which had emerged during perestroika was replaced with that of a new, fully independent 'Kyrgyz' or 'national' sociology. Since this time, the institutionalisation of sociology in Kyrgyzstan has been analysed and evaluated almost entirely on the national level (Baibosunov 1998; Bekturganov et al. 1994; Ryskulov 1998; Tishin 1998). 'Kyrgyzstan,' it is argued, 'needs real, accurate and timely information' that only sociology can provide (Bakir Uluu 1994), and sociologists are called upon to help national power bases such as the president and parliament 'create a free, democratic and civilised society' (Isaev 1991a), just as they were expected to facilitate perestroika and glasnost in previous years (Blum 1990). The body of information published about sociology in Kyrgyzstan since independence (in newspaper articles, research reports, theses and dissertations and conference proceedings), indeed gives the impression that a national sociology is emerging in the republic.

However, as illustrated in Part 2, decades of initiatives to coordinate the institutionalisation of sociology at the national level have produced few tangible or sustainable results. The KSU laboratory and Tabaldiev's attempt to use it as a base and model for sociological research in Soviet Kirgizia are seen as early examples of aborted institutionalisation (Isaev and Bekturganov 1991; Nurova 2000). Plans to create an inter-disciplinary Division of Social Sciences and Scientific Council on the Problems of International Development

and National Relations in the Academy of Science during the 1980s did not, as proposed, concretise coordination between social science institutions or strengthen empirical research on 'economic, sociological and legal problems that [had] practical national significance' (Koichuev 1988). And while state commissions were hailed as the financial future of social research during perestroika, the withdrawal of state subsidies and revenue after independence and the post-Soviet government's trend towards authoritarian rule quickly drew a line under this alternative.

Just as Isaev and Bekturganov (1990) argued that poor coordination between academic social science and technological production led to demoralisation among researchers who rarely saw tangible outcomes from their work during perestroika, younger sociologists working in the post-Soviet period have made similar comments about the absence of institutional 'mechanisms' for implementing sociologically informed policies at the national level. The state, while a source of ideological hope, has been a disappointment in reality. As Ablezova (2003) puts it, non-governmental organisations 'want to change things,' but 'the [Kyrgyz] government has more power. […] And they're not ready to get negative results.' Both before and after independence, the state repeatedly rejected proposals to establish a centralised republican centre for sociological research (Abdyrashev 1994; Bekturganov 1997; Isaev 1993a; Isaev and Bekturganov 1991; Isaev and Niyazov 1990), and an attestation committee for the defence of doctoral dissertations in sociology (Baibosunov 1998; BHU 1997b; Isaev 1998c; Ryskulov 1998; Sydykova 1998). Isaev's ongoing attempt to found a national union of sociologists, which evolved from his plan to create a Kirgiz branch of the Soviet Sociological Association in 1990 (see Sotsiologicheskoe obschestvennogo ob'edineniia 1999; Isaev 1991b, 2000), has been beset by financial difficulties and internal divisions among scholars themselves (Sagynbaeva 2003). Since 1990, social scientists have continually repeated public appeals for improvements in sociology education, increases in state funding for sociological research, legal support for social researchers, the creation of journals and informational bulletins, and the establishment of sociological research centres and a professional association (Blum 1990; Bekturganov 1995a; Isaev 1998c; Isaev and Bekturganov 1991).

When the rhetoric of 'national' or 'Kyrgyz' sociology is placed in this context, it is revealed as an intellectual, professional and political project rather than a description of something that actually exists. It serves a number of important functions, in particular, as an ideological reconstruction of sociology and a way of distancing indigenous social scientific knowledge from colonial power and politics during a period of intense post-Soviet nation building. However, there are obstacles to the institutionalisation of a national sociology in Kyrgyzstan. As discussed in Chapter 3, the hierarchical centralisation of Soviet science encouraged the republic's dependence on the Russian centre and precluded the development of viable indigenous institutions. The collapse of the Soviet Union and subsequent nationalisation of Russia's academic institutions left social scientists bereft of what they previously considered their own 'national' sociology institutions. Finally, while decentralisation made room for intellectual innovation, it also engendered professional competition. Without major funding from the state or private sector, the establishment of a new national infrastructure for social science has been supplanted by the emergence of impoverished, atomised institutions which are supported by different, often competing, individuals and organisations.

Sociologists on the ground are aware of these factors and are concerned that sociology is being institutionalised unevenly or even fragmenting at the national level. Aldasheva (2003), for example, points out that there is a process of institutionalisation occurring in which 'sociology is developing in different directions,' Omuraliev (2003) notes that different sociological institutions within the republic have incommensurable identities and functions, and Bekturganov et al. (1994) argue that the 'separation' of professional sociologists 'contributes little to the creation and development of sociology.'[43] Even wide-reaching descriptions of trends in 'Kyrgyz sociology' obscure the fact that they refer only to trends in certain parts of the sociological community and exclude others.[44]

In addition, there is considerable disagreement over how sociology should be defined in the post-Soviet context. Is it an indigenous form of knowledge or a 'western' import? If the former, what are the particular concepts and theories which characterise Kyrgyz sociology? If sociology is an

alien discipline, on the other hand, to what extent might it be adapted for use in Kyrgyz society (Bekturganov et al. 1994; Isaev, Niyazov et al. 1994b)? How can Kyrgyzstani sociologists integrate into the international community without losing their particular national or regional identity (Isaev 2000)? Given the diversity of sociological theory, what schools of thought and methodological approaches may be considered legitimate contributions to the field in its new, post-Soviet form (Asanova 1995)? In the absence of authoritative decision-making bodies, who will be able to make these decisions? How will sociologists be trained and employed, and who has the power to certify their professional expertise? If sociology must no longer be in service to illegitimate power, what are the proper boundaries between sociological work and power bases such as the state, the media and international organisations?

Rather than speaking of a 'national sociology,' it is therefore more accurate to say that different groups of sociologists are engaged in developing different types of sociology in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan. These sociologies share a number of common features by virtue of their emergence in a shared socio-political and economic context. One can speak of 'Central Asian sociology' only in the broadest of terms. After lecturing in both Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, for example, Buckley (1999) noted the rising popularity of sociology and the general problems faced by all sociologists in the region. However, she also argues that 'the future for social science appears somewhat brighter' in Kazakhstan, due to the country's less repressive government and a modicum of interest from the national Academy of Science. Furthermore, while sociologists from Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan consider themselves part of a Central Asian cultural space, many have also asserted the uniqueness of their own sociological traditions (Editor 1998; Luk'ianova 1990; Toschenko 1998). As will be demonstrated in Chapters 7 and 8, even within Kyrgyzstan, different university departments conceptualise sociology differently, basing their work on different sets of intellectual and professional traditions and relying on different institutional alliances within and beyond Kyrgyzstani society.

However, despite criticism that intellectual and institutional disorganisation is having a detrimental impact on efforts to establish public

legitimacy for the field, there has been no systematic attempt to explain the causes or scope of the phenomenon, how differences and similarities between conceptions of sociology may be related to social forces and personal choices, or why such diversity is seen as anomalous or as an anti-value. Kyrgyzstani sociologists often struggle to explain why, more than a decade after independence the field has not been institutionalised in Kyrgyzstan. As Isaev (2000) wrote,

> [t]he establishment of sociology as an independent sphere of scientific knowledge, an academic subject and a profession is difficult for us. This is seen in the lack of a special scientific-sociological knowledge and way of thinking, trained cadres and traditions, and the long-term dominance of the ideologicisation and politicisation of quasi-social scientists. […] As shown by the experience of other countries, the institutionalisation of sociological knowledge is dependent upon the appearance of specialist professionals, the achievement of a mature scientific status, the formation of a particular infrastructure, a calling to support the reproduction and translation of knowledge, investment in scientific associations and etc.[45]

Such explanations are grounded in a number of unexamined assumptions: that national independence is the logical point of departure for understanding the development of sociology in a post-colonial society, that sociology must be defined and measured as a discrete discipline and according to a pre-existing set of criteria, and that scientific progress is hastened by the institutionalisation of knowledge and impeded by the influence of 'non-scientific' ways of knowing. As such, they focus on the continued politicisation of sociology and the 'corrupting' influence of external factors such as financial difficulties, political pressure and a general lack of public interest in the field, and on answering questions like 'Who interferes in the development of sociology?' (Isaev 1996b)

These analyses neglect more theoretical questions about science itself, such as whether the social, academic and institutional conditions which make possible the emergence of sociology as a sphere of scientific knowledge are actually the same as those which make possible its development as an academic subject and practical profession. How is a 'sociological way of thinking' created, and how and why does it become shared or guarded among a broad group of practitioners? Who or what determines whether a field of

knowledge has reached 'maturity'? What enables or constrains the development of a disciplinary infrastructure, specialist training, and public and political legitimacy?

Only by taking distance from the rhetoric of 'national sociology' and analysing the local conditions in which sociology is defined and practiced can we illuminate the actual processes by which different types of sociology are being institutionalised in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan. We must understand the local intersections of knowledge and power, how sociologists working in particular institutional contexts respond to structural opportunities and constraints while pursuing professional goals, and how they conduct their affairs with different resource-granting constituencies. Given that the intellectual contours of a discipline are often constructed in response to changing intellectual environments and the expectations of resource providers, this approach can facilitate a sociological explanation of how and why sociologists vary in their definition of the nature and role of sociology, why the content and organisation of curricula differ, why there are different approaches to research, and why the boundaries of the field itself may be differently delineated.

These questions are clarified through an analysis of the boundary–work sociologists do within academic departments and in the public sphere. As discussed in Chapter 2, disciplinary boundary–work is used to order knowledge and professional knowledge production, extend or monopolise scientific authority, or defend the autonomy of a particular body of knowledge against its colonisation or control by another. At the institutional level, it may serve a number of specific purposes. It is employed to help sociologists establish a unique professional identity, enhance and protect their institutional prestige, distinguish themselves from other practitioners and solicit material and symbolic resources from external constituencies. Theoretically, boundary–work is understood as a technique of power, which is employed to further the establishment of intellectual and professional authority in situations where such authority is ambiguous or challenged. However, practitioners working in an emerging discipline may also interpret it more pragmatically as a necessary response to practical questions about how to define sociology and garner support for their professional livelihood. Exploring these more emic

understandings of boundary–work allows us to better understand how social scientific knowledge and power intersect in everyday academic life.

Reintroducing the local: the importance of departmental conditions

Despite the overwhelming focus on the development of 'national' and 'international' sociology in Kyrgyzstan, local institutional context has become increasingly important in the post-Soviet period. Existing work on national or indigenous sociology provides excellent insight into the political economy of social scientific knowledge in post-colonial societies (Akiwowo 1999; Alatas 2000a; Bujra 1994; Eisemon 1981; Fahim 1970; Filino 1990; Ganon 1965; Hiller 1979; Leoneri 1967). However, as this work focuses on explicating structures of academic dependency and the division of labour within the international social scientific community, it tells us little about how local and global social forces are experienced, interpreted or negotiated by social scientists in individual nation-states. Too often, explanations of knowledge production in newly independent societies are therefore reduced to matters of colonial domination, submission and resistance (e.g., Ake 1982; Rahman 1983). While it is important to understand how the dynamics of power and knowledge work at the level of intellectual geopolitics, it is also vital to examine how local power structures and knowledges mediate these forces.

Recent studies of disciplinary institutionalisation have emphasised the importance of local institutional conditions in mediating the construction of scientific knowledge within national contexts (Camic 1995; Camic and Xie 1994; Small 1999). Small (1999), for example, argues that an emerging field of academic knowledge may be differently conceived and institutionalised under different socio-institutional circumstances, even within a single national context. Decisions about the scope and content of sociology, its role in society, its relationship to other disciplines and practices and the relationship between teaching and research are often made within departments that have very different philosophies, organisational cultures and resources. He argues that in addition to examining the socio-political sources of such differentiation, we must also understand the effects of the narrower academic context in which a field emerges and explain how conceptualisations of a field are contingent upon immediate departmental conditions. He argues that

> [t]he definition and conception of an emerging intellectual enterprise in a department will result largely from the efforts of its practitioners to secure resources to institutionalize the department and legitimize its work; they must obtain these resources (which include material capital, political support, and academic negotiation) from specific constituencies, which, in turn, place expectations about how the new enterprise should be defined. Thus, the relationship is best conceived as an interactive process between the practitioners who attempt to institutionalize their new enterprise and the constituencies that are potentially willing to support it (Small 1999: 661).

In post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan, where educational institutions are isolated from one another and from the centre of the scientific world system, the definition and establishment of disciplines is particularly conditioned by institutional culture.

A common boundary–work project, such as the creation and institutionalisation of a national sociology, can therefore take different forms in different institutions. Bujra (1994), for example, illustrates how differences in the ownership and function of social science institutions impacted the local development of the field in post-colonial Africa by comparing the historical evolution of government led national institutions, inter-governmental institutions, social science community led institutions, and donor community led institutions. Similarly, Filino (1990) explores how four different types of sociological institutions in Brazil and Argentina—Catholic universities, state universities, private teaching centres and independent research centres—were affected by the emergence of authoritarian regimes; in general, 'what sorts of sociology find homes in which kind of institutions.'

Gieryn (1983: 781) reminds us more generally that the demarcation of academic disciplines is 'routinely accomplished in practical, everyday settings: education administrators set up curricula that include chemistry but exclude alchemy; the National Science Foundation adopts standards to assure that some physicists but no psychics get funded; journal editors reject some manuscripts as unscientific.' He goes further to ask, 'how is the demarcation of science accomplished in these practical settings, far removed from the apparently futile attempt by scholars to decide what is essential and unique about science?' This question is particularly useful for analysing the development of sociology in the highly politicised atmosphere of Kyrgyzstan.

Since independence, the local institutional context of sociological work has become a key factor in this process as scientific institutions in the republic diversify and stratify, and as new departments of sociology begin to emerge.

The institutional factor in Soviet and post-Soviet sociology

Despite the representation of Soviet sociology as a monolithic enterprise, institutions did matter under the Soviet regime.[46]   However, by the time sociology emerged on the academic scene in Kirgizia during the 1960s, the production of social scientific knowledge in educational and scientific institutions was heavily regulated by the Communist Party and therefore, at least formally, relatively homogeneous throughout the country (Lisovskaia and Karpov 1999).   Until perestroika, the standardisation of disciplinary knowledge was an integral part of both ideological and administrative state policy (Bess 2000; Kodin 1996).   This minimised the role that local institutions could play in the construction of social scientific knowledge. Sociologists working in various sectors of Soviet society shared a common intellectual and political culture, spoke one professional language and sought support and legitimacy from the same constituencies (i.e., the Communist Party and state and local governmental organisations).   While we have seen in Chapters 4 and 5 that charismatic individuals were able to assert alternative interpretations of dominant themes within Soviet sociology and that individual social scientists did not necessarily internalise official definitions of their work, the heteronomous position of the field of sociology within the Soviet power structure, the hegemonic politico-intellectual culture of the Soviet academy and the centralised organisation of education and science prevented these variations from becoming sustainable alternatives to official sociology.

This homogenisation weakened during perestroika as policies of decentralisation and democratisation were applied to educational and scientific reforms. Throughout the country, as Dunston (1992: 11) argues, you could no longer speak of 'Soviet education…the concept had become fraught with difficulty. The school system was in some respects beginning to fragment and in others to fray at the edges. The underpinning ideology was no longer sacrosanct.'[47] At this point, the local context of the production of academic sociological knowledge became increasingly more important.   This is

particularly evident in the way that certain thematic foci and approaches to sociology became associated with different institutions and individuals in the Kirgiz Republic: studies on social planning in collectives and factories under Isaev at the Frunze Polytechnic Institute, higher education under Tishin at the Kirgiz State University, the family and culture under Achylova at the Women's Pedagogical Institute, and national relations under Elebaeva at the Academy of Science.

After independence, Soviet sociology was even more radically decentralised and the Communist Party lost its monopoly on defining the field. Despite the sense of chaos that this created it was also viewed as an opportunity for sociology to recover from the 'deviation' of Soviet sociology and resume its 'natural' course of development as an independent, autonomous academic discipline. Many Kyrgyzstani sociologists believe that the emergence of greater intellectual freedom would automatically stimulate the institutional development of social science in one particular direction— that of non-Soviet, 'world sociology' (Isaev 1993; Isaev, Niyazov et al. 1994b). The adoption of positivist, universalist and modernist theories of institutionalisation has made many sociologists sceptical of arguments that this process can or should occur in different ways. Instead, differences of approach within sociology that do not fit into the consensus about what constitutes the 'correct' path of development are often perceived as new forms of politicised deviation.[48] This has made it difficult for many sociologists to come to terms with how and why multiple conceptions of sociology have emerged in Kyrgyzstan.

Introduction to the case studies

Chapters 7 and 8 therefore explore, in comparative perspective, the post-independence conceptualisation and practice of the field in two academic settings: the Sociology Department of the Bishkek Humanitarian University (BHU) and the Sociology Department of the American University–Central Asia (AUCA). These cases were selected because while they are situated within a common socio-historical context, a different paradigm of sociology has emerged in each. Both are sites of a common project to institutionalise sociology as an academic discipline, educational subject and profession in

Kyrgyzstan and both consider themselves to be the leading sociology department in the republic.[49]   However, they have different institutional legacies, sources of funding and social capital, relationships to state and society, and intellectual, political and ideological orientations. As will be illustrated in the case studies, these variables shape how practitioners define the content, scope and role of sociology, and on the types of boundary–work they engage in to advance the discipline and their own professional interests. Before introducing the cases, however, it is important to understand the common context in which they are embedded.

Common challenges facing sociology departments in the post-Soviet period
Kyrgyzstani sociologists working in universities must first of all contend with problems affecting education as a whole within the Kyrgyz Republic, including poverty, a lack of qualified instructors and teaching materials (including paper for publishing books and journals; see Naby 1993), brain drain and corruption (Asanbekov 2003; Aldasheva 2003; De Young 2001; Isaev 1998c; Karim kuzu 2003; Obychniy prepodavatel' 2000; Osorov 2002; Phipps and Wolanin 2001; Reeves 2003; Tishin 1998). These problems are not specific to Kyrgyzstan, but are common to varying degrees throughout the former Soviet Central Asian republics and the larger Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). MacWilliams (2001) dubbed the 1990s a 'decade of more freedom and less money' for Russian universities, while other writers have reported an educational crisis in Kazakhstan due to a severe shortage of money, teachers and resources (De Young 2001). In Sabloff's (1999: xi-xvii) study of eight postcommunist universities, she identifies six common trends: increased access to education and decreased support for it, widespread pressure to 'westernise' curricula and teaching methods, the erosion of faculty salaries and brain drain, demoralisation and exhaustion among educators, changes from specialised to 'flexible' curricula and the need to find new, non-state sources of income such as business, tuition fees and international organisations.

Neither are these problems unique to the post-Soviet period. In fact, lack of financing and the lack of human resources and teaching materials were also pressing problems during perestroika (see, e.g., Bekturganov 1990;

Bekturganov and Isaev 1991; Blum 1993; Isaev 1991b; Isaev and Niyazov 1990; Tabyshalieva 1986; Tishin 1981; Vlasova 1989) and, more broadly, have routinely plagued social scientists in other newly independent societies (Gomez and Sosteric 1999; Rahmad 1983).

Sociologists also work in a tumultuous environment in which the social and political role of higher education is being deliberately, but rather inconsistently, transformed. Both the Kyrgyz government and a variety of foreign organisations have put forward successive new plans for educational reform. However, the interpretation of these ideas varies widely across and within institutions. BHU, for example, adheres to a model of 'specialist training' which draws heavily on Soviet philosophies of higher education in which the purpose of higher education was to 'provide specialists for a new socialist society' (Pennar et al. 1971: 57) and 'the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake or the right of education for individual self-development rather than collective purposes [is not]…recognised as a main aim' (Tomiak 1983: 199). (The term 'socialist society' has of course now been replaced with 'market' or 'democratic' society.) While this model is commensurate with that of the Ministry of Education to which the department is ultimately responsible, the financial and social organisation of higher education in Kyrgyzstan has become decentralised and subjected to 'market forces' to such an extent that the state-centred, professional–specialist model of education is no longer entirely workable (see, e.g., Isaev 1993). AUCA, on the other hand, advocates a liberal arts model of education which prioritises values of individual enlightenment, critical thinking and further education over professional or technological training. While this philosophy resonates with that of the university's foreign sponsors, it is often uncompelling to students seeking career training, challenged by national educational elites, and regarded with scepticism by the Ministry of Education. In both cases, the need to reconcile ambiguities about the social role of education has had a profound effect on the content and organisation of sociology teaching.

Beyond the general problems facing higher educational institutions in Kyrgyzstan, the BHU and AUCA sociology departments also face challenges more specific to post-Soviet social science (Abdyrashev 1994; Ablezova 2003; Asanbekov 2003; Asanova 2003; Blum 1991; Botoeva 2003; Fanisov 1990;

Isaev 1991b, 1999e; 1998; Nurova 2003; Ruble 1999). Bronson et al. (1999) divide these problems into four categories: structural, intellectual, personal and political.[50] Structural problems of social science in the former Soviet Union (FSU) include (1) collapsed infrastructure, including the collapse of international ties due to new national borders, (2) degrading salaries, the search for non-academic income and subsequent internal and external brain drain, (3) erosion of investment in research, deterioration of libraries and archives, (4) decreased access to databases and (5) inflexible administrative and bureaucratic practices and expectations. To take a local example, salaries at AUCA begin at the equivalent of $80 per month for full-time instructors, while centre directors and higher level faculty members such as chairs and co-chairs may receive up to $250. Sociologists teaching at BHU were far less willing to divulge information about their earnings, and often simply said they 'earn very little.' One full professor, however, reported that her combined earnings from teaching at three different universities, including BHU, amounted to $150 per month; another said that she earned approximately $26 per month at BHU. See also Aslanbekova (2001) and Reeves (2003: 10, 16). Reeves (2002b: 26) reports that in 2002, a local newspaper put average the salary for a new university teacher in Kyrgyzstan at $14.60 per month.

The main intellectual problem affecting social sciences in the FSU, according to Bronson et al., is the devaluation of academic work, particularly in the humanities. In Kyrgyzstan, Asanbekov (2003) argues that students have therefore developed a 'complex'—'they either think they can't work as scientists, or they don't believe it is worth it to try as they see so few results from the scientific community now. Instead, they move into more profitable jobs like business.' He also sees trends towards the feminisation of social science, saying that 'the majority of students and those studying sociology or other sciences are women because it is a low-status career that doesn't pay anything and offers no advancement.'[51]

Personal problems include (1) poverty, (2) loss of status, (3) deterioration of collegiality, and (4) isolation. Those who receive foreign grants are often targets of envy at home. This may also include (5) the collapse of personal belief systems, (6) disillusionment, and (7) interruption of career strategies. Each of these problems is prevalent in the Kyrgyzstani sociological

community; however, career interruptions are experienced differently by scholars of different generations. For some the changes are insurmountable, for others negotiable and still others find in them opportunities for building new careers (see Chapter 8 and Asanova 2003).

Finally, political problems include (1) anti-western sentiment, (2) Soviet-style bureaucracy, (3) repressive regimes, and (4) nationalist tendencies. While few Kyrgyzstani sociologists see administrative bureaucracy as an impediment to their work, the case studies suggest that this is in fact a major problem. Anti-western tendencies and nationalist sentiment have had little effect on sociological work, although stereotypes about both 'the west' and 'the nation' certainly have. Finally, Kyrgyzstani sociologists face intellectual interference from both the repressive regime and international development agencies.

Each department also struggles with language barriers which influence the types of sociological resources, and thus the range of ideas, available to faculty and students. Sociologists working in BHU, most of whom are Kyrgyzstani and speak little English, cite lack of access to English-language resources as a major problem (Aldasheva 2003; Asanbekov 2003). At AUCA, where the faculty are required to teach predominantly in English, sociologists find it difficult to obtain English-language resources which are suitable for their classes. In addition, the department hires many foreign instructors who do not speak Russian and are often unable to suggest supplementary Russian-language materials to their students. Many students therefore learn sociological vocabulary in English and not Russian, which makes it difficult to interact with their Russian-speaking peers at an academic level.

Finally, both departments face challenges which are particular to the institutionalisation of sociology in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan. First, they have been expected to create, develop and stabilise academic departments of sociology in a very short period of time with extremely limited material and symbolic resources (Ablezova 2003; Sagynbaeva 2003). The demand for 'instant institutions' stems in part from developmentalist discourses of institution building, but also from sociologists' own theories about what constitutes a 'mature' social science. After independence, many adopted what Rist (1997) refers to as the 'myth' of development, which became dominant in

Europe during the early twentieth century and which is currently enshrined as 'an element in the religion of modernity' in major development institutions such as the United Nations Development Program and World Bank. This philosophy, adopted by both Comte and Marx, has three premises: one, that 'progress has the same substance (or nature) as history;' two, that 'all nations travel the same road;' and three, that 'all do not advance at the same speed as Western society, which therefore has an indisputable "lead" because of the greater size of its production, the dominant role that reason plays within it, and the scale of its scientific and technological discoveries' (Rist 1999: 40). It is predominant in Kyrgyzstan today; the rejection of Marxism and embracing of Comtian-style positivism did not require or provoke a fundamental shift in conceptions of human development. The belief in the importance of creating formal institutions not only remained intact, but was reinforced by new discourses of institution-building in capitalist models of development.

Second, the characterisation of sociology as a new or reformed discipline in Kyrgyzstan has necessitated the redefinition of the field both generally and in the Kyrgyz context (Isaev 1993, 1999b; Isaev, Niyazov et al. 1994b; Mendibaev 2003; Nurova 2003). The combination of the need to design full curricula, the ambiguity about what to teach or how to teach it, and the relative availability of multiple, often competing, models of disciplinary development make the conceptualisation of sociology an urgent and contested problem.

Finally, sociologists at both BHU and AUCA are forced to resolve many socio-economic, institutional and intellectual problems in their everyday activities of teaching and research, as well as in more formal exercises to institutionalise the discipline. Their responses, including decisions they make about how to define and practice sociology, are shaped partly by the opportunities and constraints presented by the structures in which they work and partly by the ways in which they interpret these conditions—and the possibilities for their own agency—through their own cultural lenses. Instead of seeing culture, economy and institutions as monolithic entities which determine the outcome of efforts to institutionalise sociology, we can therefore understand culture as a web of localised meanings and practices, both historical and contemporary, which mediate the interaction between sociologists and larger social structures.

Chapters 7 and 8 illustrate how this conjunction of structural forces and human agency have influenced the conceptualisation of sociology at the institutional level in Kyrgyzstan, specifically in terms of how the discipline is defined, curricula is formulated and research is organised. Each case is divided into two parts: the first providing an overview of the department's history, funding structure and faculty composition, and the second detailing the more substantive paradigm of sociology developed at the institution. They also examine the tensions which emerged during this process and illustrate the fluid and political nature of the disciplinary boundaries being established.

To simplify the comparison, the two conceptualisations of sociology are displayed schematically in Appendix B.

7

AN APPLIED PROFESSION FOR SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION:
SOCIOLOGY AT THE BISHKEK HUMANITARIAN UNIVERSITY

Institutional context

Departmental history and identity

The BHU Sociology Department, originally called the Department of Administration and Sociology, was established in 1993 in what was then known as the Institute of Languages and Humanitarian Sciences (ILHS). According to Anara Aldasheva, Dean of the Faculty of Socio-Political Sciences at the time this research was conducted,

> in 1988 it was decreed that sociology [should] become taught as a subject in VUZy. At this time there were no departments of sociology. And therefore it was decided—I think it was decided—to set up a Sociology Department. I think the department was opened in 1993 in order to teach sociology as a scientific subject and, gradually, on the basis of this department, a sociological laboratory and faculty of sociology and etcetera were opened (Aldasheva 2003).

The establishment of the department, however, was not an isolated event. From 1989 to 1993, Isaev and his associates had been engaged in constructing a new 'sociological' identity for the Department of Sociology and Engineering Psychology, which Isaev had established in the Frunze Polytechnic Institute to replace the earlier department of Scientific Communism, founded in 1969 (see Chapter 5; Ismailova 1995; Osmonalieva 1995; Sydykova 1998).[52] The effort was rewarded with some public recognition; for example, it was argued that the first conference of Kyrgyzstani sociologists in 1990 was rightfully held at the polytechnic because it had become the 'principle sociological institution in the republic.' As one report of the conference, published in the popular paper *Soviet Kirgizia,* asked,

> [w]hy did sociologists of the republic…gather under the roof of the Frunze Polytechnic Institute and not in the Academy of Science of the Kirgiz SSR or [under the auspices of] the Kirgiz state? The initiative of the polytechnic is no accident. In recent years, it is here that a sociological laboratory actively operated. It studies problems of student life, makes prognoses about election results, maintains ties with sociologists in industrial enterprises, and develops contacts with well-known

sociological institutions throughout the country and in the Soviet Sociological Association. All this allowed the laboratory's scientific advisor, Professor K. Isaev, to make an impartial and biting report on the state of work in sociological science in the republic (Blum 1990).

In 1993, however, Isaev closed this laboratory after the ILHS invited him to take up a professorship and chair in the newly created Faculty of Socio-Political Sciences (Baibosunov 1998; Isaev 1999b; Osmonalieva 1995).[53] He accepted and, in addition to chairing the faculty, immediately opened up a new sociological research laboratory, transferring records, projects and staff from the FPI laboratory to a new location at the ILHS.

The BHU Sociology Department has had two chairs since its establishment: Mukanmedi Asanbekov, candidate of sociology and now pro-rector for science at BHU, from 1994 to 1997 and Topchogul Shaidullaeva, formerly an aspirant in the department and candidate of sociology, from 1998 to 2003. Despite changes in leadership, it has consistently represented itself as a national institution, created by and for the Kyrgyz state and operating as a service to the people by training a new cadre of elites and making contributions to governmental administration in the form of 'scientifically grounded recommendations' (BHU 1996).

This does not imply that individual members of the department subscribe privately to its institutional ideology. Isaev is both a leading member of the department and an outspoken critic of the government, a number of instructors are self-declared supporters of the political opposition, and scepticism about government policy is often expressed in faculty meetings. While academics' main aim is to train a scientific elite to fulfil administrative functions for the Kyrgyz state, they do not consider themselves subordinate to it. As Aldasheva (2003) remarked, 'the recommendations we work out must be given to the state structure and private administrative organs…and it is their right to use them or not.' As with the sociology establishments of perestroika, however, the department endeavours to present itself as a relevant and trustworthy ally of both state and society which is also intellectually autonomous enough to have scientific legitimacy. The faculty therefore assumes a unified, pro-government front in all its official activities but formulates criticism of the power structure in subtle ways from within.[54]

This image of a coherent, unified professional team has enabled the department to attract large cohorts of students since its establishment. While sociology was taught in a number of other higher education institutions in Bishkek during the early 1990s (e.g., KNU and the Kyrgyz Agricultural Institute), the Department of Administration and Sociology was for several years the only department to offer a full undergraduate programme in sociology. By 1995, senior instructor Sagyn Ismailova claimed that programmes in sociology, social work, social information and politology had already become competitive, with between three and five students applying for each available place (Ismailova 1995). After private institutions such as the American University–Central Asia and Turkish–Manas University opened in the mid-1990s, however, BHU assumed a more modest reputation as the best *state* university in the republic, and the quality of incoming students became increasingly dependent upon their level of educational achievement and ability to pay tuition fees. Because the department lacks the human and material resources to compete successfully with private and foreign-led institutions, it began to place even greater emphasis on establishing its position as a premium state and national institution.

Funding structure

Sociology at BHU is firmly integrated into the state system of higher education. It is also, however, embedded in a new and competitive educational 'market' in which state subsidy for higher education has been largely replaced by student tuition fees. As such, it exemplifies the paradox of state higher education in the republic. On one hand, the university is legally funded by the Kyrgyz state, supervised by the Ministry of Education and politically subordinate to the ruling government. Even the department's primary research project, 'Kyrgyzstan on the path to democracy and the market,' is funded by the State Committee for Science and Technology (BHU 1995). On the other hand, the decline of state investment in education (see endnote 2) has had a deleterious effect on academic programmes in all state universities, including the Sociology Department at BHU.

Salaries for sociologists, for example, plummeted to between $30 and $40 per month and the department has few resources to purchase books or teaching

materials. Aldasheva (2003) believes that the main problem facing the department is the lack of European and American scholarship available in Russian translation, while Asanbekov (2003) points to the paucity of print publications, poor Internet access and the fact that most faculty cannot afford to publish their work in Russian scholarly journals. While the department has formally signed an agreement of cooperation with the Faculty of Sociology at MSU, students from Kyrgyzstan lack the resources to take advantage of opportunities for exchanges. As Aldasheva (2003) remarked,

> we are a state university and the source of our income is the state. We also have students who study on both budget [state subsidised] and contract [fee paying] bases. […] The department is not a priority for anyone. The money goes to wealthy universities. In general, this department gets nothing.

Sociologists at BHU are thus severely under-resourced and over the years have become increasingly dependent on foreign sources of funding such as the Soros and MacArthur Foundations.[55] By 1998, in fact, the department encouraged its instructors to 'continue to work to obtain grants for scientific research, both for individual scientific research and for projects to support the potential of the faculty, department and institutional process.' Although formally reliant on the state, they became increasingly 'prepared for the necessity of doing fundraising for the introduction of new courses and improving the material base of the faculty' (BHU 1998).

The need to 'reach out,' however, creates tensions within the department. First, many of the department's faculty are unable to speak English, which is often a requisite for receiving or even learning about foreign grants. Second, such grants offer sociologists little autonomy and are often conditional. Many are in fact commercial contracts commissioning sociologists to gather data for foreign clients. Nurova (2003), for example, says that 'when a foreign firm invites us [to do research], we do not know the results. […] We have the data, we interview everyone, but…the firm does the analysis itself. And we don't even have a publication of this here.' In a different vein, Isaev has expressed concern that accepting such grants may even facilitate foreign intelligence gathering (Sydykova 1998), and there are sobering stories of sociologists working in other institutions who have had to undertake legal battles to defend their rights and reputations against more powerful foreign grant-giving

organisations (see, e.g., Sotsiologicheskoe obschestvo Kyrgyzstana [n.d.] and Skorodumova 1998). Finally, competition for foreign grants often pits colleagues against one another, encouraging professional power struggles rather than cooperation within the department.

Foreign funding, however, is only one source of extra-governmental income for state universities such as BHU. Bribery has also become endemic since the collapse of the Soviet Union. While it is difficult to obtain reliable statistics about how many educators accept or demand payment for admission, grades and exams, a number of faculty members from the BHU Sociology Department have confirmed that they are expected to give 'contract' students good marks in return for tuition fees. The impoverishment of university instructors creates fertile ground for this practice; however, bribery is also legitimised by the prevailing sense that educational performance is somehow segregated from academic success, and by students' and faculty's pragmatic understandings of what it means to be part of an educational 'market.' Reeves explains, for example, that many fee-charging departments in Kyrgyzstan define 'contract' in a particular way, namely, that 'one *receives a degree* in return for payment, rather than the fact that one *receives an education*, which may or may not, depending on the student's abilities and efforts, result in successful completion of a degree' (2003: 21, italics in original).

Ironically, the prevalence of bribery in state universities in Kyrgyzstan is rarely mentioned as a concern in discussions about the improvement of educational and professional standards for sociology. It, like the diversity of personal opinions about the department's relationship to the state and the unequal power relations that condition foreign grants, remains part of a parallel institutional universe—one of many things unspoken and un-interrogated, yet very much influential in the development of the field. These factors have an impact that reaches far beyond issues of salaries and budgets. As will be seen below, they also influence decisions in curriculum design, organised research, and even where to draw the boundaries of the field of sociology itself.

Faculty relations

The BHU Sociology Department employs almost exclusively 'local' Kyrgyzstani instructors who teach primarily in Russian (and occasionally in Kyrgyz). In 1995, the faculty consisted of nine instructors, including one doctor of philosophy (Isaev), one candidate of sociology (Asanbekov) and a candidate of history (Ismailov). By 1998, the number of faculty members had increased to ten, including a new doctor of sociology (Nurova) and two new candidates of sociology (Shaidullaeva and Ibraeva), as well as several younger instructors who had previously been aspirants in the department. In 2002, the department boasted a faculty of thirteen—a core group of senior academics (doctors and candidates) who had worked in the department since 1995, and a second group of *prepodavateli* (younger instructors) drawn from the department's pool of aspirants.

Members of the faculty are expected to contribute to the smooth operation of the department as a whole. A tripartite image of the 'professional sociologist' as a person possessing disciplinary knowledge, specialised skills of sociological research, and patriotism and moral integrity guides all teaching and research activities. The department is thus organised to facilitate training in all three areas through instructional work (teaching), scientific-methodological work (research) and *vospitanie* (BHU 1997, 2000).[56] Each task is carried out in a specially designated physical space. Teaching activities are dictated by the approved curriculum and conducted primarily in the classroom. Research is organised at both departmental and individual levels, formally located in the sociological laboratory, and disseminated through the publication of monographs and articles, most of which are published in national newspapers and internally produced *sborniki*, or essay collections. Finally, *vospitanie* is accomplished through informal avenues such as mentoring, student study groups and extra-curricular clubs. Instructors are expected to train students in each sphere so that they will learn the 'correct values' for professional sociologists who can be trusted to conduct applied research for decision making bodies.

Faculty responsibilities, however, extend far beyond reproducing this formal structure. They include not only doing large amounts of bureaucratic recordkeeping and attending departmental meetings and events such as

seminars, workshops and student competitions, but also conforming to professional norms within the department and fulfilling roles which maintain its internal power structure. At BHU, senior academics (defined as senior in terms of chronological age, level of academic degree and length of employment at the institution) dominate younger instructors, particularly those under the age of thirty-five and who have not yet defended a candidate dissertation. Academic hierarchy is particularly pronounced at BHU, which employs a number of instructors who belong to what Ibraeva (2003) calls the 'older' and 'intermediate' generations of Soviet-trained sociologists. These categories, she argues, are based not only on age, but also on 'spirit of thinking.' In her view, the older generation

> [e]njoys traditional values and essentially stands for privilege and hierarchy in the professional sphere. Intrigues are a basic way of life. Today, many of them have experienced the shock of being unneeded. Naturally, this is an old philosophy, above all of those who taught scientific communism. It is clear that these cadres were not particularly familiar with the sociological method of research and today are not in a position to answer the demands of the time in the face of growing competition. These people are living through a dramatic situation.

Despite this rather bleak portrait of Soviet-era sociologists, older faculty members working at BHU have taken some proactive measures to adapt to the 'new conditions' of their work, not only by incorporating non-Marxist theories and national content into their research and teaching interests, but also by attempting to expand their knowledge of research methods and pedagogical techniques. However, because they continue to value hierarchy in academe and impose it within the department, the department remains stratified. In turn, younger faculty members by and large tend to reproduce these unequal patterns of power and authority in relations with their own students.

Members of the 'intermediate' generation of sociologists who also work in the department simultaneously reinforce and challenge this traditional hierarchy. By Ibraeva's definition, these are middle-aged academics who retrained as sociologists after independence and who are more or less able to meet contemporary demands, in particular, by conducting 'western-style' research and adhering to western norms of discourse in international forums. This group, however, is also facing a 'dramatic period, insofar as for many

people it is sustained by traditions (reverence for elders, hierarchy in the professional sphere, the aim of exploiting young specialists, and etcetera)' (Ibraeva 2003). Many sociologists of this generation are intellectually frustrated, for while they are often inspired by new schools of sociological thought and possibilities for further education and training, they generally lack the language and computer skills needed to take advantage of foreign-sponsored opportunities, and are sometimes even excluded by age discrimination within foreign programmes.[57] Thus, while they may be attracted to alternative perspectives and participate in educational initiatives, they are constrained by their continuing legitimisation of hierarchical norms and superseded by younger academics who have been able to acquire more 'marketable' professional skills.

The youngest generation of sociologists is the greatest beneficiary of new, often foreign-led initiatives to retrain social scientists in the post-Soviet period. However, they are also subjected to exploitation and are often targets of professional envy. One, for example, has been labelled *Amerikanka* ('American') by her peers (Omurkulova 2003). Foreign organisations often target younger instructors as 'mediators' that can participate in English-language courses and training programmes and then disseminate new ideas within their home institutions; however, those working at BHU receive little encouragement or opportunity to do so. The perpetuation of professional hierarchy and the normative expectation of deference to older, often less qualified colleagues places severe constraints on younger instructors' academic potential and their ability to initiate intellectual exchange within their own departments. Changes in the definition of sociology, the organisation of teaching and research, and professional norms continue to originate from above, and those working at lower rank tend to perpetuate this hierarchical structure out of fear, apathy or professional ambition.

Conceptualisation of sociology

The paradigm: sociology as applied profession

Within this institutional context, sociology has been constructed as an applied profession, necessary for helping governmental and non-governmental organisations improve practices of socio-political administration within the

Kyrgyz Republic. While faculty members portray the programme as a new model of post-Soviet sociology education, it retains many elements of the state-oriented, applied–professional model of academic social science which dominated the late Soviet period. Here, older conceptions of Soviet sociology have been modified to resonate with new discourses about the nature and purpose of social scientific knowledge in the post-Soviet period.

The mission of the BHU Sociology Department was unambiguous from inception: it was created to 'prepare a new generation of cadres to administer collectives, regions and states' (BHU 1994). In other words, it was set up as a new space to train cohorts of specialists who were expected to contribute to efficient governance by using technical skills to solve practical social problems. As during perestroika, they were expected not only to respond to administrative problems presented by members of the establishment, but also to identify or 'diagnose' social problems through 'prognosis,' thereby playing an active role in hastening the society's overall development. In the framework of this general agenda, the department also planned more specifically to 'develop concepts of the place and role of sociology [and] politology in the development of the Faculty of Administration and Sociology' (BHU 1994).[58]

Toward this end, the department developed a core of courses, or 'disciplines,' deemed necessary for professional expertise in sociology.[59] In September 1995, five members of the department (Asanbekov, Ibraeva, Isaev, Ismailov and Sharshembieva) were responsible for developing seven foundational courses for sociology majors: general sociology, the methods and techniques of sociological research, the history of sociology, sociology of education, sociology of youth, sociology of deviant behaviour and social structures of society (BHU 1995a). The range of courses was expanded in the 1996–97 academic year to include 'elective' options such as the problems of the establishment and formation of the elite in the conditions of democratisation in the Kyrgyz Republic, the impact of mass media on the political culture of the Kyrgyz people, the political thought of the Kyrgyz, the sociology of culture, socio-political processes toward the market, ways of life and socio-political conflict (BHU 1996), and in 1997–98, the sociology of

organisations, sociology of labour, conflictology, modelling and prognosis and comparative sociology (BHU 1997a).[60]

These courses largely reflect the existing knowledge base of the faculty itself. Asanbekov (2003), for example, who wrote his candidate dissertation on the 'ways of life of the rural population,' was responsible for developing a course on life-ways, and Ibraeva was asked to use her specialisation in media studies to develop a course on the mass media in Kyrgyzstan. Given the dearth of qualified sociology instructors in Kyrgyzstan, the department has attempted to capitalise on the experience of its existing faculty, even if this means incorporating elements of Soviet sociology into post-Soviet courses. However, the range of proposed classes also suggests the influence of deeper assumptions about the organisation of sociology education itself, namely, that gaining broad knowledge of a topical canon and specific understanding of key dimensions of social structure and organisation, combined with training in research methods, is the best practice for preparing students for professional work in sociology. This philosophy is reinforced at the individual level by faculty members' own beliefs about the role of sociology in society, and at the institutional level by the dominance of the applied–professional model of sociology education.

Personality has had a significant impact on institutional development. Isaev, for example, advocated improving the professional training of sociologists long before assuming the first chair of the faculty in 1993 (Sydykova 1998), and brought this campaign to the department. As early as 1990, he and Bekturganov had criticised the Soviet state for failing to take seriously the 'planned training of professional sociologists,' and put forward the idea of introducing specialised courses in the sociology of industry, work and administration as part of the new higher education curriculum for perestroika (Isaev and Bekturganov 1990: 6; see also Isaev 1991b). Furthermore, when he transferred the sociological laboratory from FPI to BHU, he also imported his organisational philosophy: to provide 'essential scientific leadership and conduct research of a fundamental and applied character' and to 'select, train and raise the qualifications of scientific workers' (Isaev 1993a).

His agenda resonates with the intellectual convictions of many other faculty members in the department. Aldasheva (2003), for example, asserts that

> [t]he role of sociology is to study social reality. A sociologist must know this reality…must study what is happening in society, analyse it, and say what's wrong with the social mechanisms and what can be done to alleviate the problems. Further, they must give advice about what needs to be done to cure social illnesses or make it so that they do not emerge. […] It is asking how many and what, and why and how.

From this perspective, in order to understand and alter 'social reality,' sociology students must become familiar with the basic elements of all social institutions, relationships and processes, insofar as they are defined by the members of the faculty. Nurova (2003) also prioritises the 'study of reality,' arguing that sociology has a 'great role' to play in helping Kyrgyzstani society to recover from its 'totalitarian past.' Citing Tishin's (1998) 'twelve functions of sociology,' she notes that the study of social reality in all its variety can play an ideological as well as a technical role in education by forcing students to remove the 'rose-coloured glasses' through which they often understand society.[61] As she argued in an essay on applied research, sociology is comprised of three components: general theory, particular theory and applied sociology (Nurova and Shaimergenova 2000: 4).

At BHU, this tripartite structure of the discipline, which had emerged during the 1980s (see Kabyscha 1990), is viewed as a linear progression with general theory being the base and applied sociology the ultimate responsibility of a professional in the field. The production of 'trained cadres' is therefore seem as a central part of sociology's institutionalisation as both a profession and an academic science (Isaev 1993, 2000). This is evidenced by the way in which the department sets priorities for its learning outcomes. By the academic year 2003–04, students enrolling in sociology at BHU were expected to choose a programme leading to qualification in one of five professional specialisations: sociologist–economist, sociologist–marketing specialist, sociologist with additional specialisation in computer technology, sociologist–legal specialist or sociologist–instructor of social sciences (BHU 2003). These specialisations are part of the department's attempt to

compensate for the discipline's low prestige by extending its authority into already existing fields such as economics, marketing, computer technology, law and education. By affiliating sociology with these fields and creating 'sociological' specialisations in each, they can offer students something unique within the context of more stable and prestigious disciplines.

The department's promotional brochure makes more explicit the pragmatic philosophy which underlies the definition of sociology as a set of practical professional skills that students can acquire:

> Having received the profession of sociology, our graduates will have the opportunity to, at a professional level, conduct sociological research and do scientific analyses of social phenomena and processes and, on the basis of these, make prognoses and recommendations (BHU 2003).

The conceptualisation of sociology as an applied professional science which can be mechanically transmitted in the classroom is further reinforced by the Kyrgyz Ministry of Education's formal definition of the main concepts, 'disciplines,' topics and skills which distinguish the sociology specialisation.[62] In order to understand how the national standards impacted upon the conceptualisation of sociology at BHU, we turn now to the area in which they have been most influential, the undergraduate curriculum.

G.12(521200) 'Sociology': the nationally standardised curriculum

The design and revision of curricula for undergraduate sociology education are shaped in large part by assumptions about what constitutes legitimate sociological knowledge and how and why people acquire, produce and reproduce it. The inclusion or exclusion of different content, theories, methods and foreign or indigenous materials thus reflects tacit beliefs about the nature and role of sociological knowledge and the learning process itself (Lisovskaia and Karpov 1999). This section looks at how faculty members of the BHU Sociology Department approach curriculum development and explores the underlying structural factors that condition their intellectual choices.

In developing curricula, syllabi and course programmes for sociology students, instructors at BHU rely heavily on the *State Educational Standard for Basic Higher Education in Sociology* (Ministry of Education 1994; see

Appendix C for summary). These national standards were elaborated by a special disciplinary committee under the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture in 1994 and revised ten years later. The BHU sociology curriculum is designed by 'well-known specialists' in the department, approved by the department's 'instructional methods commission,' and certified by another instructional methods committee at the university level (Aldasheva 2003). Its authors draw inspiration mainly from personal experiences in Soviet universities, contemporary course programmes from Moscow and St. Petersburg, and the national standards for sociology, which are themselves based on a Russian model (Aldasheva 2003; Ministry of Education 1994; Ryskulueva 2003).

The standards outline, in considerable detail, an applied–professional model of sociology education. They specify that undergraduate sociology education must be

> linked first of all to useful work in organs of administration [related to] revealing, posing and seeking resolutions to social problems, and the organisation of enlightenment, advertising and commercial work. The goal is to help industries, institutions, organisations, commercial structures and legal and physical individuals to expose and resolve social problems (Ministry of Education 1994).

Successful sociology graduates from state institutions must be able to make recommendations about social reform, assist in administration and predict future social trends for the state and services of social protection such as health and welfare. They may also teach in scientific and educational institutions, commercial enterprises, sociological centres and centres for the study of public opinion (Ministry of Education 1994; see also BHU 1997).

Until the 'new generation' of standards was introduced in 2004, the Ministry of Education determined two-thirds of educational requirements in academic programmes and allowed individual departments to decide, within limited parameters, the other third of their curricula. While the state component was later reduced slightly to 60%, universities remain under pressure to conform to a standard canon of disciplinary knowledge. The main function of the standards is in fact to encourage the reproduction of an emerging disciplinary canon—not, as is often the case, of hegemonic theorists

and schools of thought, but of specialised 'disciplines' and skills. Within this broad canon are dozens of sub-canons detailing the specific authors, topics and skills that should be taught as part of particular courses (see Appendix C).

Whereas during the Soviet period standardisation was driven by the regime's need to maintain political control through intellectual hegemony and mechanise economic planning, today it is motivated by labour economics and the state's desire to assert control over the content and quality of educational process in a highly de-regulated educational arena. Farida Ryskulueva (2003), a senior specialist at the Ministry of Education, offers two explanations for why the ministry introduced disciplinary standards instead of continuing the older practice of issuing formal *uchebnye plany* (instructional plans).[63] First, national standards give students the 'right of mobility' in an educational system which has become governed by student demand as opposed to state planning:

> If we don't have any standards then [a student] will have trouble transferring [between universities]. In one VUZ they will teach him according to their own programme, and he will have problems in another. […] If you have this kind of difference, you can't continue to educate students because the programmes are entirely different. Therefore, we introduced the standards. Standards give students the possibility to realise their right of mobility. We work out standards that everyone must follow in the regions and in Bishkek. If everyone has these requirements, there won't be any problems. This is not an *uchebnyi plan*, but a standard. For this you need standards.

Because the state no longer has the means or authority to oversee all activities within universities, the standards also have more overtly disciplinary functions. They are intended to regulate the gradual introduction of academic freedom into higher education (and in effect control its expansion), minimise differentiation in the development of new educational philosophies, balance equality with excellence, and prevent the disintegration of historical relationship between education and labour. To quote Ryskulueva (2003) again,

> [a]cademic freedom is increasing gradually—we cannot just give freedom straight away because [instructors] are not yet used to it. We defined the correct contents of the curriculum for how many years—one hundred years now, right? People studying in every institution and university knew what, how

many and which disciplines they need to study in order to meet the requirements. But in our VUZy we don't have this yet. Our VUZy have absolutely no idea. First of all, they accept all students who come to them but don't consider whether their graduates will be able to get work. It is important that students come and pay money, and that's it. They give it and then everything falls apart.

From the ministry's perspective, the decentralisation of education and the breakdown of university job-training programmes are threatening to social and economic stability. Therefore, the main task set before sociologists working in state educational institutions after independence was not to develop innovative conceptions of curriculum, but to recreate institutional frameworks for standardisation to replace those which had either collapsed or been abandoned as undesirable. The impetus for this movement was strengthened in 1992 when the Kyrgyz government signed an agreement with other former Soviet republics to create a 'single educational and scientific space in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).'[64] Supporters of this initiative used it to argue that the development of sociology was being undermined by institutional differentiation:

> [t]raining proceeds according to different models of education, creating a spirit of competition between universities. But they also have serious problems in standardizing specializations and subjects, in raising the quality of preparation for specialists, in supporting the process of instruction with educational and methodological literature, in conducting scientific research, and etc. The professional and skilful resolution of all these and other problems for the most part depends on the effective and thorough use of a single educational and scientific space in the CIS (Isaev 2000).

As employees of a state institution who are dependent upon the goodwill of the Kyrgyz government for job security, members of the BHU Sociology Department elevate compliance with the national standards to a matter of departmental and disciplinary identity. Instructors are required to develop their own individualised teaching plans in accordance with the standards and must submit them to senior faculty members for approval (BHU 1994). Although the standards are technically 'suggestions' rather than requirements as were Soviet instructional plans, the extent to which a department's curriculum conforms with these goals has a direct influence on whether it is

granted attestation from the Ministry of Education (for a summary of the attestation procedure, see Appendix D). The bestowal of legitimate authority from the state is significant, particularly as university degrees are conferred by the ministry as opposed to individual institutions; students not holding a Kyrgyz diploma are seen to have graduated from 'inferior' schools and thus are at a disadvantage in the national labour market.[65] Offering a state-approved curriculum therefore not only enables the department to assure students of their political marketability after graduation, but also bestows upon it a type of official legitimacy not afforded to departments in private institutions which do not grant state diplomas.

This legitimacy is based in the perception that the department's curriculum is educationally sound, as it has been certified by national 'experts,' and politically correct, as it has been approved by the Ministry of Education. It is primarily a legitimacy of security; an affirmation that the department's work is permissible and sustainable under conditions of economic and political instability. Because this legitimacy is bestowed from without, however, it is tentative and must be vigilantly maintained. In the 2004 version of the national standards, for example, the status of sociology shifted from a required or 'foundational' field to an 'elective' subject.[66] This was interpreted as a disciplinary demotion and obstacle to the institutionalisation of a field which, in BHU, draws its authority primarily from governmental approval and student demand.

The BHU faculty therefore use the national standards to develop departmental instructional plans which they believe both fulfil state requirements and constitute a comprehensive, internationally recognised sociology degree. Toward the first end they emphasis the inclusion of canonical themes and the progression of sociology toward 'world science.' At the same time, however, they seek to enhance their professional and scientific prestige with politicians, students and the public by offering a new, socially relevant knowledge product. As a result, the sociology curriculum comprises both a stable core of courses in nationally recommended 'disciplines' and a regular infusion of new, often idiosyncratic courses which address current issues in Kyrgyz society and academic discourse. The bulk of the curriculum mirrors the requirements set out in the national standards. In addition to

completing general educational requirements, students must attend a specified number of hours in a 'cycle of general professional disciplines in the subject' (Ministry of Education 1994). These include the history of sociology, general sociology, methods and techniques of sociological research, political sociology, demography, social statistics, social anthropology, social psychology, social pedagogics, and social modelling and programming. The influence of the standards on the curriculum can be deduced from the heavy emphasis placed on developing these particular 'core' courses during the first years of curriculum development (BHU 1994, 1995a).

The broad core of survey style courses is supplemented by an annual cycle of 'special' disciplines, intended to be 'narrower in relation to the subject' and geared towards professional training (Ministry of Education 1994: 13). As Aldasheva (2003) noted, the introduction of new specialised subjects is much less systematic than the development of core classes and tends to depend on the overall 'demand for such courses' in the programme. As already mentioned, the possible range of such courses is also determined by the supply of qualified or semi-qualified instructors. The department has long offered courses in areas favoured by permanent faculty members, including the sociology of youth, comparative sociology, deviant behaviour, the sociology of the individual and various courses on Kyrgyz culture. As younger instructors joined the faculty, they began to offer other courses on the sociology of mass media, stratification, labour, marriage and the family, conflictology and civil society (BHU 1995a, 1996, 1997a). The department has also been developing a new component in gender studies since 2002.

In addition to these requirements, the national standards stipulate that undergraduate students must complete a *praktika*, or internship. A practical component was introduced into the curriculum in 1995–96 and students have since been placed in the department's sociological laboratory, international organisations such as the UNDP, the National Academy of Science, local groups such as adoption agencies and women's shelters, and marketing companies such as Tatuu, M–Vektor and SIAR Bishkek. Finally, students are expected to produce a *diplomnaia rabota* or *proekt* (senior research paper or project) and pass a series of state graduation exams.

Curriculum development within the BHU Sociology Department is ostensibly a collective process. Faculty members often debate the merit and appropriateness of new textbooks before introducing them into the curriculum (see, e.g., BHU 2001, 2002a) and instructors must present their lectures and lesson plans for general approval. The process has a veneer of cooperative knowledge production. In reality, however, the department's hierarchical structure makes curriculum development a power-laden and bureaucratic process, dominated by senior members of the department who have considerably more decision-making power than their younger colleagues. Individual instructors, usually those at the senior level, are responsible for developing one or two new courses per year as part of their 'instructional-methodological work' (course development in this case includes writing lectures, outlining seminars and elaborating questions for examination). This distribution of labour is intended to broaden the general knowledge base within the department.

However, because such courses are considered *avtorskie kursy* (authors' courses), faculty members often guard teaching materials such as syllabi and lecture notes as private intellectual property or commodities. These, therefore, do not contribute to communal knowledge development within the department. As Nurova (2003) explained, contrary to the Soviet period in which she claims they 'all helped each other,' academic life has become highly competitive, even within departments. Academics tend to hoard knowledge and materials so they can be 'experts' in their own field of specialisation (not dissimilar to the way in which doctoral students or scientific researchers often limit access to original material until it is published). As already discussed, this competitive atmosphere is fostered partly by the current individualised grant-giving strategies of international organisations, partly by the withdrawal of state funding and subsequent financial crisis, and partly because while sociologists now have greater opportunity to be more creative, they have less time and fewer resources with which to do so, and decreasing confidence in the moral standards of academic integrity.

This has also created other problems in curriculum development, namely, lack of intellectual motivation and professional commitment. Because the

sociology curriculum follows the national standards as a matter of principle, neither junior nor senior faculty have much say in determining the range of courses they are expected to teach. This lack of autonomy has bred a lack of imagination; innovation is theoretically encouraged, but new ideas that are marginally unfamiliar are often rejected. Furthermore, the breadth of the curriculum requires each instructor to teach between two and six courses per year.[67] In 1999, course loads were stretched to the limit by increases in both the number of required courses in the curriculum and the number of students—in particular, 'contract' or fee-paying students—admitted to the programme (BHU 2000). Ibraeva (2003) reflects on how this affected the quality of her own teaching at the time:

> Unfortunately, until recently, teaching in the BHU Faculty of Sociology…was linked with an incredible teaching load and the need to develop the most various courses. Thus, the courses in my pedagogical toolbox were quite diverse: gender sociology, sociology of mass media and mass communication, urban sociology, political sociology, history of sociology, introduction to sociology, sociology of management and sociology of conflict. The practice of 'plugging up' gaps in the instructional programmes at higher education institutions has terrible consequences, [such as] the poor quality of courses, particularly in connection with the lack of literature and other instructional materials. I am very glad that this is not a factor at AUK.

The 'plugging up' metaphor reflects the current philosophy and practice of curriculum development in sociology in Kyrgyzstan—not only in BHU, as implied here, but in state and private institutions throughout the entire republic. There are tangible discrepancies between intellectual expectations, educational requirements and the human and material resources available to fulfil both. As will be seen in Chapter 8, sociologists working at private institutions such as AUCA, which have self-consciously created curricula that diverge from both the national standards and traditional models of Russian education, also struggle to balance the demand for programmes that will satisfy both local and international requirements with the need to promote quality teaching and research.

Disciplinarity

'Disciplinarity,' or the processes by which knowledge units get constructed, altered and deconstructed and the epistemological and social consequences of these processes, has been an emerging topic of interest since the 1980s (see Messer-Davidow et al. 1996; Good 2000; Lemaine et al. 1976). The term 'discipline' has dual meaning, referring to both the intellectual boundaries of a knowledge unit and to the practices through which these boundaries order or 'discipline' thinking and action in that sphere.

Each sociology department in Kyrgyzstan has a different notion of its own disciplinarity, or relationship to other academic disciplines and social practices. In some cases, as with the AUCA Sociology Department, disciplinary boundaries are fluid and contested. At the BHU Sociology Department, however, these boundaries are fixed and largely taken for granted as necessary and natural. This is due partly to the way the discipline has been conceptualised, but is also influenced by the department's affiliation with the state and faculty members' beliefs about the role of sociology in Kyrgyzstani society. Sociology is defined as an empirical object, a naturalised body of knowledge possessing a coherent history and stable set of characteristics which transcend time and space, and a universal standard against which inferior classes of social scientific and lay knowledge can be measured. Isaev (2003), for example, argues that 'as a science, profession and subject, sociology has no less than a two-hundred-year-old tradition of development;' that it is 'studied in nearly all higher education institutions in the civilised countries of the world;' and that 'on the eve of the twenty-first century, a single world sociological science has been formed and objectively exists.'

The department is part of the larger Faculty of Socio-Political Science, which also houses programmes in social work and politology. Although the department offers introductory sociology courses for students of other departments (also called 'courses for non-sociologists') and requires that sociology and politology students take courses in both subjects, its primary agenda is to institutionalise sociology as a discrete discipline, separate from politology, social work and other academic disciplines. Here, sociology is a specialised profession, discernable by possession of a specific set of 'disciplines,' information and skills, particularly quantitative methods of

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survey research. The BHU Sociology Department has adopted the Kyrgyz Ministry of Education's classification, G.12(521200) 'Sociology,' to distinguish these sets of knowledge and skills from those allocated to other professional specialisations such as politology, social work, psychology and pedagogy. In this framework, sociology addresses only those matters which are deemed to belong to the 'social' sphere of society: migration, ethnicity, gender relations, social change and stability, etc. These are distinct from 'political' matters, such as government, political parties and elections. According to the Ministry of Education, such distinctions not only establish neat intellectual boundaries, but also enable potential employers to hire specialised graduates for positions requiring particular professional skills. This is perceived as the main 'selling point' of sociology for students, instructors and potential employers.

While the department promotes itself as a purveyor of 'professional qualifications,' the effort to discipline sociology by erecting unambiguous boundaries between it and other disciplines is also motivated by a desire to promote sociology as a unique way of knowing about society in order to expand sociologists' authority and right to resources. Therefore, in addition to demarcating knowledge/skill boundaries between professional specialisations such as sociology and social work, sociologists at BHU are also sensitive about distinctions between social science, politics and lay knowledge. The well-educated professional sociologist must be qualitatively different both from politicians, who are believed to distort social reality intentionally, and from members of the general public, who are seen as lacking the necessary information and skills to apprehend social reality accurately. Professional sociologists are portrayed as the scientific guardians of social consciousness, whose authority draws on possession of specialised disciplinary knowledge and the ability to conduct scientific studies which produce objective representations of social reality.

Centralised, policy-oriented research
The quest for objective truth about society is therefore adopted as the primary discourse surrounding sociological research at BHU. The creation of a sociological laboratory (or rather, the relocation of the earlier FPI laboratory)

in 1993 was hailed as a major step forward in the advancement of the discipline, and the laboratory has since become a prominent sociological institution within the republic. It is defined by its members as a progressive example of how to reorganise sociology in the post-independence period (Isaev 1993).   However, it has also received negative publicity after its members became embroiled in public debates about the politicisation of sociology (Isaev 1993a; see Chapter 9).

The relationship between teaching and research in the department is similar to a model previously advocated by Isaev and others during perestroika. It asserts that all departments of sociology should be affiliated with a *nauchnaia–issledovatel'naia–sotsiologicheskaia–laboratoriia* (scientific–research–sociological–laboratory, or NISL). The Marxist–Leninist theoretical basis for this model was that

> [t]he teaching of sociology must maintain a dialectical interconnection with two types of scientific knowledge [material and spiritual (thought, values and imagination)]. In consequence, a sociologist–instructor must be above all a highly qualified specialist and combine a high theoretical level of sociological knowledge with the talents and skills of conducting concrete empirical research (Isaev 1993).

During the late 1980s, combining teaching and research in Soviet universities was a radical rethinking of the relationship between education and science, which hitherto had been regarded as fundamentally different social institutions. Social scientific research was conducted primarily for the Soviet politico–industrial–military complex and produced in 'scientific' institutions such as the Academy of Science and on-site research centres. Social science education, on the other hand, was carried out to provide scientific institutions with a skilled labour force, and was situated in specialised secondary and higher education institutions such as universities and technical institutes. While this rendering of the relationship between teaching and research may have been called 'dialectical,' the emphasis is on research and an academic's ability to train students to be well-rounded professional researchers.   For example, a recently published sociology textbook criticised teaching materials in the field because their authors 'do not do concrete sociological research'

and therefore produce books which are, on the whole, merely traditional or classical 'compilations of sociological views' (Tishin 1998: 3).[68]

Within the BHU Sociology Department, there have been a number of initiatives to include students in research work. Some instructors supervise small groups of students as part of their *nauchno–issledovatel'skaia rabota so studentami* (scientific–research work with students). In 1996–97, Ibraeva mentored a group on 'the role of mass media information in the reformation of society' and Asanbekov supervised one which dealt with the 'problems of establishing new social commonalities' (BHU 1997). In 1999, Shaidullaeva organised a student club called 'Datkaiym' in order to hold discussions on contemporary social problems, particularly regarding female elites (BHU 2000).

Despite such initiatives, the creation of a dialectical relationship between teaching and research remains a formal rather than substantive project. While students are required to assist with projects carried out by members of the sociological laboratory and conduct individual research projects, apprenticeships are often formulaic and not systematically integrated into students' learning experiences. Instead of being dialectically related, it is perhaps more accurate to say that sociological teaching and research co-exist as related but discrete activities.

As with the curriculum, sociological research at BHU is highly structured, centrally organised and dominated by a small number of senior academics. It is defined as a departmental, not individual, activity. Instructors and students must design projects which conform and contribute to the department's 'general scientific theme.' In the 1999–2000 Annual Report, for example, it was specified that 'members of the department continued to work actively on their scientific themes, defined in the framework of the departmental themes' (BHU 2000). From 1994 to 2000, the 'all-faculty scientific problem,' funded by the State Committee for Science and Technology of the Kyrgyz Republic, was 'Kyrgyzstan on the road to democracy and the market.' By 1995, the Sociology Department had developed its own 'all-department theme' within this broad framework, called 'Social changes in the conditions of a transitional society' (BHU 1995, 1998, 2002).

Every year, this broad programme is divided into a number of narrower themes, each one investigated by a designated group of instructors and supervised by a senior faculty member. Such research teams are more commonly referred to as 'sociological groups' and may be constituted and reconstituted depending upon the nature of the research (Nurova 2003). In 1994 and 1995, teams conducted research on the establishment and development of new social groups in the process of transition to market relations, the particularities of the creation of new political, military and economic elites in the conditions of democracy, and changes in the process of transformation (BHU 1994, 1995).[69]

Under the first theme, supervised by Isaev, staff conducted empirical research on topics such as the development of a national working class, entrepreneurs and farmers, the social problems of women, and the participation of young people in privatisation, ultimately publishing twenty-one articles on the results of this research in national newspapers and several locally produced *sborniki* (BHU 1995). The following year, the team developed a programme on 'monitoring public opinion,' upon which basis they made recommendations to the governmental groups in charge of designing privatisation policies and produced a four-part publication, *The Kyrgyz Republic: Changes in the Process of Social Transformation*, which focused on outlining the effects of political and economic reform on everyday life in Kyrgyzstan (BHU 1995). The aim of this research was overwhelmingly to ascertain and expose the 'objective social reality' about the reforms, which, it was argued, was obscured by both popular misinterpretation and political propaganda, particularly on the part of the government.

The second theme, also supervised by Isaev, explored the 'formation of the political elite as it is directly linked with fundamental changes in the life of the new Kyrgyz state.' The process, it was asserted, could only occur in a democracy 'defined by political freedom and political pluralism.' Research on the topic, which was dominated by Isaev's controversial studies on political ratings conducted from 1991–97 (see Chapter 9), therefore focused on drawing correlations between elite power and levels of political freedom in the republic (BHU 1995). In post-independence Kyrgyzstan, political ratings studies are defined as 'an important element of democracy in all civilised

states;' it is argued that they 'serve as a believable source of social information for making decisions or correcting the political behaviour of leaders' (Isaev et al. 1994b). They are also symbolic of a shift from traditional politics to rational political organisation insofar as they '[evaluate] the head of state not according to his position in the hierarchy, but according to his concrete deeds, and the effectiveness of the work he undertook to do' (Isaev et al. 1994).

During this period, departmental reports claim that little research was conducted on the third all-departmental theme, the 'social-spiritual face of the people of Kyrgyzstan,' owing to a lack of funds for empirical sociological research (BHU 1995). However, some faculty members pursued this theme in more individualised ways, despite severe financial and professional constraints. Asanbekov, for example, has developed a project on national culture, filling notebooks with commentary on theories of social change and globalisation. However, he feels disabled by lack of resources and support, and his personal research has not been included in the department's overall research programme. Claiming that his primary role as university pro-rector takes up 80% of his time, he says, 'very little time, practically none, is left for working on any sort of scientific problem.' While he can work in a group within the Sociology Department, he would prefer to pursue his personal research interests. 'In general,' he remarks,

> I am a better scientist than administrator. […] It makes me happier to do unofficial scientific research. If they give me money to publish three articles, it would be a great achievement for me. Not only because I would work on something to completion, [but also because] these articles contain my own opinion, my own analysis of these problems. […] If I could be sure that I would receive a salary for scientific research and knew I could support my family on it, of course, I would absolutely leave [the administration] for science (Asanbekov 2003).

From 1996 to 2000, the department's research programme was expanded to include other themes, which were pursued to varying degrees from year to year: socio-cultural processes (e.g., globalisation, migration, mass media and ideology), labour and distributive relations (e.g., unemployment, internal migration, poverty), the establishment of new social groups (mainly entrepreneurs and various professional strata), changes in the social types of

individuals (including migrants and women), deviant behaviour and inter-ethnic relations (BHU 1997). The results of empirical studies (primarily questionnaire research and expert surveys) conducted on these themes were again used to 'make recommendations for organs of social administration in [the] republic' and published in internally produced *sborniki* and national newspapers. Several faculty members also completed individual projects within this framework: Ibraeva, for example, published a book on media in Kyrgyzstan, and Alamanova produced a translated summary of a German textbook on the sociology of labour and professions (BHU 1997).

The research conducted by the programme's aspirants reflects the department's insistence on professional hierarchy as well as intellectual homogeneity. During 1994 and 1995, seven were writing dissertations on the development of social groups, two on problems of the political elite and two on more general topics of social development in Kyrgyzstan.[70] All but two were supervised by Isaev and all took Kyrgyzstan as their unit of analysis or 'example.' From 1996 to 2000, after the department's research programme had been broadened to include other themes, these students were joined by new aspirants who focused on emerging themes of democratisation, stratification, values and religion;[71] Satkynaliev worked together with Isaev to comprise the department's new 'team' on deviant behaviour.[72] By 1998 and 1999, the department's aspirants, most of whom were supervised by Isaev, had also begun to concentrate on the study of 'civil society,'[73] and by 2001 were working within the new thematic component on the 'problems of gender relations in Kyrgyzstan,' led by Shaidullaeva (BHU 2002).

Graduate students at BHU rarely have the opportunity to choose their own topics of research, and many are assigned studies which correspond to the work of a senior academic and the department's 'general scientific theme.' Botoeva (2003), for example, met with considerable resistance when she proposed to write a masters thesis on narcotics, a subject which she became interested in while on an educational exchange to Indiana University:

> I wanted to write my dissertation on narcotics, but they didn't
> let me. They said, 'oh you're such a girl, you still don't have
> enough information, it's an overly dangerous theme.' And thus,
> though I wanted to do research about drugs, I don't know why,
> I couldn't. […] I went seven times in order to get away from

the theme [and my supervisor]. I wanted to work with [another supervisor], but he didn't want to give me to anyone because he knew I would do all right. I went to him seven times and told him I didn't want to do this theme. It was a horrible theme: 'Open society: problems and perspectives of its establishment in Kyrgyzstan.' I wanted to write about narcotics. And then [the person who I wanted to supervise me] said, 'you're small, you're weak,' as if there were no problems with narcotics that would support interviews or something.[74]

The control over and homogenisation of research interests, however, reflects more than an affinity to intellectual centralisation. While monism is encouraged for the sake of solidarity and control, it is exacerbated and at times almost necessitated by the severe shortage of scholarly materials in other areas. According to the department's annual report for 1995, research conducted by members of the department on the topics above 'form[ed] the foundation of the information base of research programmes for graduate dissertation themes in sociology and politology' (BHU 1995). The university library stocks only a few books on sociology and selected volumes of *Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniia*, and the smaller library maintained by the Faculty of Socio–Political Sciences contains mainly theoretical and introductory textbooks. Likewise, there are few academic resources on contemporary sociology housed in the national library (e.g., Isaev 2003a; Osmonov 2001).

In addition to working within the department's structured research programme, faculty members and graduate students therefore also seek funding from foreign grants or research commissioned by the government or international organisations such as UNESCO, TACIS, Gallup and the IMF. Despite his criticism of the colonialist nature of such relationships, Isaev (1993) has even suggested that under such circumstances sociological laboratories should be used for 'fulfilling *zakazy* from the state, private or other types of organisations and enterprises on a *khozgovorniy* level [i.e., financial contracts], which is an important source of additional salary for teachers, co-workers and students.' Such research generally addresses topics of interest to these agencies, such as migration, business, unemployment and reproductive health. However, because it frequently takes the form of

empirical data gathering for use in specific policy reports, it has little impact on the department's research programme as a whole.

Boundary–work and contingency in sociology at BHU

Outwardly, the BHU Sociology Department presents a clear, unambiguous image of sociology as an academic discipline, educational subject and profession. However, a more careful analysis of how this reified image has been constructed and maintained reveals that it emerged at the convergence of a number of non-scientific factors, including the opportunities and constraints provided by the state educational system and the institutional organisation of the university, the norms which govern how sociologists acquiesce to or challenge these structural conditions, the background assumptions and intellectual architecture of individual actors, historical legacies of financial and academic dependency, and the ascendance of new discourses on both social science and society.

The need for disciplinary boundary–work which aims to extend the authority of sociology into already existing fields is minimised in the department, primarily because decisions about how to distinguish between sociology and other academic disciplines and social practices are generally made outside the department itself. The state, particularly the Ministry of Education and its affiliated advisors, is recognised as the legitimate authority in categorising bodies of knowledge, particularly insofar as these are linked to sectors of society which fall under the purview of the state. Similarly, there is little controversy over what content (concepts, topics and skills) may be legitimately included in or excluded from the discipline. This is because sociologists at BHU also recognise more abstract authorities of canonical knowledge and disciplinary tradition in both Soviet and western sociologies. Many faculty members are unfamiliar with the concept of 'the canon' and, assuming a positivist theory of knowledge production, do not question the disciplinary standards that are perceived to have been established as hegemonic.[75] The reproduction of hegemonic canons which are defined as standards of excellence in mature science is therefore interpreted as the ideal method for disciplinary development. The legitimacy of new truth claims in

sociology is measured against their correspondence to other truth claims issued by external authoritative institutions, namely, the state and dominant western sociological institutions.

The latter phenomenon has material as well as intellectual foundations. Sociologists at BHU have limited access to sociological work, both historical and contemporary. Soviet resources, which are in any case now often neglected, present two dominant paradigms of sociology: Marxist–Leninist sociology and *zapadnaia sotsiologiia*. Older, Soviet-generation sociologists continue to be influenced by both, although it is currently a professional taboo to publicly condone elements of the first. Younger, post-Soviet-generation sociologists, however, rely heavily on Russian textbooks of *zapadnaia sotsiologiia,* most of which were first published in the 1980s and reproduce the traditional classical sociological canon (Weber, Durkheim, Simmel, Mead, Parsons etc.), sometimes including and other times excluding Marx. Due to the lack of resources to purchase new materials, poor Internet access and the breakdown of communication between Kyrgyzstani sociologists with colleagues from more resource-rich former Soviet republics (e.g., Russia and the Baltic countries), those working at BHU have little opportunity to learn about post-Soviet developments in sociology, including work which challenges the hegemony of traditional canons and that introduces new concepts and themes into sociological discourse.

In addition, the hierarchical professional culture within the department reinforces the tendency toward authoritative knowledge reproduction rather than creative knowledge production. The authority of the state is exercised at the department level by academic administrators who assume responsibility for outlining and monitoring compliance with a specific set of disciplinary standards. Senior sociologists at BHU do not have to struggle to establish or maintain their authority within the department, as older Soviet norms of social and academic hierarchy are observed (if not legitimised) by all faculty members. Furthermore, while the rigid hierarchisation of professional position largely eliminates ambiguities about who has authority within the department, it does not prevent competition for status among faculty members. All are equalised on the wider 'market' for research contracts and foreign grants; in fact, younger faculty are often at an advantage due to their higher

levels of social capital (e.g., better computer and in some cases language skills) as well as by ageism in grant-giving agencies. This engenders competitive rather than cooperative relations among sociologists within the department, many of whom respond by hoarding knowledge and information in order to protect their job, niche of expertise and edge in extra-departmental opportunities. In other words, while the department outwardly advocates its commitment to the advancement of social scientific knowledge, the internal organisation and culture instead create conditions for its static reproduction.

The reproduction of social scientific knowledge, however, is also part of the department's project to establish scientific legitimacy vis-à-vis its declared role as producer of the state and nation's new professional and administrative elite. Sociology, defined as an applied profession, is purposefully constructed as a standardised complex of bodies of knowledge and skills which can be transmitted from one generation to the next, 'received' by students, and applied to a range of social problems. The emphasis on technical skill is in turn used to legitimise the discipline's social relevance, which is an important factor in maintaining political and public support for the department and for attracting new students to the programme.

However, there are tensions between the quest for scientific legitimacy and that for social relevance in sociology. The department has not, for example, resolved the discrepancy between its overtly political relationship to the state and its insistence that the sociological knowledge and practice which it purveys are essentially apolitical. Boundary–work has been used to distinguish the nature of sociological knowledge (i.e., 'scientific') from its social role (i.e., political and applied); however, the distinction also blurs the actually existing intersection of the scientific and the political.

In addition, members of the department conduct additional boundary–work to justify their commitment to these two competing goals. On the one hand, faculty members are responsible for maintaining the order of the status quo; overt challenges to the ruling regime made at the department level, for example, would result in reprisals from the university's primary benefactor, the state. The department's teaching and research activities therefore reinforce the notion that the role of sociology is to aid in the more effective administration of state and society; if it is to encourage social change, this

must be effected within the context of advising political and managerial authorities who can then more 'scientifically' design and implement social reforms from the top down.

On the other hand, however, sociologists within the department maintain that one of the discipline's main functions is to 'expose' social reality and unpleasant facts about social life in Kyrgyzstan. As such, the sociology which is taught in the classroom often has a more critical edge. Students may be encouraged to think critically about issues such as the legality of elections, political participation or the meaning of national culture; however, the work they produce for examinations fits comfortably within the bounds of the standards for professional knowledge outlined by the Ministry of Education.

In order to balance these competing roles, the department emphasises an ideal of scientific politics and asserts that a truly 'scientific sociology,' precisely because it is apolitical, can contribute to state-sanctioned social reform through both scientific skills and social criticism. By claiming to offer a window onto social reality through providing students and the public with social scientific information, sociologists can also claim to be promoting the restoration of social stability in a society that is widely regarded as chaotic and trapped within an informational vacuum.

Nevertheless, within BHU the theoretical and conceptual content of sociology are not generative sources of questions about this or any other society. Instead, sociological knowledge is perceived as a resource for answering questions which are raised in other non-intellectual contexts, often about practical problems faced by political groups and organisations, the media and commercial and industrial institutions, or indeed, perceptions of public opinion. Theorising, in other words, is largely absent from the definition of sociological work in BHU.

The BHU Sociology Department is an excellent example of the discipline in transition—not from communism to democracy or socialism to capitalism as is often argued, but rather from Soviet state sociology to national sociology in a post-colonial state. It also reveals how sociologists have interpreted and negotiated the ambiguous relationship between sociology and politics, or truth and power, in this context. Chapter 7 moves away from this example to explore how many of the same structural contingencies coalesced with

different human and cultural factors to cultivate the emergence of a very
different conceptualisation of sociology at the American University–Central
Asia.

8

BETWEEN SCHOLARSHIP AND SERVICE:
SOCIOLOGY AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY–CENTRAL ASIA

Institutional context

History and departmental identity

The Sociology Department at the American University–Central Asia was founded in 1998, five years after the BHU department was established. At the time, the university (then known as the American University in Kyrgyzstan) was five years old. It began in 1993 as the Kyrgyz–American Faculty, a small department housed in the English-language faculty of KNU. Its founder, a charismatic instructor of English named Kamila Sharshekeeva, aimed to train students in English and introduce them to a variety of newly emerging 'market-oriented' fields such as business administration, law and economics. In 1997, the school separated from the National University, strengthened its formal ties with the US government, changed its name to the American University in Kyrgyzstan (AUK), moved into a separate building in the city centre (the former headquarters of the Kirgiz Republic's Communist Party Supreme Soviet) and was conferred independent status by presidential decree (AUK 2002; Ministry of Education 2000).[76] By 1997, the institution began a rapid transition from a small, professionally oriented Soviet faculty to an American liberal-arts-style private college. The shift included a reorganisation of the disciplines, in particular, a new focus on the establishment of social science departments (Reeves 2003).[77]

This coincided with an initiative to establish a 'new kind' of sociology department in Kyrgyzstan, one which would incorporate best practices from both Soviet and American models of sociological education. It was led by Ainoura Sagynbaeva, a Moscow-educated candidate of sociology who was at the time teaching short courses in sociology in one of the university's two departments.[78] Sociology was not introduced to AUCA as an independent discipline, but rather as an elective course. Sagynbaeva, however, was inspired to expand the university's offerings in sociology while on an academic exchange to Washington DC in 1997. There, she encountered a wide variety of sociological perspectives that were absent in Kyrgyzstan, a

strong scholarly community and specialised degrees in which students made choices about how to design their own educational programmes. She returned to Bishkek to discuss the idea with her students at AUK, aided by the daughter of another Kyrgyzstani sociologist who wanted to study sociology. Other interested students followed her example. 'To be honest,' says Sagynbaeva, 'when I told the girls that I dreamt of a school, I didn't mean to have a department. I simply meant colleagues who would understand me, who would love sociology' (Sagynbaeva 2003). She thought that AUK was the most suitable site for her project because it was 'experimental' and less 'Soviet' than either BHU or KNU. She imagined the department from the ground up as an intellectual and academic enterprise, without substantial consideration for the administrative needs of the state.

It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to explore the ideological and institutional particularities of AUCA; this has been done already (Reeves 2003; Sharshkeeva 2001). However, it is important to understand why the university established a reputation as the republic's most 'independent' and post- or anti-Soviet institution. First, the university acquired symbolic political prestige as a 'bridge' between Kyrgyzstan and the United States when US First Lady Hilary Clinton attended its opening ceremonies in 1997. It soon after became endowed with almost missionary status as the standard bearer of 'modern' educational reform and the republic's controversial transition to American-style practices in higher education. Second, owing to the university's heavy emphasis on English-language learning, it began to attract a large number of high performing and wealthy students who were also recipients of foreign grants, many of whom spent time in the US on educational exchange programmes sponsored by organisations such as Soros and ACCELS.[79] In other words, both the administration and student body played a role in encouraging the westernisation, specifically the Americanisation, of higher education at AUK. Third, as Reeves (2003: 28) points out, the school had no Soviet identity to 'shake off.' The novelty factor means that institutions such as AUK, 'whilst facing considerable difficulties of their own (notably, establishing themselves as "reputable" in the eyes of longer-established institutions)…have far greater leeway to introduce reforms

without this being seen as revolutionary (and therefore at risk of encountering reactionary coups).'

However, its self-declared autonomy did not save the university from criticism and hostility. Some of resistance originated from within the faculty, particularly from instructors who wanted to maintain a more specialised and didactic approach to education. There has also been some resistance to 'internationalising' education in a country that is self-consciously constructing a 'national' identity (Reeves 2002b). Finally, many of the university's large-scale administrative initiatives—merit-based admission and scholarships, charging high tuition fees, discouraging bribery and corruption, focusing on cross-curricular critical thinking and switching from a 'points' to a 'credit-hour' system—have met with enormous resistance from other members of the educational community in Kyrgyzstan, many of whom feel threatened by these changes. For some, Reeves argues, AUK is a

> reminder of the glaring inequalities that have polarized Kyrgyzstani society for the last ten years and the unfettered penetration of the market into areas of social life, education among them, that were previously free of such logics. As such, it is often seen as representing a set of values and an educational philosophy rooted in liberal individualism that is alien to, and inappropriate to meet the needs of, contemporary Kyrgyzstan' (2002b: 22).

While there has been no successful 'reactionary coup' against AUCA, there have nevertheless been a number of attempts to close the university, curtail its experimental activities, and force the administration to conform to more traditional types of educational management.

Emerging against this political and cultural backdrop, the Sociology Department also identified itself as an 'experimental' programme. However, Sagynbaeva's initial vision of a hybrid Soviet–American school of sociology was gradually superseded by new plans to institutionalise a thoroughly 'western' Sociology Department, which were put forward by foreign academics recruited by foreign organisations, mainly the Open Society Institute and Indiana University, specifically to 'reform' and 'aid' the department. Although their approaches to the experiment differed, all aimed to bypass the Soviet experience entirely and find ways to adapt disciplinary knowledge from western sociological theory and method to the local context

of Kyrgyzstani society. The programme curriculum was revised twice in five years. The shift from Soviet–American sociology to an Anglo–American–Kyrgyz sociology did not affect the department's identity as an experimental programme; however, it resulted in the department's segregation from other national sociology institutions, its distance from the state, and its strong symbolic and material affiliations with American culture, politics and education.

Funding structure

Like the Sociology Department at BHU, the AUCA Sociology Department has never been a priority for funding or support. AUCA is a private university which represents itself as a model for non-state higher education in the republic. Its main sources of funding are tuition fees, the Open Society Institute and the US State Department. (While the Kyrgyz government signed a memorandum of understanding with the last two, its unspoken responsibility is to offer the university political support in the form of non-interference.) The department enjoys no direct benefit from student fees, although its existence is contingent upon its ability to enrol well educated, fee-paying students.[80] However, it receives technical support (visiting scholars, student exchanges, computer software, teaching materials, etc.) from fixed-term grants such as those initiated by the University of Nebraska, Indiana University, IREX, Fulbright and the Eurasia Foundation (AUK 2002).

AUCA enjoys a considerable degree of autonomy from the Kyrgyz Ministry of Education; however, this was granted in large part as a favour to the school's founders, who had maintained their Soviet-era connections with other members of the new political elite. This autonomy has been maintained by a series of formal and informal negotiations; it is also conditional on donor philanthropy and the stability of political relations between the university and the Kyrgyz and American governments. The fragility of this position was exposed in 2003, when a major internal crisis erupted, pitting different factions of the university leadership and faculty against one another. A symbolic struggle between two philosophies of educational management—bureaucratic and democratic or personalised and authoritarian—became manifested in a professional battle between the university's American

president, David Huwiler, and its former Kyrgyz provost, Sharshekeeva. The Soros Foundation, US government and Kyrgyz state all threatened to withdraw their support for the university if the issue was not resolved to their satisfaction (see Abdrakhmanova 2003).

Such conflicts necessarily affect the Sociology Department; for example, Sanghera (2003) recalls how the rift occupied the full intellectual attention of faculty members, leaving little room for discussing other issues. However, the department is more immediately dependent upon the good will of powerful individuals who are responsible for allocating budgetary funds—the president, vice-president, provost, vice-provost and various financial and pedagogical committees. The need to persuade influential persons within the university administration of the value and merit of sociology education has at times compounded the problem of how to cater to both the Kyrgyz Ministry of Education, which confers legal status on the department, and western sponsors, which confer on it symbolic intellectual legitimacy.

Just as sociologists working at BHU are pulled between loyalty to the state and the need to solicit supplemental funding from non-state organisations, those working at AUCA are torn between their ideological commitments to 'civil society' organisations and American higher educational institutions, and the need to receive approval from the Kyrgyz government and society. Almost since its inception, therefore, the department has fought two battles on four fronts. Faculty members need to distance themselves from the Kyrgyz state and national education system while nevertheless attempting to gain legitimacy within both, and to align themselves with and obtain accreditation from US educational authorities while distinguishing themselves from American sociologists as members of a uniquely 'Kyrgyz' institution.

These tasks have been made particularly challenging by the perpetuation of severe financial hardship. As with the BHU department, formal sponsorship agreements have not translated into sustainable material maintenance for the AUCA Sociology Department. A year after it was established, the then-chair (Sagynbaeva) and co-chair (myself) submitted a budget to the university administration, requesting money to purchase computers, a printer, copy machine, tape recorder and video camera for research purposes (AUK 1999b). In 2001, the department still lacked these

basic items, as well as money to hire new instructors, purchase books and computer programmes for teaching (e.g., SPSS), subscribe to academic journals, join scholarly associations such as the International Sociological Association or fund student research and extra-curricular activities (AUK 2001).[81] While the university eventually allocated a room for the department to set up an applied research centre in 2002, Ablezova (2003) remembers that 'it was very hard to get these tables and shelves…and the computers were not here. They didn't provide us with a lot.'

One of the department's most acute financial problems is the lack of funding to hire qualified faculty to teach required and elective courses. Even the relatively high salaries offered at AUCA are an insufficient incentive for highly qualified instructors to stay on. Ibraeva (2003), for example, claims that she earned more money working on contract for organisations such as the United Nations and OSCE than she did teaching at AUCA. Although she earned $250 a month as an instructor, these 'earnings as a sociologist in universities were never the main source of income.' However, the administration does not provide the department with the resources or authority to hire new instructors, despite the fact that faculty members have argued that this would enhance the university's own objectives to improve scholarship and raise its profile within the international academic community. In 2001, the department's two co-chairs (Botoeva and Reeves) requested $2,650 to hire two full-time faculty members who would have 'a commitment to teaching' and support the department's transition from a Soviet-style 'point' system to an American-style 'credit-hours' system (AUK 2001). Although this request was denied, the department was nevertheless expected to alter its curriculum to conform to the university's new credit-hour system.

After five years of failed appeals for financial and professional support from the university, faculty began to seek alternative solutions to their perpetual financial crisis. Since its establishment in 2002, the Applied Research Center has worked to broaden its support base with the foreign organisations for which it conducts research. In this way, faculty managed to secure basic research equipment such as a laptop, camera, dictaphone and video camera from Save the Children UK as part of their contract to conduct a study on child poverty in Kyrgyzstan. While according to the contract these

should all be returned, the staff have been promised that they will be able to keep them (Ablezova 2003).

Like sociologists working at BHU, however, sociologists at AUCA often feel disempowered by unequal relationships with foreign clients.

> CIMERA kind of published [our research], and we are going to publish something for Children and Poverty—a book or some kind of bulletin. As for the HIV project, they promised us that they would publish it as well. But we do not have any kind of rights…I mean we don't have money for it. That's why we don't ask them. For sure, we will have some credits for publishing. There should be an inscription that it was conducted by the Applied Research Center, and [have] our names there. […] The basic problem in our centre is the financial part. We don't know how to negotiate these things. [There are] little things we just don't know. [Things we can't do.] Because the data is not our property; it's the property of the clients (Ablezova 2003).

Without adequate funding from either the state or university, however, the department is forced to earn revenue through commercial research.

In addition, sociology instructors have increasingly turned toward visiting faculty, particularly from the department's partner school, Indiana University, for training and collaboration in areas such as curriculum development, departmental administration, sociological theory and methods of social research. Unlike the BHU Sociology Department, which is not defined as a progressive 'target institution' by western universities or aid organisations, the AUCA department receives between one and three visiting faculty—often American and British—from overseas universities per year. The following section describes more closely the role that these foreign instructors play in the life of the department and in the conceptualisation of sociology itself.

Faculty relations

The AUCA Sociology Department comprises a mixture of permanent Russian-speaking local faculty, most of whom receive average salaries of $80 to $150 per month, and revolving English-speaking foreign faculty, who are generally paid 'foreigners' wages' of $200 per month or more. From 1998–99, there were six instructors on the department roster—one candidate of sociology (Sagynbaeva) and a doctor of philosophy (Isaev, who was also teaching at

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BHU), one masters of sociology (myself), and three instructors with lower degrees. However, four of the six taught only one general education or elective course each; Sagynbaeva and I taught the remaining nine required and three elective classes. In 1999, when we assumed responsibility for teaching the required sociology sections of the undergraduate curriculum, instructors from other universities and research centres such as Nurova and Elebaeva joined the department temporarily to offer elective courses in the sociology of management and ethnology. By 2000, the faculty consisted of eight instructors: four *shtatnye*, or 'on the staff,' and four *sovmestiteli*, or instructors from other institutions hired on a contract basis to teach semester-length elective courses (AUK 2000, 2000a). All instructors are expected to teach at least one course per semester; however, their professional responsibilities do not include individual or collective research. Although there have been initiatives to integrate teaching and research within the department, at the time of this study these were still treated as separate activities, the Applied Research Center being affiliated with the department but operating independently from it.

The Sociology Department is a young department. While it employed a number of older-generation instructors to teach elective courses from 1998–2001, many have since left AUCA and been replaced by younger American-educated instructors (e.g., Mehrigiul Ablezova, Gulzat Botoeva and Medina Aitieva). Because the department does not offer graduate training and lacks the resources to recruit senior instructors, its main recruitment policy involves sending promising graduates abroad to pursue further education or masters degrees at Indiana University, with the understanding that they will return to teach. There are concerns, however, that this 'train-to-return' model of faculty recruitment may in the long run contribute to brain drain rather than sustainable development. While aspirants graduating from BHU have fairly limited opportunities for employment within and beyond the republic, those completing English-language degrees from western universities often face difficult choices about whether to remain in western academia or return to Kyrgyzstan. John Newman, who worked as a visiting professor in the department during the spring of 2003, says,

it seems to me that a place like AUCA is targeting the best and the brightest to give them a ticket out. […] I know you can't stop people from doing this…I fully have sympathy with the hierarchy of needs; that if you are hungry you can't think about the great philosophical issues of the universe. […] I don't know if what I hear is just some sort of general academic grousing that you hear all academics doing about how tough life is in the academic world, but for them it is hard.

Another strategy for increasing the number of qualified instructors on the faculty is to recruit from abroad; to 'import expertise.' Although one departmental document (AUK 1999c) claims that the department intended to 'recruit well-known specialists from [the Kyrgyz Republic], the US and other western countries,' new recruits have been drawn primarily from the US. Since the department's establishment, at least one full-time, junior-level American or British instructor has been appointed by a foreign organisation, primarily the Soros-sponsored Civic Education Project (CEP), though also Fulbright and Indiana University.[82] Although two such instructors (Balihar Sanghera and Russell Kleinbach) hold PhDs in sociology, others such as myself (co-chair from 1998–2000) and Madeleine Reeves (co-chair from 2000–02) were hired immediately after completing masters degrees in the field. Regardless of degree level and their temporary contract status, however, foreign instructors are often offered either an administrative position within the department (i.e., chair or co-chair) or receive privileged status as 'consultants' or advisors.

As at BHU, faculty relations in the department are hierarchical. Formally, the department is organised around principles of democratic governance, mutual cooperation and academic freedom. Many of its members in fact distinguish themselves from instructors in state universities by their deliberate refusal to institutionalise hierarchies of age, status and degree. Indeed, faculty meetings within the department are more than formal exercises. While frequently poorly attended, such meetings often involve serious debates about the programme—which courses should be required and elective, how to assess students for admission and graduation, how to organise internships, etc. Younger instructors also enjoy more dynamic and equitable relations with their older colleagues, most of whom fall into Ibraeva's 'intermediate' category of middle-aged sociologists, and most of whom have

received some degree of sociology education in American universities. Team teaching is encouraged, and instructors are often invited (or, in times when teaching staff is particularly stretched, required) to design innovative courses which are added to the curriculum without necessarily receiving formal approval from senior faculty. Many of the department's achievements, including the establishment of the Applied Research Center, have been initiated and/or accomplished by junior instructors.

Despite the more open atmosphere and egalitarian relations, however, professional power is nevertheless stratified in the department. Power and prestige are distributed not according to age and academic degree as in BHU, but are rather based on an individual's occupational status and ethnicity or citizenship. Full-time foreign members of the faculty command considerable prestige, owing to their ideological affiliation with 'the west,' but exercise limited professional power as they are often poorly integrated into the university's formal and informal power structures. Their high level of job security and exclusion from indigenous power structures such as the clan, however, make them well placed to lobby the university administration on sensitive issues where their Kyrgyzstani colleagues often fear to tread. Full-time Kyrgyzstani instructors occupy a more ambiguous position. While they are afforded greater professional power in terms of administrative decision making at the university level, they tend to have less intellectual and academic prestige than their foreign colleagues. They also have less job security, which often makes them reluctant to enter into debates with the administration. Part-time local instructors, particularly those who do not speak English and spend little time in the department, have the lowest power and prestige, and part-time, temporary foreign instructors often play very little role in the department at all.

These inequalities are reinforced by the administration's privileged treatment of foreign faculty, relatively low salaries, and the absence of incentive or pressure (as in BHU) to contribute to conform to a departmental identity. Newman (2003), in fact, remarked that

> the most interesting thing is that I see faculty kind of trying to
> *act* like faculty, but—it strikes me for a variety of reasons—not
> being able to do it. And I think that, especially with the young

faculty, there's no senior local faculty to act as mentors that didn't live under a very autocratic system. I think [there is a] sense of faculty governance, faculty responsibility, faculty taking charge of the academic mission of the university—and at once you see that happening, but at the same time you don't. I don't see it enough and I don't see it sustained as much as I'd like to see it, where people, where their single-minded devotion is to making this work, and to work becomes my responsibility shared with my colleagues, a sort of collegial intensity that I think is going to be required here (Newman 2003).

Divisions are also exacerbated by the department's two-way language barrier: most foreign faculty speak little or no Russian and many of the local instructors do not speak English. The latter problem has improved in recent years, however, as local faculty members have taken it upon themselves to learn English and foreign faculty take an interest in Russian. Internal groups within the department, however, continue to be organised around language, with English-speaking local and foreign faculty forming an influential core.

As a result of these subtle hierarchies, an intellectual–technical division of labour has emerged within the department. For a number of years, the intellectual content of the sociology programme was organised and maintained by full-time faculty members, mainly the chair and co-chair, who made key decisions about curriculum design, course offerings and programme policy before presenting them to the rest of the faculty for discussion and amendment. While curriculum design is formally a team effort, foreign academics have historically dominated decisions about the type of content to include and exclude from the curriculum. This trend has begun to change in recent years, however, as visiting faculty have begun to value perspectives from local faculty and as local instructors have demanded to be more involved in the educational process. Changes to the curriculum in 2003, for example, were negotiated among a core group of local and foreign English-speaking faculty (e.g., Ablezova, Botoeva, Sanghera and Tanya Yarkokva). Although Sanghera, the sole foreign faculty member in the group, initially brought the notion of reform to the table, it was an issue that had been of concern to the others, and he points out that he would have desisted had the others not been interested in participating (Sanghera 2003). Despite this greater degree of collaboration, however, professional authority remains determined by degrees of 'western-ness;' Sanghera was routinely asked by his peers to draft ideas and

reports that could be put to discussion among the group, and took a leading role in lobbying for the changes with the university administration.

While part-time, local and younger instructors are not systematically exploited at AUCA, they are nevertheless responsible for the vast majority of administrative and technical work within the Sociology Department. This includes writing reports for the university administration, marketing for student recruitment and liaising with other departments, as well as organising events and translating for foreign instructors working in the department. As will be seen below, the foreign–local hierarchy also reveals itself in more intellectual forms, in particular, the definition of sociology itself.

Conceptualisation of sociology

The paradigm: sociology between scholarship and profession

While sociologists at BHU aim to create and strengthen institutional ties between sociology and the apparatus of the nation-state by defining sociology as an applied profession, at AUCA the discipline has been defined in deliberate opposition to existing conceptions of the relationship between social science and society in Kyrgyzstan. Its faculty have consciously striven to sever associations with what are often referred to as 'Soviet' conceptions of social science, including its affiliation with the state, and to foster new affinities with the international (i.e., Anglo-American) academic community.

Sociology was first defined at AUCA as a liberal art, oriented toward explaining and understanding society (as opposed to 'fixing' it), and as a discipline which would enable students to become independent and 'critical' thinkers. In 1999, Sagynbaeva outlined three priorities for departmental development: the expansion of elective courses and student choice in sociology, the encouragement of independent research on the part of both students and faculty, and the development of critical thinking skills, leadership qualities and creative talents (AUK 1999a). While she herself is an applied researcher, she rejected the applied–professional model of the field in her early visions for the department. Likewise, when Ibraeva took over as chair in 2002, she came, at least formally, with a liberal intellectual agenda. She aspired not only to 'give a definite sum of sociological knowledge, but to teach students to think critically, using established technologies of analysis' in

order to help them 'find their niche in sociology and be independent individuals' and to contribute to the development of the social science community in Kyrgyzstan (Ibraeva 2003).

The orientation toward liberal–critical scholarship has been consistent, one might say even dominant, within the department. However, unlike at BHU, the philosophy and practice of sociology are considerably contested here. Neither institutional legacies nor governmental authority have played a decisive role in the construction of departmental or disciplinary identity, and the more nationally diverse faculty has struggled to strike a balance which meets the expectations of both 'local' and 'foreign' constituencies. The project of defining sociology in the post-Soviet period is complicated at AUCA by the underlying tension between 'internationalising' and 'nationalising' forces, manifested in the desire to create a western-style sociology that will nevertheless be recognised as a legitimate specialisation in Kyrgyzstan. While the overarching identity as a private, alternative, post-Soviet department provided space for the development of a liberal, non-Soviet conceptualisation of sociology, the concurrent need to integrate the discipline into new national frameworks demanded increasing attention to the applied–professional model.

The conceptualisation of sociology as liberal–critical scholarship is not only incompatible with the intellectual orientations of some Kyrgyzstani faculty, but also with many of the material realities of higher education in the republic. The dominant conception of sociology therefore co-exists with an alternative conception of the discipline as an applied profession. While the department may be characterised primarily as a science of society oriented toward interpretation and social criticism, it has become increasingly characterised as applied science in the service of 'civil society.' While the rhetoric of American social service is used to describe the department's public orientation, 'service' is still defined in practice as the provision of information-gathering services for potential clients. In addition, while the department views itself as a training ground for a new national elite, the meaning of this differs dramatically from the state-centric 'cadre politics' which shape conceptions of professional sociology at BHU. At AUCA, sociology students are expected to make contributions to national and

international development not necessarily by applying technical skills to practical problems, but through producing critical research and social criticism; they are encouraged to identify not with the government, but with its international opposition. This conceptualisation, as will be seen below, has impacted both the curriculum and the department's research activities.

The early mission of the department was fluid and nebulous. Unlike at BHU, where the department reproduced many familiar Soviet practices and was subject to strict governmental control, according to Sagynbaeva (2003) 'there was absolutely no foundation for creating programmes at AUK.'

> You went [to the administration] and they said, 'fine, in September there will be a new programme.' I had to…create an *uchebnyaia programma* and find instructors to teach the courses. My situation was extremely complicated in comparison with other department heads, because they had the first course [of students] coming. That's OK; there are a number of general subjects. But I had the problem of finding teachers for [second-year students]; I had to write a programme for the second course. And of course this was difficult because there was still no programme for the *first* course. There still were no goals or concepts, in general, of what [or] who we would graduate. There was absolutely nothing.

The freedom to design new parameters for sociology education and to reject the state standards allowed for a certain amount of innovation in the conceptualisation of the discipline. However, in conjunction with a shortage of books, journals and contact with other sociologists, it also created something of an intellectual vacuum. Sagynbaeva was in a less than ideal position to take advantage of this potentially liberating ambiguity. She had limited access to alternative models of sociology education and few colleagues with whom she felt she could discuss the issue in any depth. Furthermore, after granting her permission to establish a sociology department, the university administration expected her to produce and implement a full curriculum for first and second-year students. Ironically, in an institution which purported to value critical thinking and intellectual experimentation above all else, Sagynbaeva did not have the luxury of creative contemplation. Her initial plans to develop sociology as a locally relevant intellectual vocation were soon overshadowed by the pragmatic demands of institutionalising it as a general, standardised academic discipline.

This more technocratic approach to departmental development resulted not in the articulation of Sagynbaeva's 'new Soviet–American sociology,' but rather in the urgent importation of foreign, mainly American and British, models of sociology education. In contrast to the state-centred and top-down development of the BHU Sociology Department, sociology at AUCA evolved under the influence of hegemonic definitions of sociology imported from abroad. The practice of adopting foreign models of sociology education became institutionalised as the university began to hire foreign sociologists to help establish the department and reform the social sciences. In the autumn of 1998, for example, I joined CEP and was assigned to serve as Sagynbaeva's co-chair in the new department. However pleased she was to have help, she had not invited this particular type of intervention. 'To be honest,' she remembers,

> when we were told that an American woman was coming to help me and to teach, I was a little worried because it was so hard for me. Everything was new, and I was all by myself. And then to take on some American woman—I thought, what a surprise! What will I do? How will I do it? We don't have a common language. I was really worried (Sagynbaeva 2003).

These feelings changed over time as we developed a working relationship and she 'understood that we could work together' (Sagynbaeva 2003). However, she also feels that while the department is 'alive,' it is not entirely what she initially imagined it would be.

This is evident in a comparison of promotional brochures published by the department in 1999 and 2003. At the time, the university's high tuition fees, distance from traditional educational institutions, lack of state attestation, emphasis on English-language instruction and liberal education, and affiliation with the Soros Foundation and US government made it difficult to attract Kyrgyzstani students seeking 'marketable' professional degrees. Furthermore, few people in the republic had heard of sociology—or at least the types of sociology advanced by the department. For example, in a faculty–student meeting to 'explore sociology,' one student admitted that she thought a *sotsiolog* was someone who gathered statistics for the government, while another suggested that we change the name of the discipline altogether to clarify its meaning and dissociate it from Soviet sociology. Because the

department's survival depended on student intake, one of its first tasks was therefore to construct a departmental and disciplinary identity which would attract students to the programme.

The definition of sociology in the first brochure was a generic one that had been adapted from a selection of US websites:

> Sociology is the systematic study and inquiry of human social life. It provides a solid basis for understanding modern and historical social issues, including individual and group relationships, crime and poverty, human rights, racism, sexism, politics, economics and social stability and processes of change (AUK 1999).

The programme's main selling point at this time was a quote from Peter Berger's *Invitation to Sociology*, which promised students that they would be able to 'look behind the scenes' to find out what was 'really going on' in the social world. The 'social world' in this case was in fact an image of society constructed by mainstream American sociologists; 'social issues' were framed in unfamiliar lexicon such as 'individual and group relationships, crime and poverty, human rights, racism, sexism, politics, economics and social stability and processes of social change' (AUK 1999). The programme's learning outcomes as defined in this brochure reflect the early dominance of the liberal–critical conceptualisation and the heavy influence of American sociology. It was designed to 'offer students critical sociological perspectives and concepts for understanding the complexities of modern social life and problems, train students in the principles and methods of qualitative and quantitative social research, introduce students to classical and contemporary social theories and research concerns, familiarize students with fundamental issues of sociological study, encourage students to develop individual research interests, and prepare students for a variety of professional work and/or graduate training in sociology' (AUK 1999).

Sagynbaeva did not include either her intention to build on Soviet sociological experience or an introduction to 'social problems' as defined by Kyrgyzstani sociologists in this initial conceptualisation of the discipline. However, she insisted on including a section on 'careers in sociology,' or a list of areas in which sociologists might find gainful employment in 'developing effective solutions for complex social problems,' such as businesses, non-

profit and government organisations, journalism and museums. As there was no precedent of employment for sociologists in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan, this list was modified from the website of the American Sociological Association. The department's nationally based division of labour, discussed above, is also reflected in this document: the American author outlined the intellectual substance and social benefits of the discipline, while the Kyrgyz author emphasised its applied and professional dimensions. Despite Sagynbaeva's orientation toward sociology as an intellectual vocation, her fuller immersion into Kyrgyzstani society and concern about the competitive market for students compelled her to take a more pragmatic approach to defining the discipline.

The next promotional brochure, which was published by the same faculty members in 2000, built on the image of sociology as marketable liberal–critical scholarship, but added to this a new symbolic dimension: identification with 'the west.' By this time, although many government officials and educators within the republic remained highly critical of AUK's pro-American orientation, the school had gained a reputation as a prestigious, elite and internationally recognised university. Intellectual geopolitics became an even more important factor in the struggle to attract students, and therefore exerted even greater influence on departmental and disciplinary identity. In an attempt to distance themselves even further from the Kyrgyz state and traditional forms of Soviet education, the department emphasised its intellectual and institutional affiliations with the US and Western Europe, as well as with capitalist values more generally. The brochure asserted that sociology was recognised and practiced 'in all developed countries of the world community,' and that a sociology education would enable students to become highly educated, mobile, independent, oriented to the modern world and valued in national and international labour markets.

By 2002, the department had expanded. Students had successfully graduated from the department and gone on to work and study both in the region and abroad (AUK 2001). This expansion also fostered diversification. Faculty members began to rethink the definition of the discipline. Foreign sociologists continued to promote the liberal–critical scholarship model of the discipline, but also began to question the uncritical adoption of this model for

sociology in Kyrgyzstan and to develop new courses which addressed more 'national' issues or that included localised content. Many Kyrgyzstani faculty, on the other hand, grew frustrated with the department's slow development and continuing financial difficulties and began to seek other models of disciplinary development. As they had by this time assumed primary responsibility for marketing the department, two drafts of a new promotional brochure, published in 2003 in both Russian and English, placed less emphasis on promoting sociology's academic virtues and more on selling its practical usefulness as a tool for personal advancement in what the authors defined as an increasingly competitive, outward-looking society. The first draft, for example, stated that

> [i]n Kyrgyzstan…there are great opportunities to receive a degree in Western universities, especially the Central European University in Budapest, Oxford and many in Germany and the US. […] Receiving a PhD or Masters from a Western university opens many doors, in particular, the possibility to teach in national and foreign institutions and find interesting work in state and international research organisations (AUK 2003c).

While this statement did not appear on the final version, the new emphasis on applied, western-oriented sociology remained. The department still defined sociology as a way for students to 'understand society,' but clarified that theoretical and critical insight into issues such as poverty, crime and corruption was also important for 'resolving these sorts of problems, creating theories which explain the laws of the social world, serving leaders to act and even helping to predict the future' (AUK 2003d). The Americo-centric list of professions available to sociologists outlined in the 1999 brochure had been concretised thematically and rhetorically to better reflect the range of options potentially available to students in Kyrgyzstan: working with non-governmental, commercial and international organisations; teaching in universities and schools; conducting analytical work in state organs of administration such as the ministries of labour, culture, education, migration, and state services on migration; and acting as personnel directors in industrial firms, marketing and advertising. The continuing commitment to teaching sociological theory was linked to a new focus on applied research with the

assertion that 'humanity knows a wealth of examples when theories changed the course of history.' Finally, prospective students were assured that

> the faculty consists of Western sociologists and many local sociologists [who] have received a Western education. Students of our university have large chance to receive financial support both from foreign sponsors and the university. […] The *uchebnyi plan* has received favourable expert evaluations from both American and European specialists and meets the requirements for an international degree, and the diploma will be valid in both Kyrgyzstan and abroad (AUK 2003d).

The inclusion of social problems such as corruption, the use of concepts like 'social law' and prediction, and the new emphasis on sociological professions in government, commerce and industry reflects a subtle indigenisation of the content and context of sociology at AUCA. Ironically, however, indigenisation was also marked by an increase in the level of deference toward American, British and European sociological communities.

By 2003, sociology was defined as a scholarly, practical and marketable discipline which was oriented toward public service at both national and international levels. It was legitimised not only by its grounding in the liberal, non-Soviet tradition of 'critical thinking,' but also by its technical practicality, national relevance and recognition from Western 'experts.' While it was initially conceptualised as an intellectual experiment within and for a transitional post-Soviet society, cultural and material factors intersected to reorient the project in two ways: first, towards American models of sociology as an academic discipline, and second, towards Kyrgyzstani models of sociology as an applied profession. The trajectory of this process can be seen not only in the department's marketing materials, but also in the successive revisions of its undergraduate curriculum.

The internationally-oriented curriculum

In contrast to sociology at BHU, the AUCA sociology curriculum was originally designed with little regard for the national standards. Although the standards had been in place for four years when the department was founded in 1998, sociologists were encouraged to experiment with 'new' models of curriculum development—particularly those imported or adapted from the

US—and to refrain from conforming to the Ministry of Education's expectations. In fact, despite the university's 'commitment to democratic values, to freedom of expression and inquiry, and to academic integrity and honesty' (AUK 2002), many academics who attempted to promote the potential value of more 'traditional' approaches were often ostracised or reprimanded for their 'conservatism.'

A policy of innovation was therefore pursued unreservedly in the Sociology Department during 1998 and 1999, before the faculty and university administration became concerned about obtaining attestation from the Ministry of Education. While the curriculum still diverged from the form and content of the national standards adhered to so stringently by BHU, in 2000 the AUCA department succeeded in obtaining a state license to teach its version of sociology until 2005, at which point the attestation will be reviewed (Ministry of Education 2000, 2001).

As mentioned above, the undergraduate curriculum was born of two separate agendas. The first was Sagynbaeva's desire to design a new type of programme to produce students educated in sufficient depth (as opposed to the wide breadth of the Soviet system), but who were not as narrowly specialised as she believed many American students are. In addition, she wanted to facilitate the development of a new hybrid school of indigenous sociological thought and offer a programme that incorporated student choice as an alternative to the more conventional lock-step implementation of *uchebnye plany*. The second agenda was the university's desire to expand its course offers and establish fully operational, American-style social science departments. While Sagynbaeva's project required considerable space, time and flexibility, the university's mission demanded rapid decision making and procedural institutionalisation.

Without precedent or guiding principles for such a programme and with few sociologists available to staff the faculty of a new department, developing a full, experimental curriculum for sociology presented a considerable challenge. In the first few months of the department's existence, Sagynbaeva drew on her personal experiences as a student and lecturer in Russia, the Ukraine and the US and adapted curricula from American and Russian universities. She also used older models of Soviet sociological education and

consulted with senior sociologists such as Isaev in order to compile a course programme. Despite the difficulties, she also considered this a time of exciting creativity: 'it was a very interesting period of my life,' she recalls (Sagynbaeva 2003).

The first draft of the curriculum (AUK 1998) was not the hybrid Soviet–American degree that Sagynbaeva had initially envisioned. It was learning-centred as opposed to professional training-focused and had been compiled from sample curricula borrowed from American and European sociology departments. It was closely fashioned after the curriculum developed by the university's International Relations Department (now the Department of International and Comparative Politics). The IR programme, written by British and American social scientists working at the university, was based on the philosophy that social science education in Kyrgyzstan should 'move away from the old-style curriculum where all students in a major are required to take the same programme' and to change 'to an American-style curriculum, where students are required to take a number of "core" courses…but otherwise are free to choose among a variety of courses to complete their undergraduate degrees' (AUK 1997). The main agenda of curriculum development in both the IR and Sociology departments at this time was to challenge Soviet philosophies of education and replace them with American ones. The foreign faculty dominating this early phase of curriculum development therefore had little interest in implementing or adapting the national standards for sociology. Furthermore, as many did not speak Russian and had little or no contact with officials from the Ministry of Education or other educational administrators, they failed to realise that this decision was often interpreted locally as radical or even heretical.

The first version of the sociology curriculum ambitiously aimed to 'meet both international standards of sociological training and the particular needs and interests of university students in Kyrgyzstan,' in other words, to combine the local and the global (AUK 1998a). Students were expected to complete a certain number of subject hours of instruction as in BHU. However, the hours corresponded not to 'contact hours' in the classroom, but rather to 'points,' which were in turn correlated to 'credits' in the American higher education tradition. Disciplinary courses constituted approximately one-third of the first

curriculum: a year-long introduction to sociology and a shorter introduction to research methods, two semester-long theory courses, a course in social anthropology, one semester-long course each in qualitative and quantitative (statistical) methods, a course in the sociology of stratification and inequality, and two short courses in academic writing (AUK 1998).

Beyond these requirements, students were expected to choose, with the help of a personal faculty advisor, seven of the following elective courses during the duration of their studies: comparative and historical sociology, sociology of culture, sociology of sex and gender, political sociology, sociological perspectives of mass media, racial and ethnic relations, environmental sociology and human ecology, social demography, principles and methods of computerised statistics, and collective behaviour and social movements. Draft documents from this period also list other potential course offerings such as comparative Marxism, criminology, conflict resolution, medical sociology, democracy and institutions, deviance and social control, sociology of education, social history, and urban sociology. At the time of its implementation, however, the department had instructors to teach only three of the nineteen proposed electives.

In 1999, the department introduced a *praktika*, or internship, into the curriculum. In contrast to the placement-oriented guiding principles of professional training internships at BHU, practical experience at AUK was justified on four grounds: promoting the combination of theory and practice, encouragement of independent research, provision of professional experience, and facilitation of community service. At a more theoretical level, it was based on the belief that 'in sociology there is no prescription for how to connect social theory to social and political practice' (AUK 1999d). A draft plan of the internship project continued that

> [p]raxis is a craft that can only be improved with having to make difficult intellectual, scientific, and moral decisions in real-life situations. Because training in sociology does not provide students with a definitive set of skills or formulas for how to use their theoretical and methodological knowledge in everyday life, it is important to provide them with opportunities to use their sociological classroom training in practical situations. The internship positions…are designed to facilitate

and necessitate connections between students' academic work and practical, professional, and social problems.

This philosophy, however, translated poorly into practice. Organisations which agreed to sponsor student interns (e.g., UNDP Gender in Development, Counterpart Consortium, SIAR Bishkek, the International Organisation of Migration, the National Statistics Committee and the UNHCR) had little experience in coordinating practical learning experiences and often lacked the time and resources to give students adequate attention. Furthermore, many Kyrgyzstani organisations continue to use interns as temporary employees and often assign them menial tasks such as filing or data entry.[83] While later proposals for instituting a 'service learning' component into the curriculum were met with enthusiasm by the departmental faculty (Newman 2003a), many agreed that the lack of time for planning, culturally specific conceptions (e.g., the idea of the university as a 'community resource' and students as competent resource people) and dearth of qualified instructors or host organisations led them to decide that it was impracticable in Kyrgyzstan.

The AUCA sociology curriculum was not initially organised into minors, specialisations or tracks. Following the American tradition, courses were classified as theory, method or specialised topics. Sagynbaeva, however, divided the curriculum into four main 'disciplines' in documents that she prepared especially for the Ministry of Education: social institutions, social structures and processes, the history of sociology, and methods. Despite the department's unique ideological and geopolitical orientation and its status as part of a private university, it still needed to obtain a license from the Ministry of Education before it would be legally permitted to confer sociology degrees on students. Sagynbaeva's more thematic or 'disciplinary' classification system played an important role in convincing evaluators from the ministry that while the department diverged from traditional models of higher education and the national standards, it was still integrated into Kyrgyzstani academic traditions and should therefore be considered a legitimate part of the national educational system.

At the same time, the department sought accreditation from the US so that its degrees would be recognised by the international academic community and accepted by universities abroad. One of the main differences between AUCA

and state universities in Kyrgyzstan is that the former grants both American and Kyrgyz degrees. Students therefore graduate from the university with an AUCA Bachelor of Arts and a Kyrgyz diploma (AUK 2002). Thus, curriculum designers face the difficult task of simultaneously fulfilling two very different sets of academic requirements and developing a programme that is compatible with different systems of education. They must demonstrate to the Ministry of Education, on the one hand, that students undertake study in a wide range of 'disciplines' that will prepare them for 'theoretical, applied and pedagogical work in social science institutions, industrial enterprises, organisations and commercial–entrepreneurial structures,' as well as in centres of public opinion, mass media; branches of governmental social security such as health, labour, legal support and moral welfare; state administration and social organisations, consultancy, or further education in a masters programme in sociology (Ministry of Education 1999).

On the other hand, American reviewers have been more concerned with issues such as eliminating excessive course requirements, striking a proper balance between theory, method and substantive course content, identifying what constitutes 'core' knowledge in sociology, discerning what types of sociology are most necessary in Kyrgyzstan, and questioning whether students can engage in 'service learning' rather than the more traditional *uchebnaia* (instructional) and *proizvodstvennaia* (practical) internships. While the university administration increasingly encourages the introduction of elective courses, the Ministry of Education considers electives useful only for 'enhancing professional quality' (Ministry of Education 1999). Government evaluators have also been concerned that the department's 'new approach' to instruction, a 'synthesis of pedagogical principles generally taken from Kyrgyzstan and the US' (Ministry of Education 1999) contained only a

> limited quantity of courses on social problems in Kyrgyzstan, which is not unimportant at this stage of the development of our state. Also, the programme does not support a material–technical base for conducting sociological research. The material–technical outfitting of programmes allows for the improvement of the practical significance of sociology programmes in Kyrgyzstan (Ministry of Education, Attestation Commission 2002).

Thus, the department must also balance the treatment of locality and globality in the curriculum. The deliberate adoption of an 'American' model of sociology education co-exists with the desire to educate students who will be able to function as sociologists in and for their own society. Both western faculty and officials from the Ministry of Education have consistently expressed concern about the programme's general knowledge approach and relative lack of attention to the sociology of Kyrgyzstani society. Various efforts have been made to correct for this bias. In 1999, for example, Sagynbaeva and I offered a research course on the history of sociology in Kyrgyzstan, and others have since taught classes on post-communist social change, nationhood and ethnicity in Central Asia, and the politics of post-Soviet transition. However, the international orientation of the faculty and institution has overshadowed efforts to indigenise programme content. Sagynbaeva (2003), who no longer works at the university, remains frustrated with both the absence of localised understandings of sociology and the existence of obstacles to producing it:

> I understand that all this knowledge is, you could say, western. In the Soviet system there was little knowledge, and as yet in Kyrgyzstan there is none at all. It is all western. I would like to do it so that in the courses we look at both western theories and some sort of purely Kyrgyz life. […] Of course, this won't be anything grand. It won't be scientific. But they have to try.

The first version of the curriculum looked usable on paper. However, its creators had concerns about its practical viability as early as October 1998:

> [We] cannot offer a complete sociology major without having the faculty to teach the required courses and those courses that students would take in their specialised areas. Those students entering a Bachelors programme in sociology need guarantees that they will be able to complete the requirements for that degree. We can offer a variety of sociology courses or even a sociology minor, but do we have the human resources to announce a sociology degree programme?

In other words, the problem of 'plugging up' gaps in the curriculum also affected this private university. Handwritten notes on the first draft of the curriculum (AUK 1998) reveal that the faculty had devised a number of tactics to fill holes which were left gaping by the lack of instructors: 'Soros exchanges, Fulbright, IREX,' it reads; 'send one to States for MA;' 'ask

Ibraeva, Isaev, Aldasheva to teach…' This sort of 'plugging up' in fact became a central tactic in the department's 'short-term curriculum development plan, designed to meet the immediate needs of sociology students and faculty at AUK.' While sociologists from other universities were hired to teach elective courses from 1999 to 2002, the department's chronic inability to 'begin a process of faculty recruitment and contact…to hire qualified instructors,' precluded a transition to its medium and long-term goals for curriculum development.

In 2002, while the department was still pursuing this short-term tactical approach to faculty recruitment, the curriculum was revised again. Balihar Sanghera, a British sociologist assigned to the department by CEP, initiated discussions about curricular reform among his English-speaking colleagues shortly after his arrival to AUCA. In comparison with his previous CEP appointment in Novosibirsk, which he felt has a dynamic sociology curriculum, the AUCA programme was organised 'bizarrely,' 'chaotically,' with no apparent logic to the inclusion or exclusion of courses. There was 'no structure…to how students would progress in the lifetime of their course.' For example, in one semester students were offered a course on 'social change,' one on 'institutional change,' and one on 'transformations in post-communist countries.' Similarly, the department offered a course on fashion and another on consumption. 'Did we really need two courses on the sociology of consumption?' asked Sanghera (2003).

Although his colleagues had not previously raised the issue amongst themselves, 'there was a degree of consensus that there was something not quite right.' According to Sanghera (2003), 'that's not to say that all of it was wrong…in effect, we didn't really change all that much, I think we changed the structure, but I don't think we changed a lot of the content.' Despite the widespread agreement that the curriculum needed to be revised, there was considerable disagreement about 'what next to do, what kind of courses to offer' (Sanghera 2003). Sanghera wanted to design a curriculum, based on 'best practices' from Lancaster University (UK) and the Central European University (Hungary) that would give students a 'broad understanding of what sociology entails;' specifically, components on economy, culture and politics. Others, however, wanted to include more 'marketable' courses in areas such

as quantitative research methods, and were afraid that theoretical courses 'would not allow students to be employed by what [they] thought to be the main employers, market research companies' (Sanghera 2003).

The curriculum was revised seven times before it was finally accepted by the department and sent on to the university's Curriculum Committee for approval. It was the outcome of a long negotiating process, not only between individuals within the department, but also between competing philosophies of education and conceptions of the nature and social role of sociology. While many of the Kyrgyzstani faculty were engaged in a campaign to make sociology more useful and marketable for both the state and non-governmental organisations, Sanghera advocated a more liberal–critical approach. In his opinion,

> our job as a university is not—not necessarily—to turn out employable people for market research companies. We're not paid [by them] to skill their future employees. I think our job as a university is to broaden the horizon of undergraduates in areas that we think are useful. And we may agree or disagree about what are the canons in sociology, but I think we would recognise what would be a good set of courses. And that is our job. In terms of what happens afterwards, in terms of what happens with employment, I just don't think as lecturers we should be worrying about that.

Ibraeva (2003), however, wanted to

> disseminate this particular world view throughout [her] society. [She] believes in the potential of this science to resolve applied administrative problems [and] hopes that this potential can be realised by [them] in the country.

In the end, the new curriculum was designed to introduce new courses, give students more 'structured choice' in designing their degree, and enable the department to offer a 'broad spectrum of courses that explore in depth the abstract and concrete complexities and contradictions of society' through the lens of what Sanghera identified as the two main 'camps' in contemporary sociology: political economy and cultural studies. It also included a range of methodological and special-topic courses. While this version of the curriculum retained the first curriculum's set of required courses for the first two years of study, third-year students were tracked into specialisations of 'Economy, Polity and Society' or 'Culture and Society,' with the opportunity

to take courses from the alternate track in their final year (AUK 2002). Students are now required to complete 12 courses in social theory and research methods (including structured internships in the second and third years of study), 5 courses in their area of specialisation, 22 elective courses and 14 courses from the general educational requirements.

In addition to its pedagogical goals, the new curriculum also had a more pragmatic agenda: to make the sociology programme more attractive to students, thereby increasing student intake into the department. This entailed integrating sociological content into more dominant discourses of the 'transition,' 'democracy' and 'the market.' According to Sanghera,

> [t]he courses in the curriculum are a mixture of existing and new courses, as well as re-naming previous courses to attract students from other disciplines. For instance, 'Political Sociology' has been re-named as 'State and Society,' 'Economic Society' as 'Market Society,' and 'Methods of Measurement' as 'Quantitative Research Methods' (AUK 2002, 2003a).

As with previous versions of the curriculum, however, the success of the new programme depended on the department's ability to recruit qualified lecturers able to teach new courses such as 'Identity and Difference,' 'Political Economy' and 'Advanced Social Theory.' As Sanghera noted, 'of course, the new courses require particular lecturers to adopt them, and prepare readily for their implementation. Assistance will be offered in terms of visiting guest lecturers, curriculum development programmes abroad, and mentoring from recognised authorities' (AUK 2002). However, as in previous years, the department had little power to select its own visiting faculty and has been unable to attract permanent, full-time instructors willing and able to take on the new courses. As with the 1999 curriculum, half the programme's courses could not be taught at the time of its implementation (Sanghera 2003).

Sanghera, however, chose not to adopt the 'plugging up' approach to this problem which had led to curricular disorder in the first place. He was faced with a choice: to either develop ideas about what constitutes a good curriculum and then figure out how to implement it, or identify current strengths within the department and build upon them. 'I thought that going with our current strengths now,' he says,

would have led to a rather mediocre curriculum because not many of the lecturers are sociologists. […] I felt that was not the way to go. Given that this was a long-term process, a long-term development, nothing that could be fixed right away, I thought that we could come up with some ideas about what are good courses, who could be in the ideal position of teaching them, and then ensure that these people will be in a position to teach them in three years.

Through the revision process, Sanghera (2003) learned that one of the main obstacles to curriculum design was that the contents of the curriculum were almost entirely determined by an economic as opposed to pedagogical logic. 'Academic good practices,' he argues, are intertwined with—even determined by—the 'whole business of economic survival.' Because instructors are not salaried and under constant threat of having their courses cancelled due to low student enrolment, many choose to offer only popular courses, without regard for how these fit into a broader pedagogical framework, or offer the same courses every term in order to reduce workload. To overcome this and encourage instructors to be more creative, he lobbied the administration to make their courses compulsory (required courses are held regardless of student numbers).[84]

Striking a balance of theoretical and practical, national and indigenous subject matter and perspectives is an enduring problem for sociologists at AUCA. It has affected not only curriculum development and teaching, but also conceptions of disciplinarity and the nature and organisation of sociological research within the department.

Disciplinarity

In contrast to BHU where the boundaries of sociology are clearly demarcated from other disciplines, the academic parameters of sociology are more fluid and contested at AUCA. While the department has striven to establish sociology as an independent academic discipline since its inception, it has also embraced, rather unsuccessfully, elements of inter-disciplinarity. This is due partly to the dominance of Anglo-American models of sociology education and partly to influential faculty members' preference for cross-disciplinary knowledge. However, it has also been influenced by more material concerns, in particular, the need to consolidate resources and attract students to the

programme. For example, according to Sanghera (2003), by 2002–03 there 'was a risk that the Sociology Department would be taken over by another department if it didn't get more students.' At the time, it was recruiting only six new students per year. Thus, decisions about the structure of disciplines—their contours, overlapping elements, differences, inter-disciplinary relationships, and connections—have often been made on extra-intellectual grounds, disciplinary or departmental prestige being the most prominent, with 'usefulness' or relevance running closely behind. The tension between erecting and crossing disciplinary boundaries, often interpreted as a matter of personal and cultural politics, has been best revealed in debates about whether to 'merge' the Sociology Department with other social science departments in the university, including Psychology, Anthropology and International and Comparative Politics (ICP).

At the time of this research, the AUCA Sociology Department had become an autonomous division within the university. When it was first established in 1998, it shared a small office with the departments of Psychology and Economics. The three programmes shared space, a budget, equipment and faculty; however, they maintained sharp intellectual boundaries as different disciplines. Psychology, which aimed to provide education in 'political and business life, personal problem solving, group behavior management, personal and professional growth, personnel development management, image making, advertising and public relations,' and economics, which focused on 'offering students an understanding of market-oriented economics,' were not considered legitimate elements of sociology, or the 'systematic study of society' (AUK 2002).

The sheer need for physical space encouraged further disciplinary differentiation. While the Economics Department moved to a new office in 1999, sociology and psychology were still forced to share. In 2001, co-chairs Reeves and Botoeva asserted that

> the departmental space currently available is simply insufficient to accommodate the increased volume of students. There is, at present, often little room to move in the department, and the noise levels from the volume of students and faculty it accommodates limit the amount of productive work that can be achieved (AUK 2001).

That year, both programmes were allocated new, larger offices and in 2002 the Sociology Department acquired an adjoining room to set up its applied research centre. It is clearly distinguished from other departments not only by its physical independence, but also by its identity as discrete, self-contained academic subject. Although sociology students are encouraged to take courses from other departments—many have now become 'cross-listed' for this very purpose—formal interdisciplinary degrees have not been introduced.

The new spatial autonomy, however, did not resolve more intellectual concerns about the disciplinary status of sociology within the university. In fact, increasing stratification between 'stronger' and 'weaker' departments and disciplines has inflamed controversy about whether sociology can and should be considered an independent discipline, and whether the department commands enough prestige and legitimacy to survive on its own. For example, ICP—by far, the university's most lucrative and successful department—suggested in 2002 that the two departments develop a plan for joint intake of students, where second-year students would be required to major in either sociology or political science. From the perspective of the ICP department, affiliation with a more popular discipline would help sociology attract more high-quality students and ultimately help raise its prestige.

Faculty members of the Sociology Department, however, expressed concerns that if students were allowed to enrol in a general programme, they would ultimately choose not to major in the less prestigious field of sociology and that, as a result, its reputation would be tarnished. 'From our side,' recalls Sanghera (2003), 'no one was interested, so it got scuttled there.' Their goal remained to reinforce the disciplinary boundaries of sociology, emphasising its unique contribution to social scientific knowledge and asserting its practical usefulness for society. Instructors from the more resource-rich ICP department, in response, accused the sociologists of being narrow-minded and overly conscious of disciplinary status, as well as over-protective of their student intake.

A similar debate emerged in 2003 when another foreign faculty member from the Anthropology Department (then called Kyrgyz Ethnology) recommended a merger of the two departments. Initially, Sanghera was interested. 'From where I was standing,' he says, 'the

the anthropology department is a weak department. Half the courses don't really make that much sense. And the sort of courses which I think would have been useful for us to offer to them and vice versa to us. For example, economic anthropology. They don't offer this course. Again, maybe this is my bias…how come they don't offer a course on economic anthropology? They offer courses on Kyrgyz music, which is great, but you don't need three courses on that….It was Farida who came up with the idea that we should perhaps merge the departments. […] I thought it was a good idea. You would have one department, Anthropology and Sociology. This would also improve our number intake. No longer would it be 6, because anthropology was also having low numbers, like 5 or 6, so now we would have 12!'

However, this number play would have other consequences. Merging the departments would mean that there 'had to be some rationalisation and job losses and the lecturers in anthropology weren't willing… [but] you couldn't have a department of 12 [students] per year with almost 12 [instructors] full-time; it just wouldn't be viable' (Sanghera 2003). In addition, both departmental chairs realised that one would have to stand down.

The proposal was finally overruled by Ibraeva, chair of Sociology, who was at the time on an exchange programme in Indiana. However, the rank and file faculty members of both departments had been critical of the plan all along. Many 'felt that anthropology and sociology were sufficiently different from one another to merit having different departments' (Sanghera 2003). As one argued, neither discipline was established or well understood. Combining the programmes would therefore only lead to more confusion, the eradication of both, and *kasha* (a mixed mess) (Bakchiev 2003; also Sanghera 2003). In his mind, it was imperative to delineate and institutionalise anthropology and sociology as discrete scientific disciplines, each with their own specialised body of knowledge, skills and applications.

Finally, the question of disciplinarity arose again with regard to the boundary between sociology and mathematics, and during debates over who has the authority to teach courses in social science. In 2003, members of the Sociology Department began to re-examine the rationale for the mathematics component in its entrance exam and curricular requirements. While maths was required by the Ministry of Education, it was largely irrelevant to students' performance in the programme, which was evaluated on more

qualitative criteria and their ability to perform statistical analysis for social research. However, when a recommendation was made to replace mathematics requirements with open-ended essay or analytical problem-solving questions, there was great concern that faculty from the mathematics programme would be resistant and even view the move as an attack on their occupational status.

A similar controversy had erupted earlier in the year when the Sociology Department wanted to replace mathematical statistics courses with 'social statistics,' to be taught by sociologists; they were accused of 'stealing' classes (and therefore students and salaries) from the mathematics programme. A similar accusation was also levied against the department when influential foreign faculty challenged the authority of the American Studies Department, which had begun to offer a 'track' in sociology and teach sociology courses that were not affiliated or cross-listed with the Sociology Department. As Newman (2003) put it, 'American Studies has a de facto sociology program, [but] they don't have a single person qualified to teach sociology teaching in a sociology curriculum.' While these criticisms were issued in order to make distinctions about professional qualification and to preserve the authority of instructors in the sociology department, they were often interpreted as occupational posturing and disciplinary narrow-mindedness.

These examples illustrate that the tendency to promote disciplinarity over inter-disciplinarity in sociology at AUCA is a deliberate choice, influenced by material as well as intellectual considerations. Here, boundary–work is a matter of both professional survival and intellectual clarification. The conjunction of structural conditions and ideas has also affected the nature and organisation of sociological research conducted within the department, as illustrated in the following section.

Individualised, market-driven sociological research
While the AUCA department has historically focused on teaching sociology, the inclusion of a research component was a priority since its establishment and faculty are formally encouraged to conduct academic research as part of their professional responsibilities (AUK 1999a). However, the department did not establish a research centre until 2002 (AUK 2003b). Several factors

contributed to this, including AUCA's liberal arts agenda, the intellectually oriented visions of the department's founders and the sheer lack of physical space and human resources, which made a distribution of labour between teaching and research difficult, if not impossible.

The Applied Research Center defines itself as a 'non-commercial research organization…which undertakes research on issues of social significance' (AUK 2003). Initially, plans to create a laboratory were based on the assumption, derived from Soviet principles of dialectical education and practice, that members of a sociology department should conduct research and that this required space beyond the small office that sociologists shared with members of the Psychology Department (AUK 2001). The need for designated research space became pressing as the curriculum was expanded to include student internships and practical research experience. As phrased in a 2001 budget request,

> The students in [sociology and psychology] have repeatedly requested a room where they can conduct empirical research (interviews, focus groups, experiments etc.), and which would be equipped appropriately for that purpose. AUK currently lacks such a space. (AUK 2001)

Sociology instructors also appealed to the university administration's own pedagogical philosophy in their requests for funding:

> The move to a credit-hours system will place greater emphasis on the need for a space where faculty can conduct tutorials/consultations/office hours with students in relative quiet. At present, individual consultations with students have to take place in the cafeteria or other public places, which is both pedagogically unsound and discourages faculty from holding regular office hours. […] The educational benefit of a quiet space for preparation cannot be underestimated. At present, it is simply impossible for teachers to prepare lectures or mark written work in the departmental office because of the volume of traffic it receives. This in turn means that teachers (including programme heads) are physically present on campus less than they might optimally be, which cannot be good for departmental-administration contact (AUK 2001).

In January 2002, the university finally allocated the department a small second office. Mehrigiul Ablezova, a sociology MA who had worked as an interviewer for Sagynbaeva's company SIAR Bishkek, was appointed head of research soon after. 'When I came here,' she recalls, 'they just decided to

offer me a position as the head of the sociological laboratory. And I became one. The first thing I did was rename it the Applied Research Center' (Ablezova 2003). Renaming the laboratory was a meaningful symbolic gesture for Ablezova, who, as a member of sociology's younger generation, is thoroughly oriented away from Soviet and Kyrgyz academic traditions and towards the concepts, practices and language of American sociology. Whereas the term 'sociological laboratory' conjures images of experimental research and hard science, the notion of an applied research centre suggests space for the study of social problems and their alleviation.

Ablezova was faced with the formidable task of creating a respectable centre for research in an empty room without financial resources, academic materials, equipment or staff; indeed, there were no established research interests, and no obvious constituencies.[85] She and other faculty members who worked in the centre therefore sought additional sources of support beyond both the university and the state, namely, international organisations. Unlike the BHU laboratory, which receives a meagre donation for its research projects from the Kyrgyz government, the Applied Research Center receives no state funding. Instead, it attracts money for research by commissioning studies from international organisations and has worked deliberately to establish a reputation for producing quality work in this field.

Its first contract was a two-year study on child poverty in Kyrgyzstan, conducted for Save the Children UK. The study, a combination of qualitative and quantitative research, 'examines child poverty in Kyrgyzstan, with a particular emphasis on chronic poverty and inter-generation poverty reproduction.' It attempts to explain why and how poverty is reproduced and 'provide an empirically sound account of what the extent of such poverty is, which groups are particularly vulnerable, and why' (AUK 2003). The project was a team effort: Reeves, a British sociology MA assigned to the department by CEP, wrote the proposal for this project and worked on it together with Tatiana Yarkova (also of CEP), Ablezova, Botoeva and Ibraeva. The department's high staff turnover made the team unstable, however, and according to Ablezova (2003) detracted from the quality of the research itself:

> different people worked on different stages…the thing is, we
> started working on the questionnaire when the literature review

was not finished. And actually, if you do it classically, you should construct the questionnaire on the basis of the literature review. But we did it, I guess, non-scientifically, non-professional. […] I don't call it 'non-professional' because the majority of research is conducted that way. We do the topics we can do right now.

As this statement implies, child poverty did not become a lasting research theme within the department. In addition to the need to move on to new contracts, few of the team were interested in the topic in the first place. 'Frankly speaking,' says Ablezova (2003), 'I gave myself my word that I would never deal with poverty. It's too complex; too difficult a subject and I don't want to deal with all this mess. […] And now I'm working on poverty, and it's children's poverty, so it's even…harder for me. But now we have another proposal [about HIV], we got it from UNICEF. So we're working on this.'

The centre's next contracted project, a study of HIV in Kyrgyzstan, grew out of the study on child poverty when a woman who was asked to comment on the first questionnaire asked the group to conduct a study for her organisation (Ablezova 2003). '[S]he knew about us already and she wanted us to conduct it,' said Ablezova (2003). 'Actually, she didn't reach for anybody else.' This is precisely the sort of reputation of reliability that the staff of the AUCA research centre have striven to establish. It in turn led to two more commissioned studies: one on the 'influence of internal migration on family structures,' sponsored by the Indiana University Consortium, and another on 'mass media and languages,' sponsored by the Swiss media NGO, CIMERA. The former is a purely qualitative investigation of migration conducted through focus groups and semi-structured and in-depth interviews, while the latter employs a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to 'examine the consciousness of journalists and explore the social and lingual aspects of mass media in Kyrgyzstan' (AUK 2003). While the research questions were designed by the client organisations, the research team had considerable autonomy in developing the research instruments and in the initial stages of data analysis. However, this did not increase their right to retain or use the data for other purposes.

Officially, the Applied Research Center's mission is fourfold: to support academic research, to 'gather and systematize data from the surveys conducted on the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic and throughout the world that will be open and serve as educational and methodological material for various courses,' to carry out research on 'social, economic, political, demographic and social-environmental problems facing the country,' and to provide a space for students to gain research experience through internships and assistantships (AUK 2003). The prioritisation of these goals has been particularly important in continuing efforts to secure institutional support from the university administration, which is primarily interested in the laboratory's contribution to its own development. A 2003 departmental needs assessment, for example, therefore emphasised the importance of creating a database of information for student use. 'Since all students cannot develop their own research,' it argued, 'they need statistical data for analysis in some of their student papers.' Such a database was also deemed important for the statistical training of sociology students who suffered because the 'department still has a lack of statistical data on regional and country conditions' (AUK 2003b).

In addition to promoting its usefulness as an internal information source, the centre was presented as an important site for the development of hands-on research experience and, more broadly, the 'integration of theoretical learning and practical skills.' The university administration became increasingly concerned about linking teaching and research in 2002. Members of the centre capitalised on this new agenda and argued that it could become a 'base for much social science research [done] by sociology instructors, which will have an impact on explaining current societies in Central Asia' in the classroom, but only if it received 'proper technical and financial support.' Finally, it was argued that the centre could contribute to the development of the university by conducting internal research which would 'assist in making the work of all university structures more effective along with better human relations among students and instructors.'

In addition to these institutionally focused goals, staff also argued that, given adequate support, they could 'support the development of democracy in the country and region' by having an 'effective impact on the development of civil society' and 'providing for the monitoring of political, economic and

cultural changes in the republic' (AUK 2003). This objective is central to the project to create a distinctive identity for the centre as a source of reliable empirical sociological research in the service of development. Its members are self-consciously oriented away from state-centred concepts of development and toward international agencies, which they see as dominant in the research process but less likely to manipulate research results for political purposes (Ablezova 2003). In addition, Ablezova argues that international organisations offer the centre more 'moral' support because, unlike the state, they conduct training sessions, share information, and encourage the staff to 'make a difference' with their research.

While this outward orientation towards foreign clients shapes the activities of the centre and thus the nature of the discipline's institutionalisation at AUCA, it is not based on theoretical understandings of the institutional relationship between sociological research and development aid, or between sociology and the state. Rather, it stems from two things: a history of disappointment with governmental cooperation, and a general lack of trust in the state. Ablezova (2003), who points out that she has never worked for the government, commented that

> Mr. Newman…says that we can write prescriptions to [heal] some illnesses of society, and I totally agree with him. But the thing is, in the end it never happens. For example, I conducted so many—I was involved in, not conducted—some studies. I mean, the research [was kind of conducted in vain]; it was a waste of time, a waste of money, and a waste of talent, because it—I didn't see any kind of results from these projects. Nothing happened, nothing changed after that. I think that sociologists should work more actively with the government so that they can change something. For example, if we're studying poverty, we should work with, I don't know, the Ministry of Education [or] the Ministry of Social Protection in order to have some kind of power to change these things. Because sometimes, my fear is that when we conduct these surveys like Children in Poverty, after that, nothing happens.

Nevertheless, she says that she is 'more into working with non-governmental organisations. They try to do something to change things. […] So I'm more interested in working with NGOs rather than government. But government is more powerful.' Such statements reflect Ablezova's frustration at the discrepancy between what she thinks her role *should* be (to write prescriptions

for healing social problems) and what it *actually* is (in her mind, to conduct research that has no practical effect because the researchers do not work in cooperation with policy makers). Botoeva (2003) is also disappointed in the lack of state support for sociological research:

> The state invests very little in research. *Very little*. […] And thus on the whole a lot of research is done by international organisations, they order it. Even the research on children in poverty is a commission from Save the Children UK. Child poverty in Kyrgyzstan, right, and who commissions it? Foreigners. And many other projects, too. And then [the organisations] have the right over everything in this project: over all the data—we don't have the rights to one bit of information. And so it turns out that there are several research projects on a single theme, because even if they publish it, they do it in the west and nothing stays in Kyrgyzstan—no publications, no nothing. It's very bad.

In contrast to BHU, sociological research at AUCA is highly decentralised, even atomised. The department does not dictate or monitor individual research projects or prescribe the forums in which research may be published; departmental reports contain no mention of conferences attended, manuscripts prepared or articles published in newspapers and other media. Individual research projects are not generally discussed at faculty meetings, and the practice is so personalised that academics working together within the department are often unaware of what their colleagues are doing. As Botoeva (2003) put it, 'someone does something but no one knows that someone is doing something or what anyone is doing.'

However, while there is no formal 'scientific theme' in sociological research at AUCA, members of the department have developed specialisations in particular areas. The most established is Ablezova and Botoeva's work on developing methodologies for large-scale empirical studies of social problems which are of interest to international aid agencies. Their research, however, bears little relation to teaching activities in the main department, though it has substantiated their courses on research methods. While Sagynbaeva's early work on qualitative methodology, particularly the use of focus groups for marketing studies, was discontinued after she left the department in 2002, undergraduate students now have the opportunity to gain practical experience with interviewing, focus groups and questionnaire construction through the

Applied Research Center. However, although researchers have developed areas of methodological expertise, the thematic content of research is still determined almost entirely by external demand. Newman (2003) interprets this in a negative light, remarking that

> we've got some projects that they really did a nice job in gathering data [for] and then the data just sit. They fulfil the grant obligations and then they move onto the next thing. […] [With] the migration study, they did some descriptive work on migration and what it does to families and then—they didn't abandon it, but they set it off to the side and moved to the poverty study. And then they gathered the data on the poverty study, and then they gathered the data on the professional orientation study. And what they'll do is report out what the funding agencies want. They'll make their annual reports and this sort of thing, and then move onto the next project. I'd like to see them get some national and international exposure for the research.

Many Kyrgyzstani faculty members, however, feel that what this arrangement lacks in autonomy it makes up for by offering them the opportunity to explore different questions and themes. Botoeva, for example, explains why she likes being a sociologist, even though she had originally wanted to become a lawyer or judge:

> Why do I like it? Well, I like it because…it's always new, sociology—you can develop as much as you want, it's not something singular. I don't know. Maybe other disciplines are also interesting, there are many that I haven't encountered! But with sociology everything is new, everything is always interesting; you can open up everything, right? […] I really like sociology; that you can resolve various sorts of problems, maybe help.

Similarly, Ablezova (2003) says the most appealing thing about her choice of career is that

> you never work on the same topic. For example, now we are working on poverty and I found…I studied, I read some articles on poverty, other work on poverty. Before, I was interested in environmental attitudes, so I started to read all the articles and research done on environmental attitudes. And you know, you always discover something, you are so flexible, you know, within sociology. It can be very practical. I'm a positivist and I'm good at numbers, crunching numbers, and I love doing these numbers. So I just kind of found myself there, and… I don't think I regret that.

Sociologists at AUCA have the political freedom, both internally and externally, to determine the direction of their own sociological research. However, this does not necessarily translate into greater opportunity to conduct independent research, particularly when heavy teaching loads and low wages reduce the amount of time and energy instructors can spend on personal intellectual work, and when lack of institutional sponsorship breeds dependence on commissions from external clients. Ibraeva (2003), for example, remarks that 'to do research through the support of one's institution,' she says, 'is a luxury we still do not have. […] Unfortunately, the financial question sometimes compels one to work on other things to the detriment of professional work.' These 'other things,' in fact, tend to be commercial projects that fail to develop beyond the early stages of literature reviews and data collection, and that lack theoretical substance. Thus, while the AUCA Applied Research Center has managed to sustain itself by conducting empirical research for client organisations, it has nevertheless been unable to institutionalise a culture of academic research at the university.

Boundary–work and contingency in sociology at AUCA

While sociologists working at BHU find defining sociology unproblematic, perhaps in the extreme, the definition and characterisation of the discipline has more conspicuously occupied sociologists at AUCA since the department's establishment. Here, too, the boundaries of the discipline are contingent on a variety of factors: culturally specific ideologies about social science and its role in the wider society, the emergence of and affiliation with a new western scientific 'centre,' the diverse background assumptions of faculty members, and material factors such as dependence on external funding and poor access to physical space within the university. The main difference between the post-Soviet construction of sociology at BHU and AUCA is that these contingencies have led to more visible controversies about the nature and role of sociology at the latter.

The creative potential of this fluidity, however, has been inhibited by institutional imperatives to institutionalise the discipline in a formal way which meets the demands of both Kyrgyz and American constituencies. In

addition, professional and ideological propensities to rapid academic reform—particularly among foreign faculty members—often pre-empt careful consideration of how the discipline is actually being institutionalised at the university. It might be said that the definition and boundaries of sociology at AUCA exist in a state of perpetual revolution. This has two main consequences. On one hand, it encourages theoretical innovation in the conceptualisation of sociology. On the other hand, however, it also encourages the devaluation of accumulated knowledge and experience and precludes awareness of institutional history.

The history of the AUCA department is a localised window onto the enduring influence of institutionalised power relationships among academics at the global level. In many instances, faculty members recognise that decisions about how to define and practice sociology are constructions; the existence of uneven power relations and the technological–intellectual division of labour between local and foreign instructors are no secret within the department. Deliberate efforts to democratise faculty relations and redistribute authority more equally have failed to deconstruct these hierarchies entirely. However, shared ideals about the importance of reducing the effects of power relations in the academic sphere have created space for sociologists from diverse backgrounds to take different positions within the department, thus enabling the emergence and development of two alternative visions of the discipline: sociology as liberal–critical scholarship and sociology as applied service profession. While these remain mutually independent to a large extent, recent movements to rethink the relationship between teaching and research, as well as the increasing participation of Kyrgyzstani faculty members in making intellectual decisions within the department, suggest that the two approaches may converge in the future.

Whether one type of sociology becomes ascendant over the other, however, will depend on a variety of factors. The relative dominance of the liberal–critical scholarship model of sociology has been maintained by a number of things: the stability of the university's general identification with American liberal arts education and its rejection of Soviet models of technocratic education, the continuing supply of liberal sociologists from western institutions, the routine training of younger faculty members in

American universities, the predominance of liberal and critical scholarly materials in the departmental library, and external moral support for developing new definitions of social relevance. Changes in these structural conditions would present sociologists with a new set of problems and choices in constructing the field.

Unlike at BHU, here the quest to establish scientific legitimacy for sociology is relatively unproblematic; it is asserted on the basis of the department's affiliation with western sociological traditions and institutions which are assumed to be universally authoritative. The more pressing problem is communicating the discipline's social relevance, not only to prospective students, but also to the Kyrgyz state, to which the department must appear experimental but not threatening, and to American educational authorities, to whom the department must exhibit both its international and national qualifications and its commitment to post-Soviet reform. In other words, sociology at AUCA must be at once a discipline dedicated to preserving and revolutionising the social order, and sociologists must strike a balance between different expectations of what constitutes legitimate social scientific knowledge in each context.

The need to appeal simultaneously to these different constituencies has forced faculty members to modify descriptions of their teaching activities in different circumstances and to reconcile minimum compliance with the state standards for sociology with maximum compliance to the professional and intellectual norms of Anglo-American sociology. Instead of advocating the potential for sociology in improving scientific politics as in BHU, the AUCA department has absorbed some of this tension by creating a division of labour between teaching and research, with curriculum design oriented outward, toward 'the west,' and research oriented inward, toward the study of social problems in Kyrgyzstan.

This more nationally orientated research, though, receives little professional recognition from other sociologists in the republic because it is maintained predominantly through commissions for foreign clients, many of which advocate non-state or 'civil society' solutions to national social problems. Thus, while the AUCA Sociology Department would like to be seen as a non-political educational establishment, its self-imposed distance

from the state and state-run sociology institutions gives it a highly politically, even oppositional profile. Instead of countering this, the department capitalises on it by emphasising its unique offering to the liberal functions of sociology education, including personal development, professional growth, individualised critical thinking and social enlightenment. The nature and role of sociology in this context is constructed in direct relation to the department's reformist vision of social change.

In the instructional sphere, sociology at AUCA is both generative and applied; problems for discussion and debate within the classroom emerge from sociological theory as often as they are resolved by it. Themes for sociological research, however, are still determined by commercial demands from foreign *zakazchiki*. Financial dependence on contract research, combined with heavy teaching loads, low salaries, poor scholarly community and a lack of space and resources make it difficult for sociologists to pursue individual research interests within the department, despite the formal encouragement of such scholarship. As a result, the department has established a reputation as a reliable centre for American-style sociological education and survey research, but has not cultivated the development of any sustainable areas of specialisation or expertise.

Sociology at AUCA has never been 'in transition' as this phrase is often interpreted in former Soviet institutions. It was imagined and introduced as a novelty in Kyrgyzstan; a department whose philosophy and geopolitical affiliations enabled it to reject the old and embrace the new. From its inception, it self-consciously represented an ideal rather than a change. However, historically familiar patterns of academic dependency have emerged within the department, which suggest that neither the type of sociology being institutionalised here nor the structural and cultural contingencies of the process are entirely new. Sociology at AUCA is in a different type of transition as faculty members struggle to negotiate an ambiguous balance between east and west, national and international, theoretical and applied sociology, and intellectual and financial autonomy and dependence. As such, it embodies the problems faced by those attempting to institutionalise a liberal–critical scholarship model of sociology in a technocratic and aid-dependent post-colonial state.

9

PRIVATISATION, POLITICAL RATINGS AND PUBLIC SCIENCE:
SOCIOLOGICAL BOUNDARY–WORK IN THE MASS MEDIA

The case studies presented in Chapters 7 and 8 illustrate how different conceptions of academic sociology have emerged from different departmental contexts in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan. They also demonstrate that 'Kyrgyzstani sociology,' far from being a monolithic enterprise, is in fact a concept which encompasses a variety of different conceptualisations and practices. However, in Kyrgyzstan, the field of sociology extends beyond academic institutions into the public sphere, particularly, commerce, development organisations and the media. This chapter will explore, through a set of smaller case studies, how and why the discipline's definition, content and role have been negotiated in the most public of all sectors, the national print media. Because public social science is conducted predominately by Kyrgyzstani and not by foreign sociologists within the republic, this chapter also provides a more in-depth examination of the epistemological issues that have emerged within the applied–professional model of sociology since independence.

Sociology in the national press

The overt linking of sociology with other, non-academic sectors of society is in part a continuation of the Soviet-era relationship between science and society. However, the emergence of a deliberately public sociology which serves as a platform for academic politics and aims to build bridges between social scientists and the lay reading public is a relatively new phenomenon. It has emerged from the conjunction of a number of factors: the expansion of independent media outlets and reduction of scholarly forums such as journals and bulletins, an increased public concern about knowing the 'truth' about social reality, the reorganisation of science and higher education, the association of sociology with modernity and development, competition between different sociological groups and institutions, and perhaps most significantly, sociologists' need to establish legitimacy for sociology and attract financial and political support from new types of constituencies,

namely, the state, international organisations, private business and even public citizens.

In this context, the division between academic and public sociology has become particularly fluid in the post-independence period. Kyrgyzstani sociologists have ambivalent feelings about using newspapers as a medium for publication, and despite the practical obstacles to publishing scholarly work, many do differentiate between 'scientific' and 'unscientific' forms of presentation. On one hand, many see publications in newspapers and popular magazines as inferior to those published in academic journals or even non-peer reviewed, institutionally-produced conference proceedings. On the other hand, the absence of peer-reviewed journals and the lack of resources for publishing in general have created a situation in which newspaper publications are often classified as 'scientific publications' (the Sociology Department at BHU, for example, includes them in its annual research reports). The fact that such publications are not acceptable contributions toward the fulfilment of a candidate or doctoral degree, however, suggests that there is still considerable stigma attached to media publication.

Articles about sociology began to appear on the pages of national newspapers such as *Slovo Kyrgyzstana* (a pro-government publication), *ResPublica* (an opposition paper) and *Svobodnye gory* (the newspaper of the *Jogorku Kenesh*, or parliament) shortly before independence.[86] This marked a shift to 'public science.' The term 'public sociology,' particularly in American lexicon, refers to an engagement between academic sociology and public, often social or political, commitment; it can also refer to efforts to bridge the gap between academic scholarship and public consciousness and action. However, it can also refer more analytically to 'rhetoric, argument and polemic [designed] to persuade the public or influential sectors thereof that science…is worthy of receiving public attention, encouragement and finances' (Turner 1980 quoted in Gieryn et al. 1985: 392). In contemporary Kyrgyzstan, it means both. Kyrgyzstani sociologists have used the media to 'construct ideologies [of social science] with style and content well suited to the advancement or protection of their professional authority' (Gieryn 1983: 783) while simultaneously attempting to educate the public about sociology and make political statements about current events.[87]

While most of the articles on sociology published in popular media during this decade can be considered part of the larger phenomenon of public science, two debates in particular stand out as significant. The first, a series of articles about public opinion on privatisation in Kyrgyzstan published in 1994, demonstrates how the historical conflict between scientific objectivity and political interest in social scientific work was reconstrued in the post-Soviet period. This debate revolved around sociologists' authority (or lack thereof) to define, evaluate and criticise controversial government policies, and illustrates how representations of the relationship between sociology and the state were realigned as the latter became more authoritarian. It also reveals how and why two separate kinds of boundary–work—that done to expand professional and scientific authority and that to protect the autonomy of scientific knowledge from the political field—were seen as vital by sociologists attempting to establish legitimacy for their work during this period.

The second major debate, which became known as the 'ratings scandal' in 1994, consists of articles about 'political ratings' published by Isaev and members of his research group at BHU published from 1993 to 1997, as well as critiques of these studies written by sociologists from other institutions in the republic. This debate encompasses a range of topics related to the problem of scientific credibility as it is manifested both among sociologists and between sociologists, the broader public and the power elite. It reinforces that the boundary between science and politics is often renegotiable in the face of increasing political pressures on sociologists, but also reveals how central sociological concepts such as 'objectivity' may be defined strategically in relation to the professional goals of sociologists.

Ultimately, the public debates about research on both privatisation and political ratings are manifestations of a deep-seated controversy about the professional ethos of Kyrgyzstani sociology, including the role of the discipline, its relationship to power structures in society, and the emerging norms of legitimate, post-Soviet sociological method. Because both debates centre on studies which take the methodological form of public opinion research, before turning to them it is important to understand how the study of

public opinion has been defined and practiced in Kyrgyzstan and what relationship it bears to sociology more generally.

Public opinion: the 'democratic' face of Kyrgyzstani sociology

The above themes emerged from a dense volume of public opinion studies which were conducted by sociologists (or individuals defining themselves as sociologists) and published in the Kyrgyzstani press after independence. They are situated within a larger body of 'sociological' articles published on a wide variety of other issues during this period, including public perceptions of Islam, the declining standard of living in the republic, poverty, changes in the professions, educational reforms, migration, national development, crime, referendums and elections, and the role of the mass media in society.

In fact, the bulk of sociological research conducted during the 1990s consisted of survey research in one form or another. As Vladimir Chernyshev, then-director of the Tashkent (Uzbekistan) Office of Public Opinion under the Soviet Sociological Association, argued, the proliferation of survey research in the region during perestroika raised as many questions as it answered:

> In recent years, newspapers and magazines have begun to publish the results of surveys conducted by sociologists. This material demands great interest, insofar as it reflects the relation of the population to the state of things in various spheres of life in our society. It also raises a number of big questions: what is this science, the sociology of public opinion? How do sociologists get to and analyse the data? What does the use of results and their analysis give to practice? (Luk'ianova 1990: 55)

These pointed questions about the definition of legitimate knowledge and the authority of legitimate knowers had become highly contentious in Kyrgyzstan by the mid-1990s. Despite such fundamental uncertainties, however, public opinion research came to occupy a central position in Kyrgyzstani sociology, and empirical surveys, along with structured interviews and marketing-style focus groups, are the dominant and preferred methods of sociological research today.

While both public opinion and marketing research generally exist on the margins of sociology as an academic discipline and have been criticised as being conservative therapeutic tools for 'exploring and improving the existing

social conditions, within the framework of the existing social institutions' (Marcuse 1964:107), they have become the most prominent forms of 'applied sociology' in Kyrgyzstan. In fact, the term 'public opinion research' is used to refer to a variety of practices, including polls, rating and ranking surveys, structured interviews and focus groups, the common denominator being that the purpose of each of these methods is to ascertain 'public opinion.' The concept assumed privileged status as an analytical category in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstani sociology with the conjunction of four factors: the continuation of Soviet-era philosophies of social science as a technocratic tool for scientific management, the belief that empirical data provide a scientific antidote to the political manipulation of social reality, methodological individualism, and the conviction that public opinion research is a symbol and dimension of modern, democratic civil societies.

Public opinion research in the Soviet Union

The concept of public opinion, however, is not new. It has been an integral part of Kyrgyzstani sociology since the late socialist period. Owing to its focus on the subjective individual, it has often been considered the 'democratic'—and therefore most historically repressed—face of Soviet sociology. The study of public opinion in Kyrgyzstan has its origins in an earlier Communist Party practice of conducting surveys to provide party leaders with 'feedback' about how Soviet citizens understood top-down political and economic decisions and to ascertain whether they were 'ready' for certain types of social reforms.

The most famous of these were public surveys about a wide variety of social issues, conducted by the newspaper *Komsomol'skaia Pravda* in the 1960s and 1960s, in which readers could voluntarily clip out, complete and return short questionnaires to the newspaper editors (Buckley 1998: 224). Data from such non-representative surveys were used to both ascertain and influence the 'mood of the masses,' as collective social consciousness was called, and to more effectively persuade the general public to legitimise the will of the regime. This helped sustain the asymmetrical 'two-way' relationship between Communist Party leadership and society at large, in which 'the masses would learn the truth about society from the party through

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its propaganda, and the party would learn where and when people would be prepared for social change, as well as new techniques and strategies for "revolutionary" struggle' (Inkeles 1958: 18).

Insofar as empirical research on 'sensitive' issues was discouraged during the post-Stalinist period, early studies of public opinion in Soviet Kirgizia were neither systematic nor statistical, and they lacked methodological rigour (Buckley 1998). 'In past years,' said one Kyrgyzstani practitioner, 'we had the view that public opinion meant letters and announcements directed by citizens to party and Soviet organs. Many letters—that was good. It meant that we studied and knew public opinion' (Luk'ianova 1990: 55). At the time, 'knowing' public opinion did not imply understanding or interpreting the particular views or experiences of individuals or social groups. Instead, it was a matter of studying reactions 'primarily to determine the pace and speed of [one's] own actions. The goal [was] not to cater to public opinion, but to move it along with you as rapidly as possible without undermining your popular support' (Inkeles 1958: 24). A similar instrumental rationality can also be seen in many studies of industrial sociology during this period, particularly insofar as industrial sociologists made heavy use of individualised survey research for much the same purpose (see Chapter 4).

During perestroika in Kirgizia, public opinion research was reconceived as a populist counterweight to ruling power control in the political arena and offered up as a solution to the perceived need for people (both within the party and external to it) to empower themselves with information and disempower government authorities who continued to monopolise images of truth about social and political reality. Public opinion was redefined as 'a science about what society thinks and how it is related to various phenomena and facts of the surrounding activity. The differing part of this science is that the source of information is concrete people' (Luk'ianova 1990).

However, 'public opinion,' defined as the sum of individual opinions of private citizens (Isaev et al. 1997) and the conversion of these into a collective consciousness (Isaev 1995) also came to be perceived as a legitimate political force *sui generis* as well as a reflection of social experience. It was viewed as a political institution (Lokteva 1991; see also Bekturganov 1994: 15) and a 'mirror in which most people's relation to power…is reflected' (Sydykova

1998; see also Isaev et al. 1996b). It was further argued that the democratic potential of public opinion had been wilfully distorted and suppressed during the Stalinist era by authoritarian institutions which prevented people from expressing individual opinions and sociologists from exposing them.

This new, more critical function of public opinion research first emerged during the 1980s when it was officially employed to help democratise the imbalanced, didactic relationship between the Communist Party leadership and its rank–and–file members. Leninist theories about the importance of information in democratic centralism and the power of mass political participation were revived, and the public were reminded that 'it is well known that V. I. Lenin more than once said that leadership bodies of the party must have before them a full picture of the work of local organisations, as without information it is impossible to centralise party leadership' (Bekturganov 1990: 107). If party authorities did not consider the ideas of subordinates within the organisation, it was asked, how did they intend to democratise their relationship with society at large? The revitalisation of public opinion research during perestroika thus began as part of a movement to democratise the party itself.

This narrow application, however, was soon broadened to incorporate other social institutions, and public opinion became a prominent concept in discourses about the democratisation of socialist society more generally. Its reformed role was ambitious: to 'play a positive role in the further unfolding of transformational processes, in the expansion of glasnost and criticism and self-criticism, and in raising the political activity of the masses' (Bekturganov 1990: 107). In fact, it was argued that 'the political significance of research in public opinion is linked above all to the necessity of democratising and humanising socialist society' (Bekturganov 1990: 107), and that the failures of perestroika could be attributed in large part to a lack of knowledge about everyday life (Isaev and Bekturganov 1990: 3).

> Because political power has been alienated from public opinion
> and from the people and real life processes, the break between
> public expectations and the authoritarian-bureaucratic structure
> has not only not decreased, but may even assume enormous
> proportions. The way out of this situation is in the concrete
> and, at the same time, systematic study and analysis of the real

complexities of the situation, and in appealing to public opinion. This can help to make scientifically developed political and state administrative decisions which are oriented toward the democratisation of society, the deepening of social transformations, the inclusion of various strata of the population and individual citizens in social and political life, and the actual implementation of democratic forms and methods of administration (Bekturganov 1994).

The institutionalisation of public opinion research during perestroika

If public opinion was seen as a new scientific and political force in late socialist Kirgizstani society, then professionalising, institutionalising and publicising public opinion research was the new mission of sociologists. Members of the sociological community, including prominent academics such as Isaev and Bekturganov (director of the Centre for the Study of Public Opinion under the Central Committee of the Communist Party from 1985–87) advocated a more active role for public opinion research, and consequently for themselves, in social and political life. Instead of being mere surveyors of general attitudes, it was argued that 'sociological groups and bureaus established within the Councils of Peoples' Deputies, party committees and social organisations should become integral parts of the effective activities of these same organisations' (Bekturganov 1990: 110). In addition to its traditional role as a source of information about the 'social mood,' public opinion research was portrayed as necessary for the revitalisation of democratic scientific politics, which, while administered by decree from the top down, should originate from information gathered from the bottom up. Once sociologists understood public opinion, it was argued, they could advise authorities how to change it.

During perestroika, public opinion surveys served, if only symbolically, to redirect the weight of authority away from the Communist Party and back toward 'the people.' In order to legitimise this within the socialist context, sociologists invoked Marxist–Leninist theories which asserted that objective social forces are reflected in mass psychology and can be created or reformed by enlightened intervention. Kirgizstani sociologists continually advocated the creation of new alliances between state and party organisations and sociological researchers; teams that could cooperatively develop 'technical

assignments' for political purposes (Bekturganov 1990: 110). Such projects were to be housed in a 'range of organisational offices for the study of public opinion in the regions, connected with state, party and social organisations' and staffed by a new *aktiv* (group of party activists) of *anketery* (surveyors) who would be selected by the party and trained by the republic's few professional sociologists. While several efforts were made to institutionalise this movement and a number of centres for the study of public opinion were established in Kirgizia (including one established and directed by Bekturganov in 1983 under the Central Committee of the Communist Party), as with industrial sociology (see Chapter 4), the study of public opinion was never institutionalised as a sustainable practice in Kirgizia. In 1990, the most prominent practitioner of public opinion studies made devastating criticisms of the state of the field:

> It should be noted that not all the research on public opinion, either in the country [USSR] or in our republic, was conducted at the necessary scientific-theoretical level. It makes mistakes in methodical samples and the analysis of sociological information. This happens because we lack an established system of the study and formation of public opinion' (Bekturganov 1990: 106).

Public opinion studies in independent Kyrgyzstan

Despite these unresolved weaknesses in the field, independence heralded a dramatic increase in the number of public opinion surveys being conducted in the republic by amateur researchers and sociologists alike, many of whom were based in new 'sociological research centres' which had begun to proliferate during the late 1980s (Toktosunova and Sukhanova 1990; see Buckley 1998 for similar trends in the RSFSR). After independence, rhetoric about the social relevance of public opinion studies was reinforced by the powerful symbolic association of public opinion research with democratic and 'civilised'—and by implication anti-Soviet—politics. It was asserted, for example, that 'in truly democratic countries, politicians pay attention to the results of public opinion so they are prompted to action in deciding internal and external politics of the state' (Isaev et al. 1996b) and that 'in civilised countries, public opinion is a political institution that is a recognised and

legalised mechanisms at all levels of the decision making process' (Lokteva 1991). While such proclamations are rarely supported with references to empirical evidence, they are also rarely if ever questioned by either sociologists or the general public. For many, the emergence of public opinion research is a clear indication of modernisation and development.

While it is difficult to obtain reliable statistical data on the expansion of publications on public opinion research during the early independence period,[88] many sociologists in Kyrgyzstan are critical of the phenomenon. Isaev, for example, pointed to a discrepancy between the proliferation of public opinion surveys and the general confusion about what they are for, linking this with the underdevelopment of sociology more generally, saying that

> [w]hile sociological surveys of public opinion have become a standard attribute of processes of democratisation in society in recent years, we lack a good understanding of their role and place in society. This is connected above all with the fact that, due to the relative newness of this problem in our republic, fundamental sociological research and even sociology as a science itself does not receive enough attention (Isaev, Akhmatova and Dosalieva 1996).

In a critique of Isaev's research on political ratings, Bekturganov (1994a) waged a more serious criticism of post-independence public opinion studies. While he supported the popularisation of public opinion research, he also asserted that methodological weaknesses, along with the conflation of sociological research and political interest, were 'distorting the principles of correctness of the selection of experts, methods, techniques and procedures defining political ratings.'

Veteran sociologists such as Bekturganov and Tishin have also been critical of the ascendance of what they call 'dilettantism' and its deleterious effects on the status and legitimacy of academic sociology in the republic. On the one hand, they argue that the expansion of sociological discourse in the national media was a direct result of democratisation, and that as such it allowed for the 'disclosure of sides of our life that are not accessible to other sciences and…[had] a direct impact on the formation of public opinion about events and people's actual behaviour.' In this sense, they acknowledge that the long struggle to remove censorship on sociology and social criticism had

to some extent come to fruition, if only by default after the collapse of Soviet communism. On the other hand, however, they express concern that 'the rising wave of sociological surveys conducted today does not reflect all the deep life processes [and] many social problems are still analysed by publicists,' which they deem inadequate for the 'scientific analysis of life phenomena' (Bekturganov et al. 1994). As Tishin (1998: 32) remarked,

> [s]ociological dilettantism emerged on the wave of high-quality sociological research and exists to this day, discrediting sociology. In Kyrgyzstan right up to the 1990s researchers faced the problem, difficult to eradicate, of sociological publications and the promulgation of [research] results. Sociological material in the republic was held back by ignorance and was very rarely printed. […] In 1993–94, the other extreme developed. Monthly sociological pages and weekly sociological reviews with puzzling rubrics appeared in the periodical press. The philistine style of the materials, their lack of content and advertising-like presentation have created the impression of political prostitution on the part of individual sociological researchers; for example, on the problems of privatization, the definition of politicians' ratings, and etc. However, not all sociologists have fallen into this trap. At the same time, the National Academy of Science conducted fundamental sociological research about the development of international relations, and the problems of national conflict and tension.

Here, Tishin clearly distinguishes between legitimate social science done within the Academy of Science and 'amateur' or 'pseudo' sociology done by groups or individuals lacking academic training or institutional affiliation.

The distinction between 'scientific' and 'unscientific' analysis, and more narrowly between legitimate and pseudo-sociology, became particularly important as a disparate variety of intellectual and political actors, many of whom were competing for similar positions of social power, claimed to be validated by the authority of science. According to Bekturganov and Tishin, the lack of a creative indigenous sociological theory, the paucity of social scientific language to describe social phenomena, the lack of trained specialists in sociology, personal power-seeking and ambition, and the dominance of 'percent–o–mania' and '*anket*–o–mania' at the expense of more 'serious' mathematical and statistical forms of data analysis have led to sociological 'illiteracy' within the community and to 'subjective,' and

therefore invalid, research on public opinion. In turn, this state of affairs has negative consequences not only for the discipline's public image, but also for the possibility that sociologists will be recruited as consultants in social and political decision making (Bekturganov et al. 1994).

There is also a generalised, almost conspiratorial fear that the results of public opinion research might 'fall into the trap of those who crave political power,' both domestic and foreign, thus enabling them to engage in the psychological manipulation of society at large (Isaev 1998; Sydykova 1998). This fear, and its underlying assumptions that there is such an entity as 'public opinion' and that it actually constitutes an objective and potentially powerful political force, have exacerbated concerns about professionalism in sociology and the need to distinguish between 'real sociology' and pseudo-science in the republic (Bakir Uluu 1997; Bekturganov 1994a; Isaev et al. 1994b, 1997a). The failure of efforts to professionalise the discipline during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s was compounded after independence by the deregulation of academic activity and by the ascendance of a populist conception of sociology which equates sociological research with the distribution and evaluation of questionnaires. Ablezova (2003), who worked for several years as a marketing researcher in SIAR Bishkek before joining the AUCA faculty, describes her own understanding of this phenomenon:

> now…many people who have nothing to do with marketing sociology conduct surveys, conduct research, without even knowing how to do sampling or design a questionnaire, and what's the rule in the field, how they should conduct interviews, how they should analyse data. […] And I think that it also has a negative influence on sociology.

The importance of this issue is revealed most explicitly in Kyrgyzstani sociologists' efforts to separate legitimate sociology from pseudo-science and distinguish between 'good' and 'bad' sociological practice through the use of boundary–work in the mass media. Debates over the proper boundaries of an academic discipline or professional practice are practical as well as philosophical questions (Gieryn 1983). The immediate socio-political contexts of boundary–work in sociology were the post-Soviet privatisation of land and other state property, and the formal (albeit far from substantive) transformation of centralised, authoritarian politics into a democratic political

system in which power is distributed equally between citizens and elites. The practice of defining, popularising and defending sociology in the media must therefore be understood in terms of how discourses on sociological method and ethos, as well as the more general relationship between science and politics, were constructed within these broader contexts.

From privatisation to *prikhvatizatsiia*: sociology confronts the state[89]

As illustrated in Part 2, the definitions of sociological method and practice in Kyrgyzstan have been historically contingent and often pragmatically defined. This case study, based on a series of seven newspaper articles about sociological research on post-Soviet privatisation, explores how Kyrgyzstani sociologists have constructed the boundary between social science and politics in order to enhance the discipline's legitimacy within shifting political conditions which created different obstacles to this goal.[90] Unlike cases in which scientists engage in rhetorical debates with other groups of scientists and non-scientists to gain control over social and material resources, the boundary–work exhibited in these articles was targeted at counteracting political ideologies and the spectre of authoritarianism, as well as disentangling sociology from both. The challenge to sociologists' authority in this case comes not from other academic disciplines or social practices, but from the possibility of a return to a heteronomous relationship between sociology and the republic's political and economic elite.

There is very little sociological research on post-Soviet privatisation in Kyrgyzstan. While economists and legal scholars have expressed some interest in the topic (e.g., Dabrowski et al. 1995; Nicholas 1997), primarily in terms of evaluating the effectiveness of economic liberalisation programmes, sociologists and anthropologists have generally neglected it. Much of the research which has been done reproduces widely a hegemonic consensus that Kyrgyzstan's relative 'success' in privatising state-owned property, along with its 'pro-Western' and 'democratising' government, have made the republic an 'oasis of democracy and social peace in a region wrecked by powerful ethnic and religious conflicts' (Dabrowski et al. 1995: 269). The process of privatisation in Kyrgyzstan is therefore often defined by its formal components and analysed according to fiscal outcomes. It is divided into two

phases, the first from 1992–94 being extremely unsuccessful and the second, beginning in 1994, only relatively less so (Dabrowski et al. 1995; Nicholas 1997). While the Kyrgyz State Property Fund criticised the early reforms for being unprofitable (Nichols 1997: 323) and it is widely acknowledged that 'large segments of non-employee citizens have been left out of the privatisation process' (Dabrowski et al. 1995: 288), the overall logic of the initiative has gone largely unchallenged by social scientists. The failure of early 'voucher' forms of privatisation (VPP),[91] for example, is attributed to straightforward administrative incompetence (Nicholas 1997), and the effect of privatisation programmes on the everyday lives of ordinary people is often overlooked.

Indigenous survey research on privatisation

These effects, however, were not lost on Kyrgyzstani sociologists, some of whom began to study the social face of privatisation. In the early 1990s, members of Isaev's sociological laboratory at KTU and later BHU, who had by this time begun to call themselves the 'Independent Group of Sociologists' (Isaev 1994), conducted a series of nation-wide surveys of public opinion about privatisation.[92] The studies were based on an 'all-Kyrgyz representative sample' that, according to the researchers, covered 'all regions and cities in the republic.' Each was based on a sample of 2000 respondents, which the team claimed reflected the 'demographic, national [ethnic], and socio-professional structures of the population of the republic as a whole and of each oblast in particular.' They also claimed it was 'the first time such work ha[d] been conducted' (Isaev 1994). The surveys, which were purely empirical, were intended to 'gather a wealth of material for rethinking, administration, and decision-making' (Isaev 1994). In some cases, the results were published in newspapers as isolated tables or descriptions of statistical averages (e.g., the percentage of respondents who felt privatisation was beneficial or detrimental, classified according to ethnic group, class, age). In other cases, however, the statistics served as points of departure for political, often polemical statements about more general issues in question surrounding the specific research being presented, such as inequalities in the privatisation process, corruption and social misinformation.

For example, the introduction to the first article in the series, entitled 'Privatisation for what and for whom?' was a political treatise on the social relevance of sociological research as much as it was a description of the research itself. After arguing that successful privatisation depended on widespread public participation, Isaev criticised authorities for failing to take this into account and asserted that sociological research was the best—indeed the only—way to obtain information about how privatisation was actually progressing (Isaev 1994). In a certain sense, this was a new twist on the theory of 'two-way communication' which had motivated Soviet-era public opinion surveys. Instead of providing 'feedback' for the Communist Party, sociologists reconceptualised their work to suit the new political economy of post-independence Kyrgyzstan: economic policies must accommodate public demand and, if they did not, policy makers must find ways to educate the public about the importance of their political projects and garner social support for party legislation. The success of economic policy, in other words, was still seen as being heavily dependent on the construction of ideological consensus, and the possibility of creating the latter depended on obtaining data from effective surveys of public opinion. On this basis, it was argued that applied sociology could be

> called on to help in the study of concrete reality, conditions and the opinion of the population about the process of privatisation. It is precisely applied sociology, if its results are used intelligently, that can become an accurate barometer, accurately indicating the ways and means of constructing market relations (Isaev 1994).

These claims were reinforced by the public presentation of data in a highly 'scientific' style, namely, descriptive statistics displayed in table form. The tables included information on the percentage of respondents who reportedly supported and opposed moves toward privatisation as well as those who had no opinion. They were organised by region, educational level, class (or 'social category of worker'), socio-demographic group (age) and national (ethnic) identity. Table 1, translated from the Russian version (Figure1), is typical of the display format used to present studies of privatisation in Kyrgyzstan to a broad reading audience.

Figure 1: Opinions on privatisation organised by 'national group'

Results of a 1994 public opinion survey on privatisation (Isaev 1994)

Table 1: Opinions on privatisation organised by 'national group'

Results of a 1994 public opinion survey on privatisation (Isaev 1994)
(Translation of Figure 1)

NATIONAL GROUPS *in % of the entire number of respondents in each group*							
Variants of answers	**Total**	**Kyrgyz**	**Russian**	**Uzbek**	**Kazakh**	**German**	**Other**
Number of respondents	2000	1136	421	263	45	28	107
What does privatisation mean to you?							
Don't know, don't understand	46.3	47.7	38.4	51.5	33.3	24.1	47.7
Transition of property from state use to personal, private…	27.1	22.1	37.5	29.3	37.8	31.0	22.5
Gives the right to be an owner (property)	6.9	6.2	8.0	4.2	11.1	3.5	13.1
It is a path to the recovery of the economy	2.3	2.5	1.5	2.3	4.4	3.5	2.8
Gives freedom of action	0.7	0.4	1.0	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
It is a great increase of wealth for the rich, established to seize social power (*prikhvatizatsiia*)	2.7	2.4	3.6	2.3	2.2	3.5	3.7
Great significance	7.1	10.4	1.0	4.2	2.2	3.5	2.8
Other answers	6.4	8.3	9.0	4.7	9.0	30.9	7.4

Some articles also included lists of the questions asked of respondents. Appendix F, for example, is a list of questions published from an early survey on privatisation.

These early studies on privatisation were originally funded by sponsors identified only as *nomenklatura* (wealthy patrons, typically who also have political power) (Isaev 1998) and, in one case, 'an American agency' (1996a). Isaev (1998) later remarked that

> we used to have different sources of financial support in the earlier days. During that period we published a book on privatisation in three volumes, as well as numerous articles. However, when they realised that public opinion was shifting from privatisation to *prikhvatizatsiia*, the *nomenklatura* eventually withdrew [funding].

It was the critical slant of the articles which eventually led to a struggle between sociologists and politicians for control over how the motivations for and consequences of privatisation were defined. One of the reported responses in Table 1, for example, stated that privatisation 'is a great increase of wealth for the rich, established to seize social power (*prikhvatizatsiia*).' Although it was attributed to under 4% of respondents in all ethnic groups, the very fact that sociologists included it at all posed a threat to the government's position (also included as a response) that privatisation is a 'path to economic recovery.' This implicit criticism, presented as one of several objective and 'scientific' responses, was compounded by the claim in the text that nearly half the population either did not know about or understand privatisation.

As surveys on privatisation continued, sociologists became more critical of both the process and those implementing the changes. Articles published in 1994 focused on the ineffectiveness of the Kyrgyz government's 'propaganda campaign' to popularise VPP (Isaev 1994a), the class dynamics of public opinion about privatisation (Isaev and Abylgazieva 1994) and the 'complexities and contradictions' that seemed inherent in the privatisation process (Isaev, Akbagynova, and Abylagazieva 1994). Articles also began to include percentages of people purportedly living below the poverty line (90% according to one estimate from the Kyrgyz professional union, see Isaev 1994b) and were highly critical of the overall outcomes of privatisation initiatives.

By February 1994, the researchers reported that 66% of those surveyed considered privatisation practices unfair and argued that there were substantial discrepancies between people's expectations of progressive change and the

actual results of the policies (Isaev 1994b). They began to emphasise ethnic and 'national' differences in this experience, which complicated the state's generalised programme, and began offering theories not of what people thought about privatisation, but why they were so passive in the movement. Several articles pointed out that 'the majority of people care about basic living problems and not privatisation,' an obvious reference to extreme levels of poverty in the republic (Isaev and Abylgazaieva 1994; Isaev, Akbagynova and Abylgazaieva 1994). In one article, Isaev and Asanbekov (1994) argued that ethnically Kyrgyz respondents were least informed about privatisation not only because they had access to fewer media sources in the rural regions of the republic, but also because they maintained a more 'traditional' way of life in which information is communicated through informal relationships as opposed to official networks such as the media. They also suggested, as is commonly argued in Kyrgyz ethnology, that the 'nomadic past' of the Kyrgyz people dominated their collective economic psychology (or 'mentality' in local terms) to such an extent that it prevented them from being independently minded, and that they thus would fare better under programmes for more 'collective' forms of privatisation.

While many theoretical questions can obviously be raised about these arguments, their role here was more political than academic: they are implicit critiques of 'imported' policies. By the sixth article, it was blatantly asserted that

> [i]n this type of situation, propaganda and agitation won't work on social consciousness. It is thought that the main reason for people's passivity in privatisation is serious opposition to the socio-economic mechanisms of the transition to a market economy (Osmonalieva 1994).

By summer 1994, sociologists working in the BHU laboratory had published seven progressively critical articles about privatisation in the republic. While the articles had 'scientific' status because they were written by academic sociologists, they were also deliberately political documents, formulated in an emotive rhetoric which combined academic jargon and concepts with political platforms and analysis. Despite the relative freedom enjoyed by sociologists in the early years of independence, social research was still entirely dependent on funding from political patrons and produced in a semi-authoritarian

environment. Ultimately, the articles were deemed politically threatening and sponsorship for large-scale public opinion research studies at BHU was withdrawn in the second half of the year (Sydykova 1998). While not specifically intended to contribute to the redefinition of sociology in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan, the boundary–work conducted through this experience was nevertheless influential in this process.

Boundary–work in studies of privatisation

In the early years following national independence, it was assumed that freedom from Soviet control would facilitate the expansion of sociology in Kyrgyzstan and for its recognition as a legitimate and relevant way of knowing. It seemed logical that the discipline would be embraced as a path to enlightenment about a long-obscured social reality and as a way to resolve social problems 'scientifically.' The legitimation, institutionalisation and professionalisation of sociology were regarded as inalienable components of transition to a 'civil,' 'democratic' and capitalist society; in fact, the success of the latter was not infrequently attributed to the development of the former (Isaev 1993, Isaev et al. 1994b; Ismailova 1995).

By the time BHU researchers began their studies on privatisation, however, this expectation had become more of a mirage. Sociologists continued the campaign to portray the discipline as legitimate and relevant, but found themselves doing so in a state which, while no longer Soviet, still remained hostile to ideological challenges from the social sciences, and in an economy in which material resources for research and teaching were scarce and in high demand. They did this largely by portraying sociology as objective, scientific, politically potent and methodologically anti-political, erecting unambiguous boundaries between sociology and the illegitimately political, and asserting their relevance for the creation of a new type of scientific politics.

For example, while Isaev paid lip service to ideals of democratisation, by 1994 he was fully aware that Kyrgyzstan was not a democratising society. However, as he still sought funding for social research, he and his team of researchers adopted the formal rhetoric of democratisation to wage subtle critiques of the government's trends toward authoritarianism, in particular its

deleterious effect on sociology, while nevertheless maintaining that sociology could contribute to alleviating abuses of power by being closely allied with the state. The characterisation of sociological research outlined in the articles on privatisation—large-scale, empirical, methodologically rigorous, longitudinal and by implication expensive—was also linked to sociologists' renewed demands for the creation of academic institutions in which such research could be conducted, and for the establishment of 'democratic' social, political and economic institutions which could become consumers for its products (Isaev 1994).

In this socio-political milieu, sociologists engaged in two types of boundary–work simultaneously. On one hand, the privatisation articles promoted images of sociology which aimed to *extend* or *expand* the influence of sociology into two arenas dominated by the state: economic policy making and 'reality management.' This was reflected, for example, in statements that data were intended both to inform public opinion about privatisation and to provide decision makers with information about public perceptions of the policies. In this instance, researchers clearly identified themselves with the administrative apparatus of the Kyrgyz state. 'The results,' they claimed, 'will offer scientific–informative help to power structures of the Kyrgyz state in elaborating policies for social transformation, corresponding with the socio-cultural characteristics of our republic and the particularities of the mass consciousness of its citizens' (Isaev 1994). This assertion implies a continuing acceptance of the technocratic role of sociology in the republic, as well as a pragmatic approach to lobbying for funding resources. Here, the relationship between sociology and power is carefully constructed so that 'scientific' knowledge can be legitimised as long as it contributes to the establishment and maintenance of 'just authority,' or legitimate political power in the form of democratic governance and publicly-sanctioned social planning. As sociologists such as Isaev continued to seek patronage from the state, they sought to build a favourable relation with it by adopting the government's official ideology about democratisation and liberalisation and framing criticisms of state policy within this sanctioned rhetorical framework.

On the other hand, however, the researchers also aimed to distinguish sociology from politics and political activities, attempting to *establish the*

autonomy of sociological knowledge from 'non-scientific' forms of information and argumentation. Sociological knowledge (in this case about public opinion concerning privatisation) was carefully characterised as meeting four major criteria of 'democratic' knowledge: (1) 'complete, systematic and complex,' (2) 'authentic, scientific and methodologically grounded,' (3) 'efficient and regularly replenished,' and (4) 'able to apply different approaches to studying different regions of the republic' (Isaev 1994). Appeals to the logic of scientific objectivity and neutrality became part of attempts not only to differentiate social research about political issues from political activity, but also to carve out spaces for social critique in a period when public criticism was being increasingly suppressed. While there is nothing inherently 'scientific' about many of the arguments made on the basis of public opinion surveys on privatisation, connecting these claims to legitimate scientific research (and by symbolic implication democracy, 'civilisation' and truth) enabled sociologists to claim a degree of intellectual authority and political immunity.

In the case of the privatisation surveys, however, these rhetorical strategies had little practical impact on the personal, political and material interests of the organisations funding the research. This exercise in public science and boundary–work neither effected changes in the actual relationship between sociologists and the power elite nor prevented powerful sponsors from withdrawing their patronage when the results and interpretations of the research ceased to validate their own agenda.

Political ratings in Kyrgyzstan: real sociology and 'pseudo-sociology'
Another series of articles about the 'sociology of the elite,' based on public opinion surveys conducted to calculate the ratings of politicians and political parties, became the site for a different kind of struggle over scientific authority and legitimacy within the social science community itself.[93] This case provides another illustration of how the nature and role of sociology is constructed differently according to shifts in social demand, and how the definition of theoretical and normative concepts such as 'objectivity,' 'value–neutrality' and 'good' and 'bad' sociology are fluid and emerging. Gieryn et al.'s (1995) 'market model of professionalisation' offers some insight into the

economic forces shaping this process, and boundary–work to establish legitimacy for certain 'scientific' practices and exclude those deemed 'pseudo-scientific' is clearly visible.

The study of political ratings became popular in Kyrgyzstan during perestroika as power was devolved from central to locally elected authorities (Isaev 1991b) and local elections raised concerns about predicting and monitoring political behaviour. Ratings of political leaders in Kyrgyzstan, which are most often created by ranking individuals on a five-point scale, were published regularly from the early 1990s to 1997 and continue in modified form to the present day.[94] While members of the BHU sociological laboratory (specifically, teams of researchers associated with Isaev) published more than twenty articles in a four-year period, researchers in other institutions such as Osh State University, the Sociological Laboratory at the Osh Higher Technical College and KNU were also actively engaged in debates over the purpose, methodology and interpretation of surveys conducted to establish political ratings.

Social relevance

Isaev and others devote considerable attention in their articles to promoting the social relevance of sociology in general and studies of political ratings in particular. The latter are justified symbolically, often with reference to their usage in the west. Sociologists argue, for example, that this type of research constitutes an integral part of modern democratic and 'civilised' states in which political life 'is strongly influenced by the personal quality of its leaders' (Group 1993) and where 'research results serve as a believable source of social information for making decisions or correcting the political behaviour of leaders' (Isaev et al. 1994b). Similarly, 'take Boris Yeltsin who, together with every other kind of authority, is always evaluated. And in the US, France, Germany, and other such countries, top officials and elite people are evaluated. We follow this path in order to become a democratic country' (Isaev 1999d).

Such research is also associated with the rationalisation of the political process, as ratings surveys require that political prestige and legitimacy be measured 'not according to…position in the hierarchy, but according

to…concrete deeds and the effectiveness of work' undertaken (Isaev et al. 1994). As Kyrgyzstan is defined as a society in 'crisis' or 'transition'—or in one case, described as a Hobbsean 'war of all against all' (Isaev et al. 1994b)—the demand for 'real, accurate and timely information' (Bakir Uluu 1994) about those in power has increased. It is believed that empirically derived information is not only a corrective for poorly conceived policies that fail to address actual social problems (Isaev et al. 1994b), but also a way to provide the public with vital political information 'when the parties don't and leaders won't' (Isaev et al. 1994e).

As with the studies on privatisation, the realisation that Akaev's administration was becoming more rather than less authoritarian influenced the rhetoric that sociologists used to represent their work in the media. Justifications for the social relevance of sociology shifted in mid-1994 from emphasising the therapeutic and policy oriented role of sociology in modern democratic societies to focusing on its more critical functions in authoritarian states. Sociologists began to argue, for example, that their work was necessary because 'the new "democratic" leaders are still not accustomed to the fact that they are studied from the point of view of sociology and do not want to be placed on a level with those they consider "subordinate"' (Isaev et al. 1994b). Another article employed statistical data from the surveys to argue that the society was entering a period in which the president's authoritarianism would be 'victorious' and institutionalised (Isaev et al. 1994f).

While the researchers maintained that the association between sociology, modernity, democratic politics and 'civilisation' was an ideal to aspire to, they also began to argue that in times of political crisis, and particularly under the threat of non-democratic abuses of power, sociological research may challenge the hegemonic ideologies of those in power. In a 'non-objective' (i.e., politicised) world, sociologists became responsible for 'analysing and commenting on facts, not reconstructing reality, and not refuelling elements of "lies" of political consciousness, not creating illusions tied to politics' (Isaev, Ibraeva and Madalieva 1995). By 1997, notions that sociology should contribute to the efficiency of state power had been replaced by the assertion that sociological research was 'necessary in order to analyse and differentiate contemporary politics, not leaving the sphere of the production of political

products only to individual politicians, and in order to escape from systematic, even outright manipulation thrust on certain points of view' (Isaev et al. 1997a).

As with the privatisation studies, sociologists used their articles on political ratings to reconstruct their relationship to the state during this period. Sociological research was even ascribed national missionary status, thus crystallising sociologists' new role as an alternative power base in Kyrgyzstani society:

> The results of our research may not 'suit' someone and might be 'uncomfortable,' but without servility or care for authority, without consideration of the preferred market, we absolutely inform them about the wide community. We see this as our mission—you know we answer to national socio-political science. This is the civic and scientific position we intend to stand by, regardless of opponents and individuals of all shades (Isaev, Ibraeva and Madalieva 1995).

In taking responsibility for this task, sociologists also assumed identities as national heroes who struggled to honour the scientific pursuit of truth in an atmosphere of political power-seeking and ideological manipulation:

> From the time we began empirical sociological ratings of political workers (since 1991), various toadies, people wanting to please, advisors, intriguers and envious people of all shades have tried to ruin the beginnings of this research. But we continue with our sociological scientific studies. They are widely known in the community of the republic through newspaper publications. Our scientific results are objective, impartial and reflect reality. […] In a situation where the systemic crisis of society is deepening, the social status of the population is worsening, and faith in the power structures is decreasing, the task of defining the ratings of political workers demands courage from researchers (Isaev et al. 1997a).

While studies of political popularity were justified within the BHU Sociology Department as part of its larger research project oriented towards advising the nation's power elite (see Chapter 7), they were publicly justified as a challenge to the power of this very group.

Underlying epistemologies

Arguments asserting the social relevance of sociology, and in this case the value of specific studies of political ratings, were based on a number of epistemological assumptions about the nature of scientific knowledge, the connection between social science and modernisation, and the proper relationship between social science and society. First, social science is portrayed both as a symbolic indicator and as a practical method for the modernisation of political life, particularly the rationalisation of political behaviour and the transition from personality based politics to rational-action or deeds-based politics. Second, the practice of constructing social scientific knowledge (e.g., about the legitimacy of political figures or platforms) is defined as objective and, if conducted effectively, not socially or politically contingent. Sociological research is seen to transcend political and intellectual crises within the society and to act as a guarantor of truths about social reality, which are exploited by political actors that value truth for its use value and not as an end in itself. Third, this transcendental epistemology requires that sociologists speak truth to power. In a democratic society which respects the value of truth and its role in effective social policy, they should be immune to political retribution. Finally, the production of sociological knowledge is not tied to any particular political or social system. While it is described as an integral part of democratic societies which ostensibly base political decisions on scientific research, it is also seen as a necessary presence in non-democratic societies as an alternative to the ideological hegemony of undemocratic regimes.

The very fact that sociologists put so much energy into establishing the social relevance for sociology and appealing to both political leaders and the public for support reveals that the struggle for scientific authority in Kyrgyzstani sociology is intricately intertwined with the social and political role of the discipline, as well as with the demand for material resources. However, the conceptual framework of positivist, objective, empirical and apolitical science prevents Kyrgyzstani sociologists from engaging with this problematic in a theoretically grounded manner, or from considering that

> different representations of science correspond to different
> positions in the scientific field, and that these representations

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> are *ideological strategies* and *epistemological conditions* whereby agents occupying a particular position in the field aim to justify their own position and the strategies they use to maintain or improve it, while at the same time discrediting the holders of the opposing position and their strategies (Bourdieu 1975: 40, italics in original).

That there are tensions underlying the dominant doxa of sociology becomes clearly visible in public contests for scientific legitimacy in sociology in Kyrgyzstan. By defining sociology as a necessary, important and privileged way of knowing, sociologists raise the stakes of its status as an academic discipline. By using scientific rhetoric to claim political immunity, they open spaces for disagreement about the proper relationship between politics, knowledge and power. The struggle to establish scientific authority therefore becomes a central feature of public sociology. In articles on political ratings, this struggle is manifested in three separate debates about the methodology of sociological research, the relationship between science and politics, and the definition and practice of professional ethos.

Monitoring methodology: the boundaries of acceptable sociological practice
Debates over social research methods, including approaches to sampling, questionnaire construction, the interpretation of raw statistical data, the use of 'expert' or 'mass' surveys and the actual procedures by which research is conducted assume a particularly prominent place in Kyrgyzstani sociology. This is because they are associated not only with questions of scientific reliability and validity, but also with issues of intellectual integrity, conformity to ambiguously defined professional norms, and concerns about the politicisation of sociological knowledge and practice. While boundary–work is an important way of creating new standards for sociological research in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan, it has also contributed to the creation, maintenance and destruction of professional norms among sociologists and to the establishment of relationships of trust and scepticism between sociologists and the public.

From the outset, Isaev's publications on political ratings included lengthy, albeit selective, explanations of the methodology that his teams used to obtain the results they presented. This is partly a continuation of Soviet 'political

education,' in which media such as newspapers, radio and television programmes were employed in agitation campaigns. Communist agitators, including sociologists, were concerned primarily with explaining party decisions to the public and mobilising them to participate in party-led initiatives and social events.[95] The practice of using the media as a tool for educating and persuading the public about the value of a particular policy—in this case, the production and application of survey research on political ratings—still bears some resemblance to this older practice. This is also suggested by the authors' language in claims that 'our research and publications fulfil enlightening, socialisation and mobilising functions. They, as benevolent bearers of social scientific information, do significantly more in explaining the essence of reforms being carried out in the state, compared to the acts of informers, time-servers or cowards' (Isaev et al. 1997a). Similarly, they claim to have chosen to use the 'simplest, single-measure tables' for data display 'in order not to confuse our readers' (1993a). Because Kyrgyzstani sociologists consider themselves public figures, they take seriously the responsibility to educate the public about their work, albeit at an acceptable distance and in the role of 'experts.'

There are, however, more immediate factors motivating the publication of long explanations of sociological methods. Chief among them is the bitter competition for professional authority which has emerged within the small, mainly indigenous, community of sociologists in the republic, particularly between groups of sociologists at BHU and KNU vying for prestige, recognition and commissions. In October 1994, for example, Isaev's group published a meta-explanation of why they were explaining their methodology:

> We especially paused in detail on the selection [of respondents] because recently in the mass media there have been a variety of studies of public opinion, the quality of which has been called into question. [...] We will not analyse these now, as in our view this problem merits a separate professional discussion.

Despite the call for sociologists to discuss these problems in a more exclusive and professional space, the debate was nevertheless conducted in the public sphere. From 1993–97, Isaev and his group published newspaper articles criticising the research of Osh-based academic Tursunbai Bakir Uluu, branding it 'ignorant' and 'sociologically illiterate' (Isaev et al. 1993b). Bakir

Uluu (1994, 1997) responded with articles attacking Isaev's work, labelling it 'unscientific,' 'narcissistic' and 'ideological.' He was joined by KNU sociologists Tishin and Bekturganov, who suggested that work done at BHU was part of a 'political game' and that unqualified research in general was a threat to the status of the discipline in the republic (Bekturganov 1994a).

Interestingly, each antagonist made similar accusations of the others, particularly with regard to methodology. This reveals that while there was a broad consensus about certain methodological norms—in particular, that sociological research should be objective, politically detached, representative, valid and reliable—there was considerable disagreement about what each of these terms meant and where to draw the boundaries of 'correct' intellectual interpretation and professional practice. The intensity with which these issues were debated also indicates that method, or the processes by which knowledge is constructed, played an important role in the determination of legitimate knowledge and the collective identification of authoritative knowers.

Because the representativeness of sampling techniques in social research is linked to ideals of both scientific truth and the democratisation of knowledge (Blum 1991), the design of survey samples used in studies of political ratings has been particularly contentious. In the contemporary political context, incorrect sampling frames are tantamount to scientific incompetence and wilful politicisation, both of which are deemed detrimental to the institutionalisation of the discipline in the post-Soviet period (Bekturganov 1994a). As one author argued, 'the most democratic of all these approaches [of selection], created by equal opportunity for all, must be an instrument of sociology as the production of choices, to avoid biases in this or that group of investigators' (Baibosunov 1993). Bekturganov (1994a), for example, attempted to discredit Isaev's methodology by implying that he was either unfamiliar with or unwilling to use different approaches:

> The main condition for maintaining the quality of sociological research is representativeness, that is, representation of the surveyed field. Here, subjects of opinion define not only the goal of the research, but also the use of [different] types of selection and methods for selecting the primary information. […] But in the research done by the group of independent sociologists, they use the same type and scale of selection every time.

This passage referred specifically to Isaev's consistent use of the five-point scale to survey public and 'expert' attitudes toward politicians—in the words of the independent group of sociologists (1993), chosen because it was 'the simplest and easiest to understand' of all the methods available in applied sociology. This choice of method, however, was defined as populist and therefore 'unscientific' by others in the field, who argued that such simplistic methods marginalised other, more 'scientific' approaches such as mathematical modelling and complex statistical analysis (Bekturganov et al. 1994). The necessity of making sociological research accessible to the public was for them secondary to making it scientific.

There were also debates about the types of surveys used to ascertain opinions about leading politicians. Kyrgyzstani sociologists make clear distinctions between 'expert' and 'mass' surveys. While the latter are considered more accurate (Isaev and Ibraeva 1995), the former have become popular in recent years, primarily because researchers lack the financial and human resources to conduct large-scale representative surveys of the general population. 'Mass' surveys are defined as questionnaires distributed to 'simple respondents,' who 'can be anyone living in the republic, chosen by special a method depending on their sex, age, nationality [ethnicity], education, region of residence, and other indicators.' An 'expert survey,' on the other hand, is a set of questions asked of carefully selected 'experts,' or people who 'work professionally in an area of real activity of interest to sociologists' (Isaev et al. 1993). Over the years, the definition of 'expert' has been modified to mean, among other things, 'people who are completely knowledgeable about politics and professionally familiar with the politicians of the republic' (Isaev, Ibraeva and Madaliev 1995), people 'chosen based on their professional background for scientific purposes' (Isaev 1998) and 'unbiased, neutral opponents who are equidistant from the powers–that–be and the opposition, who are professionals in their work, scholars who always distinguish between critical relations to power and opposition, and who have their own independent and objective opinion about the processes of social life' (Isaev 1999c).

This qualitative differentiation between expert and lay knowers has been used to deflect criticism that certain sampling frames are insufficiently

representative and that research data are insignificant or inconsistent (Abdyrashev 1994; Bakir Uluu 1997; Bekturganov 1994a). Boundary–work is particularly evident here. In some cases, differences between 'experts' and 'simple respondents' are *de-emphasised* so that generalisations about public opinion can be induced from responses given by a small number (e.g., 50) of selected interviewees. For example, Isaev and Ibraeva (1995) argued that an expert survey can be a 'sounding out' of the public mood, and that while it 'does not fully or adequately reflect the state of mass consciousness, it allows [them] to speak about tendencies in social public opinion and the mood of the masses.' In another article published several days later, Isaev, Ibraeva and Madaliev (1995) argue that while 'experts' evaluations are subjective, in our view they are complete enough on they whole to reflect the public mood and public opinion, which is so changing and transient.' Later still, Isaev, Shaidullaeva and Madaliev (1998) asserted that

> when experts realistically approach the problem of socio-political changes in the republic, then you can claim their opinion expresses the opinion of the masses. At the same time, as the results of the research show, the mosaic-like, multi-coloured and contradictory nature of experts' answers to the same question suggests that their opinion reflects the diversity of opinions.

In each case, the difference between 'experts' and 'simple respondents' is reduced to a quantitative question of whether generalisations about larger populations can be drawn from the responses of a smaller and more purposefully chosen segment—a choice made, it is argued, for financial reasons, but which is nevertheless acceptable within the bounds of acceptable sociological methods. The legitimacy of 'expert surveys' and of the political interpretations which are made on the basis of them is therefore justified by a theory of relative representativeness.

In other cases, however, ontological differences between the knowledge of 'experts' and 'simple respondents' are instead *emphasised* to explain why different surveys about similar questions produced different results (Isaev et al. 1993, 1994a; Isaev, Shaidullieva and Madaliev 1998). In these cases, sociologists argue that experts and non-experts are two fundamentally different types of knowers. Thus, because their responses cannot be expected

to be similar, inconsistencies in the results of studies conducted among 'experts' and 'the masses' did not challenge the validity or reliability of the studies themselves. This was explained at length in an article published on political ratings in April 1994 (Isaev et al. 1994a), worth quoting in full here because it offers a clear explanation of the logic behind these epistemological distinctions. It also illustrates the 'educative' role that Kyrgyzstani sociologists sometimes assume when presenting their work in the public sphere.

> A survey of respondents and a survey of experts are two different methods of applied sociology. (There are also a range of other methods, but that is a theme for a separate discussion.) All residents of Kyrgyzstan who are included in a selected total may be respondents, depending on their sex, age, region and place of residence, nationality, social means and other indicators, depending on the goals of the study. The whole problem here is that the basic parameters of our artificially created model (or sample) correspond to the socio-demographic structure of the entire population living in Kyrgyzstan. In this case, by correctly creating the sample, we can guarantee that the opinion of our respondents generally reflects the opinion of the whole population. [While it may be a few points off], we can always calculate this by using a special mathematical formula. When we conduct a survey of experts, however, then this is already not asking simple residents of the republic, but specialists and professionals who study an area of social life that we are interested in. In this research, political scientists, sociologists, psychologists, journalists and activists of political parties are all experts. For objectivity, we select expert personalities who do not work for power structures. For example, in the President's Apparatus, the Jogorku Kenesh, the government, and oblast *akimiats* [councils] there are plenty of professionals who have candidate and doctoral degrees, but for fully understandable reasons we do not invite them to be experts in our studies. As far as an expert survey is a survey of professionals, its results have a greater degree of prognosis, because professionals, in contrast to simple respondents, are obliged to have a broader perspective. Therefore, we think the results published today and the results of the expert survey we published earlier do not contradict one another.

There are several interesting themes in this passage, such as the overt concern about the politicisation of knowledge and its effect on sociological method and the distinction made between the legitimate professionalism of 'activists of political parties' and the illegitimate work of 'personalities who…work for

power structures,' including academics holding positions in offices of state and regional administration.

The most interesting, however, is the boundary–work done to elaborate two different but equally valid types of 'objectivity' in sociological research—one for studies that subjectify the 'masses,' and one for those which subjectify the 'elites.' Each draws its legitimacy from a different source. The validity of mass surveys is contingent on statistical probability and representativeness, while the validity of an expert survey is determined not by the number of respondents, but by their 'individual character, intellectual and professional level, and propriety and honesty' (Isaev et al. 1997, 1997b) and the belief that professionals, 'in contrast to simple respondents, are obliged to have a broader perspective' on social and political affairs (Isaev et al. 1994a; see also Isaev et al. 1996a). It is also significant that expert surveys are more frequently associated with good sociological practice in foreign (i.e., western) countries (Isaev, Shaidullieva and Madalieva 1998).

This distinction is not grounded in theories of objectivity (e.g., representation versus interpretation), but based on hierarchies of knowledge and ontological assumptions about different types of knowers. As a result, different definitions of objectivity may be ascribed to different survey methods, which are then interpreted strategically in boundary–work. There is little discussion of how the problem of representativeness may be addressed or challenged through the use of expert surveys, how political affiliation or qualities of 'propriety and honesty' may affect the answers of 'simple respondents,' or how researcher bias may also influence the definition and identification of 'objective' and 'honest' experts in the first place. These debates are excellent examples of how the 'selection of one or another description depends on which characteristics best achieve the demarcation [of sociology] in a way that justifies scientists' claims to authority or resources,' and good illustrations of the argument that science 'is no single thing: its boundaries are drawn and redrawn in flexible, historically changing and sometimes ambiguous ways' (Gieryn 1983: 781).

Mapping the fields: shifting boundaries between science and politics

In addition to concerns about representativeness and validity, the BHU research group was heavily criticised for the way it constructed lists of political leaders. Bakir Uluu (1994), for example, accused the group of substantial, even intentional researcher bias because it listed the left-leaning Republican Party first in its list of parties. 'People who are weakly political,' he argued, 'which is a special problem of southerners—[owing to] a famine of information and a difficult relationship with the rest of the republic— automatically choose the first party on the list.' Bakir Uluu also argued that good sociological practice privileged open-ended questions which enabled researchers to elicit spontaneous responses as opposed to providing respondents with closed-ended choices from pre-constructed lists, which, it was argued, inevitably bear the marks of their makers.

The debate over questionnaire design reached its apex when in 1994 the BHU group removed Akaev's name from the list of politicians being rated (Bakir Uluu 1997; Bekturganov 1994a). Though Isaev was accused of 'shuffling the data,' he claimed it was an attempt to diffuse political debates which had emerged after previous ratings surveys suggested that the president's popularity had declined (1996a). More specifically, he argued it was a way to 'consolidate society, avoid conflict with individuals and develop sociology in [the] republic as a science, academic subject and profession' (Isaev et al. 1994b). Pro-government critics, however, interpreted the decision as a politically motivated attempt to symbolically exclude Akaev from the political landscape (Bakir Uluu 1997) and criticised it for being a 'distortion of the principles of correctness for the selection of experts, methods, techniques and procedures defining political ratings' (Bekturganov 1994a). Bakir Uluu's (1994, 1997) accusations of researcher bias were rooted in deeper concerns about the effects of political, and in this case specifically party, bias. They were a response to Isaev's (1993b) claims that Bakir Uluu himself had conflated social scientific criticism with 'party work.' Both men are prominent academics who also hold positions of responsibility in political (opposition) parties in Kyrgyzstan; both, therefore, are forced to justify dual affiliations to science and politics.

The integration of sociology and the Communist Party during the Soviet period has made the sociology–political party relationship particularly contentious in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan. During perestroika, sociologists began to promote the need for scientific autonomy, albeit still within a context of political commitment and often from within the party (Adamalieva and Tuzov 1991; Blum 1990; Isaev 1991a, 1993a). They welcomed and in fact often expected material and political support from the party, but also demanded the right to serve it as they saw fit, which was not necessarily by towing the party line. In the post-independence period, however, the mere association of sociology with any particular political party has become one of the main criteria for labelling it illegitimate, politicised, unscientific and immoral. Bakir Uluu (1994) erected a clear boundary between scientific and political activity when he published an open letter to Isaev, saying,

> I did not write this article as a member of ERK, but as a social scientist. For that reason I signed only my last name. If I published something different, I would sign it 'head representative of the ERK party political council.' Obviously, when you conduct sociological research, you don't write 'Kusein Isaev, member of the high council of the DDK party.' Therefore, let's be ethical about this question: both you and I, aside from our party work, work in institutions of higher education. We cannot separate one from the other. It is a different matter if you…want to reintroduce principles of the party into science.[96]

Isaev, however, challenged this construction of the boundary between science and politics in a later article in which he drew a sharp line between political activities and sociological work while not denying his commitment to either. When confronted with questions from sceptical journalists about the possible conflation of truth and power as a result of his dual affiliation, he replied,

> [e]veryone has a right to their own opinion. […] I never use the word *egemen* [independence], but rather *azattyk* [freedom or liberty]. The ultimate treasure for an academic person, a scholar like me, is the independence and freedom of his country where scientific justice is upheld as a priority. There are few who value this treasure. Opposition and opponent are not to be confused, for they carry absolutely different meanings. I consider myself a patriot–opponent (Isaev 1998).

Here, he justifies both sociological legitimacy and social relevance by distinguishing between his academic and political work while defining the former as a moral imperative of the latter.

In such debates over the science–politics boundary, there is little concern that social science will have an adverse effect on political work; in fact, quite the opposite, as it is believed to increase the transparency, effectiveness and justice of political action. However, there is also no consideration that political affiliations, beliefs or practices can have any positive effect on sociological work. Sociologists recognise two legitimate relationships between sociology and politics: either a complete separation of the two, or a unidirectional relationship in which sociology informs political action but political action has no effect on sociological work. This is commensurate with two assumptions: first, that sociology can and should contribute to the development of scientific politics, and second, that one can maintain clear boundaries between 'science' and scientific knowledge and 'politics' and political knowledge in the process.

The location of the boundary between these two fields is, in other words, drawn along a normative axis of intent. 'Good' sociological research may have political implications and still remain legitimate as long as it objectively reveals 'the status quo' of 'social reality.' However, 'when the research programme itself serves to corroborate a priori ideals born of someone's political ambitions,' it crosses over into the realm of illegitimate knowledge (Blum 1991). Phrased metaphorically,

> [r]esearch undertaken with the goal to show that a sick person does not have syphilis, but a common cold, is not only destructive for the patient, but dangerous for the environment as well (Blum 1991).

The distinction between good and bad sociological research is also grounded in positivist theories of knowledge which ascribe a negative role to subjectivity in social science, and correspondence theories of truth that eliminate the agency of the subjective knower from the production of statements about social reality. However, despite the fear of the effects of subjectivity (in this case interpreted as effects of power) on the validity of scientific truth and the belief that truly objective research is possible, some

sociologists allow that 'any concrete sociological study, whether it is objective or not, has a certain level of subjectivism' (Isaev et al. 1994a). The legitimacy of sociological knowledge, therefore, depends on the extent to which the causes of this subjectivism can be eliminated in processes of research and interpretation.

Two of the most common strategies for achieving this among Kyrgyzstani sociologists working in the post-independence period are the establishment of scientific and intellectual autonomy within the political field and the use of positivist, empiricist methods in sociological research. In both cases, practices which aim to guarantee neutrality and objectivity are opposed to those which are founded on politicisation and intent. This is illustrated in a sample of text written by Isaev et al. (1994a), which appears in many of their subsequent articles on political ratings (Isaev and Ibraeva 1996; Isaev, Ibraeva and Madaliev 1995; Isaev et al 1994b):

> Precisely for this reason we strive to conduct our research independently from the power structure and various political forces in the country. For members of our independent sociological group, objectivity, scientific conscientiousness and the quest for truth, as well as the observation of widely accepted methods of conducting applied research, are obligatory concepts.

However, as mentioned above, the definition of objectivity is still very context-dependent and shifts according to sociologists' practical needs. Since independence, the sociological community has become fragmented. There is no central group or institution that represents a legitimate consensus on these issues; no agreed upon set of disciplinary guidelines. This leads not only to contests for this dominant position, but also to a blurring of the boundaries between insider and outsider, and to confusion about what distinguishes professional sociology from 'non-scientific' or amateur knowledge production. As Isaev asked in a 1993 article which refuted claims that his group had 'politicised sociology,' 'falsified results,' and 'filled someone else's orders,'

> [w]ho will judge? The ethico-moral aspects of this drama, as well as the problem of professionalism in sociology, deserve a separate discussion. We are ready for it. Are our opponents who call themselves professional sociologists ready for it?

Here's a question: to what extent can you consider yourself a professional person if you don't have a basic education and if you only work on applied research from time to time? (Isaev et al. 1994b)

These questions are fertile ground not only for boundary–work about methodology and the relationship between science and politics, but also for negotiations about the professional ethos of sociology in Kyrgyzstan.

'Clean hands and clean minds': the professional ethos of sociology[97]

Because concerns about scientific autonomy and reliable method are tied to normative criteria of subjective intent, they are often recruited in efforts to define the professional ethos of sociology in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan, or what distinguishes the difference between 'good' and 'bad' sociological practice. Subjective notions of honesty, integrity and professional and political morality therefore play a central role in the definition of objective practices in sociological work in Kyrgyzstan.

This is not unusual in the sociology of science; methodological rules are moral as well as technical imperatives of scientific practice. According to Merton (1996: 267), the ethos of science is 'that affectively toned complex of values and norms which is held to be binding on the man *[sic]* of science.' These norms not only shape the definition of science within different cultural contexts, but also influence the 'scientific conscience' of practitioners. As such, 'the mores of science possess a methodological rationale but they are also binding, not only because they are procedurally efficient, but because they are believed right and good' (Merton 1996: 268).

The establishment of a professional ethos for sociologists in Kyrgyzstan has been a highly contentious process as different groups of practitioners struggle to institutionalise different definitions of 'good' sociological practice, and as new alliances between sociology, the state and international and commercial organisations come into conflict with existing norms regulating the relationship between academic and political work. For example, new ethico-moral values such as disinterestedness and non-commerciality which have been embraced in theory are difficult to sustain practically in conditions where the discipline is judged on its level of political relevance and almost entirely dependent on external sources of funding.

As illustrated in Part 2, while Soviet sociologists adhered to or were bound by Marxist–Leninist norms of professional practice, strains between their scholarly responsibility to scientific truth and their voluntary or requisite subordination to the Communist Party created ambiguities in the professional ethos of sociology. By the 1990s, two dominant definitions of 'good' Soviet sociological practice had emerged, both of which were distinguished from mainstream western ideologies of 'modern science,' particularly in their rejection of disinterested objectivity and their encouragement of political commitment in scientific work (see Merton [1996: 274-76] on 'disinterestedness' in modern science and Inkeles [1958: 138] on Marxist–Leninist criticisms of 'objectivity' in intellectual activity).

The first, established by academics who supported the party's hegemony in the social sciences, emphasised the political use value of sociological work. Officially, good sociology in Soviet Kirgizia was that which contributed to extending the power of the party within society and eliminating divisive criticism; it met the administrative and ideological needs of the ruling regime. The second definition of 'good' sociology, elaborated less systematically and more discretely by both party and non-party academics who were critical of the party's ideological control over intellectual activity, was also based on the political use value of sociological work in that 'good' social research was that which could be employed in the pursuit of socialist social reform. The difference was that the latter definition privileged scientific truth claims over political truth claims. In this version of the professional ethos, 'good' sociology should form the basis for political decision making and not vice versa; 'good' political power was that which was subordinated to scientific authority.

These two definitions of 'good' sociology continue to inform the emerging professional ethos of Kyrgyzstani sociologists in the post-Soviet period. This ethos, elaborated in media texts, can be deconstructed into five elements. Each of these appears throughout the articles on political ratings, and each reveals how the professional ethos of sociology is being negotiated in response to changes in the epistemological foundations and cultural organisation of sociology, from Marxist–Leninist theories of science and society to non-Marxist, positivist conceptions.

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First, legitimate sociological work must be motivated by purely 'scientific' intentions which are not 'corrupted' in any way by personal or political aspirations to power. This norm is expressed, for example, in Bakir Uluu's (1994, see also 1997) arguments that his research is more legitimate than Isaev's because his goal was 'the search for truth and not power'—a claim imbued with normative force by the symbolic association of his research with the 'European school of education' and Isaev's with Kyrgyz patriarchal traditions. This marks a clear departure from the Soviet conception of politically committed research in the form of *partinnost'* [party-ness] and a shift toward the notion of 'disinterestedness' which grounds positivist ideologies of modern science in the west.[98]

This is connected to the second element of the emerging ethos, which is that sociological work should be non-commercial and not–for–profit, but rather produced to assist decision makers, inform the public and advance knowledge in general. Both Bakir Uluu and Isaev invoke this norm to challenge the authority of each other's research. While Isaev protested against the employment of sociological research as 'political prostitution' (Isaev et al. 1997a), Bakir Uluu accused him of taking the

> unfaithful path of the 'marketisation' of science. In sociological science we have accepted the following laws: a sociologist carrying out a survey does not have the right to divulge the collected information or give out completed questionnaires to individuals who are not connected with the research [but] who would pay for it (Bakir Uluu 1994).

Again, this reflects a move away from the Marxist–Leninist conception of applied social science as a technical service to the power elite, and toward ideals of autonomy and informational 'communism' which characterise ideologies of science in capitalist societies (for more on communism in science see Merton 1996: 271-74).

Third, sociological work must be conducted in the most 'objective' way possible, with every possible influence of subjective interpretation being accounted for at every stage of research. This runs contrary to previous norms, which held that objectivity was a 'bourgeois' tactic that prevented the identification and exposure of social inequalities. Fourth, sociologists must adhere to scientific laws and obey the scientific method; the superiority of

these approaches to 'speculative philosophy' is believed to have been demonstrated by advances in western social science.

Finally, sociologists must occupy a moral high ground by being personally and publicly honest about the limitations of their knowledge and motivations for their research, and by not allowing themselves to be influenced by extra-scientific forces. Engaging in political debate, even about sociology itself, is frowned upon and portrayed as 'uncharacteristic' of social scientists; however, it is justified if such debates are deemed necessary for defending the moral superiority of social scientific work over political truth claims (Isaev et al. 1994b). Sociologists who do engage in debates with one another over the legitimacy of particular studies, methods or practices therefore often preface their political arguments by reaffirming their commitment to the principles of intellectual autonomy and professional morality.

This nascent ethos has assumed particular significance in the context of the project to institutionalise the discipline within the republic during the post-Soviet period. As Isaev et al. argued in one response to Bakir Uluu, 'it is doubly important if we consider that sociology in our republic is going through a growing phase. For members of our sociological group…researching socio-political and other processes in Kyrgyzstan, honesty and objectivity, as well as scientific laws, are sacred values' (1993b; see also Isaev et al. 1994a for similar oaths of loyalty to values of 'objectivity, scientific conscientiousness, and the quest for truth, as well as the observation of widely accepted methods of applied research').

Personal integrity is also highly valued in this environment, where absolute objectivity has become a primary criterion of scientific legitimacy despite acknowledgements that it may not actually be a practical possibility (Isaev, Ibraeva and Madaliev 1995). This is reflected in attempts to use subjective personal characteristics and individual morality as a means to reconcile intellectual and methodological tensions or biases in studies of political ratings:

> We are far from asserting the possibility of an absolutely objective, sterile, de-ideologicised consciousness of the sociological interpreter. But it is also true that the principles of

our work are honesty, independence and scientific, objective strictness in work with facts. The Independent Group of Sociologists does not gravitate towards either a single political party or movement or towards a single leader, and does not have biases in relation to who would or would not be [in power] (Isaev, Ibraeva and Madalieva 1995).

The development of a professional ethos for the discipline is not only important for locating and patrolling the boundaries of acceptable sociological practice among sociologists, but also plays a major role in establishing scientific authority within the public sphere. Notions of honesty, integrity, morality and rational action are familiar, as they are also prevalent in more general discussions about post-Soviet social ethics in Kyrgyzstan. They resonate with a public that feels it lives in a 'period of global transformation of consciousness and a deep break of norms and behavioural stereotypes' (Bekturganov 1995) and sociologists find it natural as they encounter a 'normal process of depoliticisation and de-ideologicisation of the population who are awaiting intelligent decisions from politicians' (Isaev and Ibraeva 1995). Sociologists who do not conform to these norms or who are judged by others to be in violation of them are often labelled 'pseudo-sociologists' or 'dilettantes' (Baibosunov 1993) by their peers and excluded from the academic community (Isaev et al. 1993b, 1997a). However, the inherent ambiguity of the broadly agreed upon terms of reference means that such labels may be assigned arbitrarily and, in many cases, for deeply political reasons.

In addition, and perhaps more importantly, the ideal professional ethos of disinterestedness (or purity of intent), non-profitability (or communism in science), objectivity, scientificity and moral integrity, which is elaborated in the articles on political ratings is often subverted by the existential realities of academic life in Kyrgyzstan and by the hierarchical, competitive organisation of sociology in the republic. It is also complicated by the dual-pronged project to establish scientific legitimacy and social relevance. Appeals for methodological and moral disinterestedness in the pursuit of sociological truth exist in tension with demands for sociologists to produce politically relevant research. The commercialisation of sociological research has made researchers vulnerable to both intellectual and moral criticism, as they are

almost entirely dependent on contract work and commissions. In the absence of centralised academic standards and in an atmosphere where corruption is rampant even in the highest echelons of the academy, sociologists are forced to regulate the boundaries of the profession independently. Fierce competition between them, however, often makes the maintenance of professional norms a personal and political struggle. The ideal of free flowing information within the scientific community is unattainable within this competitive environment in which knowledge and expertise have become commodities and potential sources of social capital and professional power. While adherence to the procedures of scientific method is marginally easier to evaluate, disagreements about what constitutes an 'acceptable approach' make this a contentious area as well.

In other words, although Kyrgyzstani sociologists are constructing a professional ethos of science which ostensibly transcends structural constraints and mediates contradictions in their relationships with one another and with other social institutions, it has not yet become institutionalised as a professional code of practice. Instead, it remains most effective as a rhetorical device with which the definitions of professional norms can be further elaborated, debated and contested. The tensions in the ethos of Kyrgyzstani sociology are central to understanding why, nearly five decades after its initial emergence in the republic, sociology in any form has not been institutionalised as an academic discipline or professional practice. Many setbacks—the censorship and reorganisation of the KSU laboratory, the repression of research on ethnic relations, the lack of support for sociological work, the inability to establish indigenous sociological institutions, the lack of material and symbolic resources, and the breakdown of productive relationships within the academic community—are undeniably results of structural constraints such as authoritarian government, centre–periphery inequalities, intellectual and financial poverty, and academic dependency. Theories about the state of the discipline which focus on these factors, such as those introduced in Chapter 1, are therefore not misguided. However, they are incomplete. These and other problems are also created by non-material factors, particularly the ways in which the nature and role of sociology, as well as the meaning of its reform or

'transition,' have been conceptualised and articulated by Kyrgyzstani sociologists themselves.

10
CONCLUSION AND THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The project to transform sociology from a discipline that compromises 'truth in strength' to one that can assume 'strength in truth' epitomises the zeitgeist in late socialist and post-Soviet sociology on the Central Asian periphery. The many different projects to reform and institutionalise the discipline from the mid-1980s to the present day (as discussed in Chapters 4, 5, 7 and 8) have in common an underlying desire to divorce the production of truth about social life from the exercise of political power; to wrest the power of truth from the hands of those perceived to employ it to maintain illegitimate types of power. As stated in the beginning of this dissertation, Kyrgyzstani sociologists have therefore tried to reform sociology from a heteronomous field of knowledge and practice into an autonomous one. Those exercising power by betraying the public through manipulated truths are accused of betraying both the people and truth itself; neither justice nor truth can exist under such circumstances.

The proposed solution to this problem has been the creation of conditions in which people—political leaders, citizens and social scientists—can seek social truths outside the logic of power. Acquiring 'strength in truth' can only be achieved, it is argued, as long as the quest for social reality is pursued in isolation from personal and political interests, particularly through empirical studies conducted according to the scientific method. Truth claims constructed in this way are believed to be objective, politically neutral and value-free, and therefore useable guides for social and political action. They are believed, in other words, to form the foundation for a rational scientific politics which can stem domination by illegitimate power by asserting the strength of legitimate truth. The autonomisation of sociology and its transformation from a Marxist–Leninist technology into a positivist and empiricist science is therefore presented as the only way for rescuing truth from the abuses of power; for making the transition from a society that finds 'strength in truth' rather than being subjected to politically motivated and ideologically managed images of reality.

This entire movement can be interpreted, and often has been interpreted, in two different ways. The first, which takes into account both Soviet and

post-Soviet sociology and which is most prevalent among Kyrgyzstani sociologists themselves, is as a movement towards democracy and 'civilised' or 'world' science. In this explanation, the development and institutionalisation of a scientific type of sociology that functions to preserve truth and justice in the face of an illegitimate power that corrupts both is squarely in line with what was once the dominant history of sociology internationally. It is reinforced not only by the hegemony of post and anti-Soviet rhetoric, but also by the particularly limited narrative of the history of sociology which is available in the republic, i.e., the 'Whig history' of sociology reproduced in many Russian-language texts on *zapadnaia sotsiologiia* and in outdated English-language textbooks donated by foreign academics and organisations.

The second interpretation, which refers only to post-Soviet sociology and is dominant among many foreign sociologists and observers, is that the attempt to institutionalise scientific sociology in Kyrgyzstan represents a new type of naïve positivism, brought about by years of intellectual repression under Soviet rule and cultural tendencies towards reductionism and authoritarianism. Ironically, this interpretation is also supported by a narrow and ethnocentric understanding of the history of sociology, as well as by assumptions of the superiority of 'western' knowledge and knowers and a general lack of information about Kyrgyzstani sociology.

Both of these interpretations, however, are riddled with essentialisms of scientific knowledge (particularly its synonymisation with truth) and Kyrgyzstani society, particularly academe. They are also bolstered by tacit and often essentialist assumptions about the complex relationship between social science and society. By revealing that definitions of sociology are contingent and that 'belief in the value of scientific truth is not derived from nature but is a product of definite cultures' (Weber quoted in Merton 1996 [1938]), this dissertation has challenged these assumptions. It demonstrates that the development of different conceptualisations of sociology in Kyrgyzstan—specifically, the positivist, applied–professional model and the post-positivist liberal–critical model—was neither a natural nor inevitable consequence of the Soviet collapse. It was instead a conscious decision made by sociologists, albeit one made by within particular intellectual and structural

constraints and through the lens of particularly partial bodies of theoretical and historical knowledge. In particular, the ascendance of positivist and empiricist sociology in the post-Soviet period may be understood as a deliberate, if extremely uncritical, attempt to reorganise the relationship between power and knowledge in Kyrgyzstani society and indeed to democratise the latter.

This project to establish scientific legitimacy for the discipline and to resuscitate faith in the value of scientific knowledge, however, has been complicated by its intersection with another project: the establishment of its social relevance. In post-Soviet Central Asia, Marxist–Leninist philosophies of science have converged with both critical and neo-liberal philosophies of science which assert that social science must be useful and socially 'relevant.' While the demonstration of relevance has historically been central in attempts to institutionalise the discipline, the definition of relevance has rarely been questioned; Kyrgyzstani sociologists do not ask, relevance for whom and for what? Instead, they have formulated arguments about the social relevance of sociology by reproducing broader hegemonic beliefs about what constitutes the 'good society' and the role of social order and change in creating it.

In the 1970s and 1980s, good sociological practice was Marxist; linked to the more effective realisation of Soviet socialist ideals of justice and equality, as well as to modernisation and industrialisation as articulated in Communist Party ideology. During perestroika, Marxist sociology continued to serve these general goals but was reconstructed as a critical counterweight to the Communist Party ideology which sociologists argued had 'distorted' the original socialist agenda. It also gained a new role as part of efforts to increase the autonomy of peripheral republics within the Soviet empire, thus becoming integrated into the movement to develop a non-Russian national identity.

After independence, both the nature and the role of sociological knowledge were drastically revised. Adherence to Marxist–Leninist theories and principles no longer constituted good sociological practice; in fact, it became the criterion for what became classified as 'pseudo-sociology.' Embracing what Marxism–Leninism had rejected—positivism, empiricism, faith in scientific objectivity—became central in the project construct a new post-Soviet sociology. Its institutionalisation became a symbolic measure of

the rationalisation of political power. The development of an alternative liberal–critical model of sociology which rejects both the Marxist and positivist legacies is also part of this project; however, it links the new sociology to the radicalisation, not rationalisation, of power.

In other words, after separating the *production* of sociological knowledge from the logic of political power in order to establish scientific legitimacy, sociologists have needed to associate its *application* with the logic of power to promote the discipline's social relevance. Kyrgyzstani sociologists have devised a number of strategies to reconcile these two divergent projects, in particular, by using boundary–work in both academic and public settings. They have reconstructed sociology in the post-Soviet period through three main types of boundary–work: the erection of rigid borders between social scientific knowledge and power at the level of knowledge production, the blurring or crossing of boundaries between scientific knowledge and power at the level of knowledge application, and the articulation of ideals of either scientific politics (in the professional–applied model) or critical sociology (in the liberal–critical model) which naturalise the combination of logics in the two activities. Figure 2 displays this in schematic form.

Figure 2
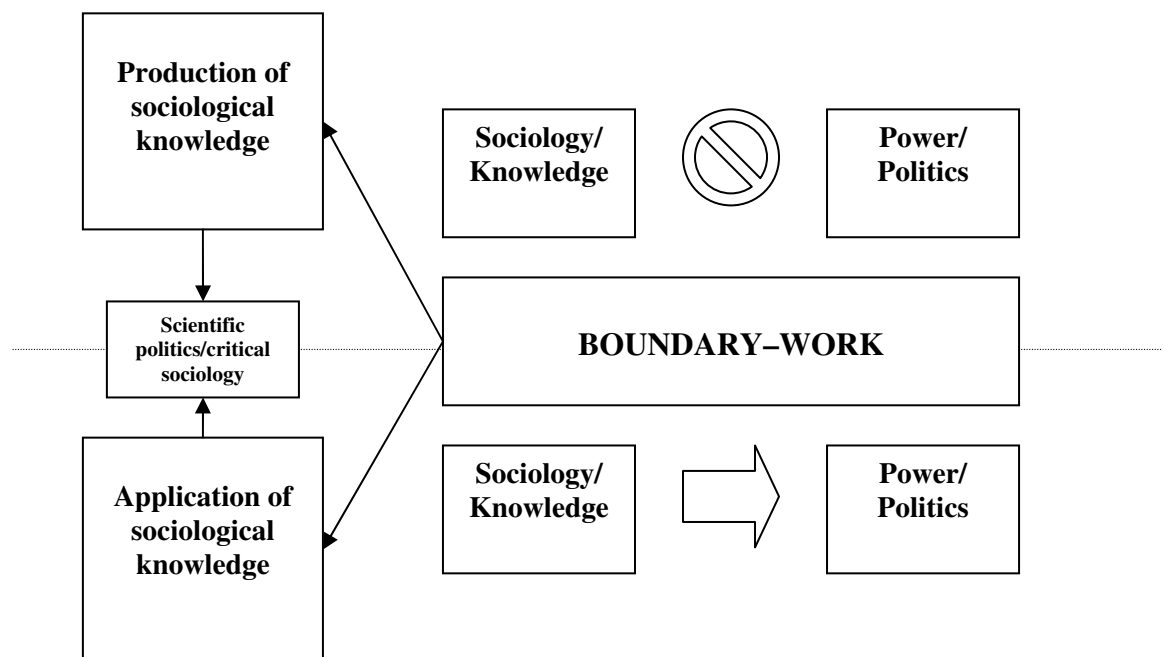
However, the two-pronged nature of the project—to *affiliate* power with knowledge (in the construction of communist society during the Soviet regime and in the realisation of democratic reforms after independence) and to *separate* social scientific knowledge from illegitimate power—has made it difficult to untangle the mutually constitutive relations between sociology and power at all stages of the discipline's historical development. These naturalised categories and relationships, which have been created by sociologists through deliberate boundary–work for the purposes of ordering, institutionalising and promoting the discipline, have been largely taken for granted by sociologists themselves. They have become integrated into the sociological imagination; they are now background assumptions, part of the prevailing intellectual doxa. Sociologists, prevented from considering the effects of power in their own knowledge production by their maintenance of the boundary between science and politics, have therefore been unable to interrogate the co-constitutive relationship between power and sociological knowledge.

And yet, while the discourse of knowledge production is anti-political, the practice of knowledge production is highly politicised. On a macro scale, we can see that the very subject of sociology—the concepts, topics and skills that are included as part of the discipline—have emerged, and continue to emerge, almost entirely within the logic of power. The research problems that dominate Kyrgyzstani sociology today are no less over-determined by forces external to the discipline than those which prevailed during the Soviet period. They are formulated in response to public opinion about social problems, dictated by the administrative and ideological needs of the state, and purchased and consumed by foreign *zakazchiki*. There is, furthermore, little if any theorising about these research problems which are operationalised as empirical questions; they are framed in non-sociological and often anti-theoretical terms. While the drive for autonomisation appears to be thriving in the scientisation of sociological method, a study of the intellectual content of the discipline reveals that the field remains almost entirely heteronomous.

This heteronomy is rooted in the conjunction of the quest for relevance, the legacies of intellectual colonialism and the current realities of academic dependence. Sociology emerged in Soviet Kirgizia on the coat-tails of an

imperialist agenda. Its content, method and raison d'être developed, albeit in various ways, in accordance with the needs of the state and Communist Party. This integration of the sociological and the political was institutionalised not only by consent and coercion, but also through Soviet practices of intellectual colonialism in Central Asia, particularly tutelage, conformity, and the rationalisation of the civilising mission. Perestroika presented the most promising opportunity for challenging the centralised organisation of Soviet social science and breaking the chains of intellectual colonialism in Kirgizia. This is reflected in the emergence of critical and creative approaches to Marxist sociology, as well as in the more independent formulation of problems for sociological research.

Independence, however, imposed a new type of dependence on Kyrgyzstani sociologists, effectively cutting short this period of creative intellectual development. Without indigenous sociological institutions, funding for sociological teaching and research, theoretical alternatives to Marxism–Leninism, or an established sociological community, sociologists turned toward the new scientific centre, 'the west.' While the nature and role of social science is no longer controlled by an imperial state, it has become heavily determined by foreign governments and aid agencies. The abrupt end of intellectual colonialism—including its financial subsidies—engendered a new type of academic dependency, characterised by sociologists' dependence on foreign ideas, media, educational technology, financial aid for teaching and research, investment in education, and brain drain (the last feature including the outflow of sociologists from universities to foreign agencies and clients within Kyrgyzstan). While the scientisation of sociological method and the erection of boundaries between science and politics may superficially create the illusion of an autonomous discipline, the inherently political nature of intellectual content in the discipline and the refusal to seriously interrogate it ensures that sociological knowledge remains dominated by political logic.

The effects of power in the production of sociological knowledge are also evident at a micro level. The way in which localised departmental conditions shape the construction of different paradigms of sociology as a scientific discipline, academic subject and profession reveal that far from being 'scientific,' decisions about what may be classified as legitimately sociological

are often made on non-scientific grounds, such as political position taking, professional posturing, and the need to attract material and symbolic resources for teaching and research. Within departments, social and political hierarchies of age, gender, ethnicity and nationality promote intellectual and professional competition, contradicting claims made by these very departments that sociological knowledge can only be developed in an atmosphere of free exchange and collaboration. Finally, as in all social science, sociological knowledge in Kyrgyzstan is produced by actors who bring to it, at every stage, their own world views, background assumptions, biases and agendas.

This dissertation therefore argues that there is an inherent contradiction between new discourses of sociology as science and new practices of knowledge production which are currently being institutionalised in Kyrgyzstan. The most pressing problem is not, as Kyrgyzstani sociologists define it, the deliberate repoliticisation of sociology as during the Soviet period, nor is it, as in the views of foreign observers, the resurgence of positivist social science. The main problematic in the institutionalisation of sociology in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan, at the level of knowledge production, is that the goal of creating an autonomous academic discipline which may develop in greater freedom from the dictates and logic of political power is defeated by the predominance of epistemological assumptions and methodological practices which are themselves politicised and which prevent the analysis of the actual relationship between sociology and politics, or knowledge and power.

The goal of institutionalising a type of sociology that is socially and politically relevant is, on the surface, more attainable, particularly if sociologists continue to develop it as a source of either policy research or social criticism. However, this goal is also thwarted by self-defeating assumptions and practices, in particular, the belief in a unidirectional relationship between sociology and politics. A politically engaged sociology that refuses to theorise and articulate its own political position or that does not take as one of its primary problematics the nature of political power itself runs the constant risk of being assimilated into the logic of the political field. Empiricism and the scientific method are not only not remedies for this dilemma; in many cases, they may actually exacerbate it. As C. Wright Mills

notes, 'it is possible for social research to be of administrative use without being concerned with the problems of social science' (1959: 53). Kyrgyzstani sociologists have, in other words, attempted to pursue through scientific rationalisation a grand vision that can only be realised through the application of critical reason.

Both types of boundary–work in Kyrgyzstani sociology—that done to autonomise sociological knowledge from the heteronomy of political power and that done to make sociology a socially and politically relevant discipline—have a potentially critical edge. In the right combination, they open possibilities for sociology to become a truly radical intellectual endeavour and practical profession in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan. However, this can only be achieved if sociologists critically consider the philosophies of scientific knowledge upon which they are based, and if inequalities in the structural conditions and organisation of sociology in the republic are redressed. It is on these two projects that the future of sociology in Kyrgyzstan depends.

Sociology, knowledge and power: beyond the Kyrgyz case

The story told in this dissertation—one of the quest for truth about social reality in authoritarian regimes, transitional societies and newly independent nations in the midst of social revolution and fragmentation—is unique to Kyrgyzstan only in ethnographic detail. The theoretical and human themes that emerge from it speak to broader questions about the nature, role and fate of social science in these types of societies, as well as to the political economy of truth in 'western' sociology. In particular, it forces us to reflect again upon the ways in which our own hegemonic conceptions of truth and 'good' social research have been formulated, negotiated and contested; what social conditions have been necessary for these formulations to emerge, and under what conditions we too might seek out other alternatives. It returns us, in other words, to the issue of power/knowledge in sociology itself.

Reductionist interpretations of recent developments in post-Soviet social science seem to suggest that many sociologists have forgotten the lessons of the sociology of knowledge, particularly the work of Foucault, that urge us to explore the social context of knowledge production before evaluating it

through a normative lens, or even interpreting it from our own taken–for–granted epistemological perspective. Instead of asking what the rise of positivist and empiricist sociology says about the state of the Kyrgyzstani academy, we may also productively ask what the act of problematising this intellectual project says about our own understanding of the relationship between positivism, empirical research, truth and power. Is the quest for autonomous truth about society still a valid goal for social scientists to pursue? Can it be achieved without disregarding recent contributions of critical sociology regarding the dialectical relationship between subjectivity and objectivity in social scientific research, and the all-pervasive reach of power in society? Can theoretical insights about the politics of knowledge from Mannheim, Foucault and Bourdieu be introduced into positivist epistemological frameworks to stimulate the development of a politically engaged, scientifically autonomous discipline? In doing so, could sociological practice in societies such as Kyrgyzstan disrupt the prevailing power/knowledge doxa that often divides positivist and critical sociologists? Given the widespread acceptance of Foucault's thesis (1967, 1973, 1978, 1989, 2001) that social scientific truth is in fact an effect of power—a thesis which has, of course, been employed in this work—is there still place in sociology for strength in truth?

The point of raising such questions is not to promote positivism, but to draw attention to three ways in which this dissertation speaks to broader themes at the intersection of power, knowledge and sociology. First, the critical study of social science in colonial and postcolonial societies must not, as is sometimes argued, be superseded by the study of a postmodern 'global' or international sociology. While categories of centre and periphery, intellectual colonisation, academic dependency and boundary–work are obviously not the only ones that may be used to analyse Soviet and post-Soviet social science, they are nevertheless productive in the effort to understand the relationship between certain types of socio-political order and the construction of social scientific knowledge. This dissertation suggests that further research in this direction will be fruitful and enlightening.

The second point is that focused, ethnographic case studies in the sociology of knowledge on the periphery of empire, and on the edge of the

scientific world system, are important for our understanding of the politics of social scientific knowledge in a wider cross-national context. In order to reduce inequalities within the scientific world system, or to eradicate the unequal system itself, we need what Smart calls an 'interpretive' rather than a 'legislative' international sociology, 'one which attempts to offer a translation service between different cultures and communities' (1994: 158). In-depth case studies of the development of non-western sociology such as this, as well as comparative studies that may follow from it are one way of advancing this project.

Finally, this dissertation illustrates how the foundational questions of sociology, particularly its political and scientific status and the effect of these on its legitimacy and relevance, are still crucially important in the formation of discipline in the field; they remain questions and potentialities, and yet lie at the heart of truth claims throughout social science. Reflexively, it suggests that our own negotiations of the boundary between science and politics, truth and power in sociological work at any particular moment should be seen as just that. The exploration of boundary–work and contingency in this process in Kyrgyzstani sociology offers a theoretical model for interrogating the political economy of truth not only in post-Soviet society, but in other socio-historical contexts, including our own.

APPENDIX A
THE SOCIOLOGISTS

Ablezova, Mehrigiul

Ablezova holds an undergraduate degree in Business Administration from AUCA and a master's degree in sociology from Indiana University. Her first encounter with sociology was in 2001, when Sagynbaeva (see below), director of the SIAR Bishkek social marketing research company, hired her as an interviewer. She joined the AUCA Sociology Department in 2002 and, in addition to her teaching responsibilities, has since been appointed director of the department's Center for Applied Social Research. Her team has conducted commissioned studies on child poverty (Children in Poverty), HIV in Kyrgyzstan (UNICEF), media and language (Cimera). Her intellectual interests currently centre on a range of issues, including environmental attitudes and methods of quantitative research.

Achylova, Rakhat

Between earning a candidate of philosophy degree from Leningrad State University in 1966 and a doctorate in philosophy in 1988, Achylova was a member of the sociological laboratory at the Kirgiz State University. She assumed directorship of this centre after Tabaldiev's death in 1975 (see below). In the 1990s, she organised a team of researchers to conduct a variety of studies about marriage and family life in Kyrgyzstan. She served as rector of the Kyrgyz Women's Pedagogical Institute.

Aldasheva, Anara

Aldasheva earned a candidate of sociology degree from BHU currently serves as Dean of the Faculty of Socio-Political Sciences. She has published fifteen papers on sociological themes.

Asanbekov, Mukanmedi

Asanbekov, currently the pro-rector for science at the Bishkek Humanitarian University, earned his Bachelors degree in history. Soon after he completed his undergraduate studies, he was invited to join the team of researchers at the

sociological laboratory within the Department of Scientific Communism in the Frunze Polytechnic Institute, led by Isaev (see below). He trained in sociology during his three-year tenure here, eventually enrolling as an aspirant at the USSR Academy of Science (now the Russian Academy of Science) in Moscow, where he wrote a candidate dissertation on the life-ways of the rural population of Kyrgyzstan. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, his research interests shifted toward the theoretical and empirical study of social change, a topic about which he currently writes in his spare time.

Asanova, Umut

Asanova originally studied English language at the Kirgiz State University and taught English at the INFAK, or Foreign Language Faculty. Later, from 1974–78, she was an active member of the sociological laboratory within the Department of Historical Materialism under Tabaldiev (see below). She participated in some of the first large-scale social research projects in Kyrgyzstan, including studies of industrial management in the hydroelectric sector (see Chapter 4). In 1981 she completed a candidate dissertation on the sociology of mixed-race marriages, which included the translation of a number of key English-language texts on the subject. While it was accepted in Moscow, she was forbidden to publish it in Kirgizia on the count that it was 'bourgeois sociology' and subsequently did not receive her candidate degree until 1984, when she was permitted to defend it in Kazakhstan. She is currently employed as a professor in the Anthropology (formerly Ethnology) Department at AUCA.

Bekturganov, Kuban

Bekturganov was one of the original members of the first sociological laboratory at KSU and from 1985–87 served as director of the Centre for the Study of Public Opinion under the Central Committee of the Communist Party, the laboratory of which was housed in the Institute of Philosophy and Law at the Kirgiz Academy of Science. Later, he became the first person in Kyrgyzstan to defend a candidate dissertation in applied sociology. He currently works as an instructor in the Sociology Department at the Kyrgyz National University in Bishkek.

Botoeva, Gulzat

Botoeva, who originally intended to study law, enrolled in what was then the only sociology programme in the republic, at the Bishkek Humanitarian University, in 1993, where she later earned a Masters degree in sociology. She was educated in sociology at the graduate level for six months at Indiana University and is currently an instructor of sociology at AUCA. While her graduate dissertation concerned issues of migration in Kyrgyzstan, her intellectual interest lies primarily in the study of deviant behaviour and in conflict theory. She is a prominent member of the research team at the university's Centre for Applied Social Research and is actively involved in continuing studies on child poverty in Kyrgyzstan.

Elebaeva, Ainoura

In 1988, Elebaeva was appointed head of the Division of National Relations in the Institute of Philosophy and Law in the Kirgiz Academy of Science (later named the Centre for Sociological Research and directed by Omuraliev, see below). From 1991–93 she carried out a number of studies for local and national government bodies on interethnic relations in the republic, and is recognised as one of the foremost experts in the field. She currently organises a group of social researchers who study ethnic conflict and tension in the independence period. With Omuraliev, she co-authored a major study on the Osh conflict (Elebaeva et al. 1991) and has published a number of other articles on ethnic relations in Kyrgyzstan (Elebaeva and Omuraliev 1993, 1995).

Ibraeva, Gulnara

Ibraeva, who was appointed Chair of Sociology at AUCA in 2002, holds an undergraduate degree in journalism and a candidate degree in sociology. She began her teaching career at BHU as an instructor of media studies in 1994. Her intellectual interests include media, gender, and social theory. In addition to publishing three books on the sociology of media (Ibraeva 1997, 2000, 2003), she has co-published another on gender (Ibraeva et al. 1999) eight articles and at least ten conference papers on sociology.

Isaev, Kusein

Isaev is referred to by some as the 'father of Kyrgyz sociology,' which refers to his prominent role in popularising the field during perestroika and after independence. He earned a candidate degree in philosophy from the USSR Academy of Science in 1967 and later a doctorate from the Department of Scientific Communism at the Frunze Polytechnic Institute for his work on social development in rural villages during the 1960s. He taught political economy in the Kirgiz State University and, at the behest of the Communist Party, established a Department of Scientific Communism in the Frunze Polytechnic Institute in 1969. In 1983, he organised and assumed directorship of a laboratory for sociological research within this department, in which he trained a number of the sociologists referenced in this dissertation. The laboratory was transferred to BHU in 1993 when Isaev was asked to take up a professorship there. Since this time, he has written prolifically on sociology, publishing two textbooks (1993b, 2003a) and dozens of articles in the republican newspapers (see bibliography). He continues to teach at BHU and has also lectured in sociology at AUCA and the Turkish–Manas University.

Mendibaev, Nuratbek

Mendibaev was originally educated as an historian in Frunze (now Bishkek) in the 1960s. He became attracted to sociology after attending a Soros-sponsored conference on sociology in 1995, at which Isaev (see above). After this time he began educating himself about new developments in sociology and publishing a variety of articles related to sociology and sociological research in the local press in the southern city of Osh, where he presently resides. He is currently employed as a professor in the Department of Philosophy and Sociology at the Osh Technical University.

Nurova, Saida

Nurova, the first woman in Kyrgyzstan to be awarded a doctoral degree in sociology, was first educated as a school teacher. In 1966, after completing a Masters degree in philosophy (which she defines as sociological) in 1965, she joined the newly established sociological laboratory at the Kirgiz State University. For several years she organised research on 'ethno-sociology,'

related to the laboratory's broader focus on interethnic relations in Kirgizia and in connection with her own graduate research. As degrees in sociology were not conferred at the time, she defended a candidate dissertation in historical materialism. Before pursuing her doctoral degree she taught in universities in Osh and Karakol and in the 1980s began attending courses in Almaty, Kazakhstan to retrain in sociological research. After several more years of teaching in Karakol, she joined the Faculty of Socio-Political Sciences at BHU in 1998. Her main research interests are the sociology of culture, sociology of administration, political sociology and social theory.

Omuraliev, Nurbek

Omuraliev holds a first degree in philosophy (1983) and received a candidate of philosophical sciences degree from the Kazakh State University in 1991. In 1994, he was appointed director of the Centre for Social Research under the National Academy of Science of the Kyrgyz Republic, where he is still employed. This centre, the successor to the former Division of National Relations (see Elebaeva, above) conducts research for both public and private organisations, including the president's administration. He is also senior lecturer in the Sociology Department at KNU and serves on the administrative board which oversees doctoral and candidate degrees in philosophy, sociology and political science. His research interests include interethnic relations and social research, and he has conducted studies in a variety of other areas including poverty, political culture, public health (including AIDS) and the environment. He has published more than forty papers and participated in a number of local, regional and international conferences.

Sagynbaeva, Ainoura

Sagynbaeva, founder of the AUCA Sociology Department, received her candidate degree in philosophy from Kiev University in 1985. She became interested in sociology during her second year as an undergraduate and took a number of short courses in the field. She returned to Bishkek in 1986 and joined the Department of Scientific Communism at the Humanitarian University in order to participate in the teaching and research activities in the sociological laboratory there, which had been established three years earlier.

In 1989, as soon as Moscow State University opened a degree programme in sociology, she enrolled there and completed a candidate degree. She also worked as a researcher in the USSR Academy of Science's Institute of Sociology. After returning to Bishkek from Moscow she taught short courses in sociology at the Academy of Management before winning a grant from USID to study in Washington, DC. Inspired by this trip to combine the best of both Soviet and American sociology education, she introduced sociology courses to AUK (now AUCA) in 1996 and in 1998 opened a Sociology Department at the institution. She simultaneously founded SIAR Bishkek, one of the republic's most prominent companies for social and marketing research. She left AUCA in 2002 to pursue a full-time career in commercial research.

Tabaldiev, Asanbek

Tabaldiev is considered by many to be the first sociologist in Kirgizia. Trained as a school teacher, he worked in his home town of Dzheral-Tal before pursuing a candidate degree in Marxist philosophy at KSU. An active member of the Communist Party, he served as chair of the Department of Philosophy and Historical Materialism at the institution and in 1966 established the first laboratory of sociological research in the republic. In 1973 the Communist Party of Kirgizia requested that he take up another position as editor of the Kirgiz Soviet Encyclopaedia, which he remained responsible for until his death in 1975.

Tishin, Alexei

Tishin's entry into sociology was through mathematics, in which he earned his undergraduate degree. After completing his degree he was directed to the sociological laboratory at KSU, which was at the time working on developing the use of mathematical modelling in sociological research. After Tabaldiev's death in 1975 (see above), Tishin continued to work in the laboratory, leading a number of large-scale studies on industrial sociology. In 1989 he directed a joint research project with the Faculty of Journalism from Moscow State University to study the effectiveness of the regional press in Kirgizia. He is currently chair of the Sociology Department at KNU.

APPENDIX B

COMPARATIVE CONCEPTUALISATIONS OF SOCIOLOGY:
BISHKEK HUMANITARIAN UNIVERSITY AND
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY–CENTRAL ASIA

	Sociology Department *Established 1993* **Bishkek Humanitarian University**	**Sociology Department** *Established 1998* **American University– Central Asia**
Institutional history and identity	Successor to Soviet-era Sociology Department and Engineering Psychology Identifies with Kyrgyz state and people	Established to combine Soviet and American models of sociology education Identifies with universalist principles and American sociology
Institutional funding structure	State-funded Increasingly reliant on other sources of funds (tuition fees, bribes)	'Private' university funded by foreign governments and international organisations Increasingly reliant on other sources of income (tuition fees)
Disciplinarity	Boundaries between sociology and other disciplines clear and uncontested	Boundaries between sociology, psychology, anthropology and political science ambiguous and contested
Faculty composition and departmental structure	Tripartite division of labour—teaching, research, upbringing; local faculty	Dual division of labour— teaching and research; combination of local and foreign faculty
Definition and role of sociology	Applied profession; establishment of scientific politics	Liberal–critical scholarship/applied service; understanding and explanation of social phenomena
Sociology curriculum	Nationally oriented, Russian-inspired, professional training model	Internationally oriented, Euro-American inspiration, liberal education model
Sociological research	Centralised and policy-centred	Individualised and market-driven

APPENDIX C

STATE EDUCATIONAL STANDARD
FOR BASIC EDUCATION IN SOCIOLOGY

Summarised from the Ministry of Education's *Gosudarstvennyi obrazovatel'nyi standard bazovogo obrazovaniia po napravleniiu G.12 (521200) 'Sotsiologiia'* (1994)

Section 1. Legal status of the state educational standard for basic education in Sociology

1.1   The state standard for basic education in Sociology establishes the requirements for the content and level of preparation of individuals receiving a bachelor's degree in sociological science.

1.2   This standard is part of the state educational standard for general requirements in higher education, GOS-VO-94, and works in connection with it. The standard was accepted by colleagues of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic on 2 December 1994 and will be in operation from 1994 to 2000.

1.3   The state standard for basic education in Sociology is the foundation for the creation of curricula (*uchebnye plany*) and programmes for preparing bachelors of sociological science, diploma specialists specialising as sociologists, and social anthropology.

1.4   Attestation and the licensing of subdivisions within higher educational institutions, the practice of preparing bachelors of sociological science, and the state certification of graduates are carried out on the basis of this standard.

1.5   The requirements of this standard are obligatory for the fulfilment of all higher educational institutions in the Kyrgyz Republic (independent of their administrative supervision or form of maintenance), which are carrying out educational–professional programmes of basic and further [graduate] higher education. Note: Higher educational institutions have the right to choose the form and method of organising their instructional process, allowing it fulfils the requirements set forward in this standard.

Section 2. General character of the subject

2.1   The subject G.12 (521200) 'Sotsiologiia' was certified by order no. 10/1 of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic on 2 December 1993.

2.2   Educational–professional programmes in Sociology are four-year programmes.

2.3   Professional work for a graduate of Sociology is oriented toward the deep study of social conditions of life, the character and content of social transformations and changes in the state, society and collective. A specialist in this sphere must be able to give an argumentative answer to the question of what is necessary for realising substantial social reforms in life and innovations in social administration, and

which social and other changes are promising. A bachelor must be prepared to do professional work in organs of state administration, social organisations, committees and services of social welfare, and various branches of the social sphere.

2.4 Individuals successfully mastering educational–professional programmes in accordance with the requirements of the present standard will be conferred with the qualification of an academic degree of 'Bachelor of Science' in Sociology. A bachelor of Sociology, successfully completing a programme of basic higher education and receiving a recommendation of the state attestation commission for continuing their education in further higher education may study for a master's degree in Sociology. A bachelor of Sociological Science may continue instruction in a programme to prepare specialists in further higher education in the specialisations of G.12.303(5212.303) Sociology, G.12.319(5212.319) Social Anthropology, as well as in related specialisations: G.11.321(5211.321) Social Work, G.11.320(5211.320) Links with the Social, and G.11.331(5211.311) Socio-cultural Work.

Section 3. General requirements for enrolling in study in programmes that prepare [students] to become bachelors of Sociological Science

3.1 Those entering the first step of instruction with evidence of uncompleted higher education must have knowledge in a group of middle school programmes in history, language and literature, mathematics, and information and computer technology. Higher educational institutions have the right to define the form of entrance exams.

3.2 Transferring to a programme of Sociology in the same institution is done on the recommendation of the state attestation commission and the successful completion of the state exams. Entrance into the same programme in a different institution is done through [providing] additional evidence of uncompleted higher education and the recommendation of the state attestation commission…

3.3 Individuals having evidence of uncompleted higher education in socio-political and humanitarian subjects are admitted to enrol in a programme preparing bachelors, on a competitive basis of vacant places under the condition of passing entrance exams in various academic disciplines defined by the state standard for corresponding subjects. The form of entrance exams is determined by the higher educational institutions.

Section 4. Maximum amount of instructional loads for educational–professional programmes preparing bachelors of Sociological Science

4.1 The maximum working calendar consists of 140 weeks of theoretical instruction, 25 weeks of examination sessions, 9 weeks of practical experience, 4 weeks of state attestation, 25 weeks of vacation, including monthly breaks for studying; in all, 203 weeks.

4.2 The maximum instructional load for students consists of 7624 hours in 56 academic weeks. Within this, student work with instructors in the form of required classroom lessons accounts for no more than 60% of the instructional weeks in the average period of instruction. The rest of the time belongs to students for their independent work, faculty courses, lessons in physical culture and other individual consultations with instructors.

4.3 The instructional–productive practicum begins from the third year of instruction and includes 2 weeks of instructional practicum and 7 weeks of productive practicum, which is conducted after completing the theoretical instruction in related sociological disciplines in order to receive practical skills to conduct sociological research.

4.4 The amount of required classroom lessons for a student must not exceed 32 hours in the period of theoretical instruction. Required lessons in physical culture and lessons in faculty disciplines are not included in this.

Section 5. Content requirements for the preparation of bachelors of Sociological Science

5.1 Requirements for humanitarian and fundamental natural–scientific training for preparing bachelors of Sociological Science. […] [Includes math, information and computer technology, training in theories of validity, statistics, mathematical logic and modelling and demography.]

5.2 Requirements for the general professional preparation of bachelors of Sociological Science. In the framework of a general sociological training a bachelor in Sociology must (1) know the basic levels of sociological knowledge and general sociological theory, the history of sociology, and the methodological and methodical foundations of sociological research; (2) distinguish the basic constitutional organisation and geographic, economic, social and psychological particularities of the Kyrgyz Republic and its regions; (3) know the specialised sociological disciplines, the content of scientific knowledge, the relevant nomenclature for specialised sociological science: theory, methodology and the history of sociology, methods of sociological research, sociology of labour and the market, theory of social structures and social stratification, social institutions and ways of life, socio-political processes, organisation and administration; the sociology of culture, education and science; and public opinion; (4) be able to make correct explanatory scientific conclusions about research in relation to the theory and method of sociological science; and (5) be able to independently conduct sociological research of an applied character on the level of small groups, enterprises and organisations, and territorial communities at various levels, and use the necessary instrumentation of modern sociological science.

5.3 Requirements for the special (disciplines of specialisation) preparation of bachelors of sociological science. A bachelor must master general theoretical knowledge, scientific methods of sociological research and skills of practical work in concrete spheres of social life. The cycle of

specialised disciplines must prepare a bachelor with a deep mastery of the subjects of sociology and must hold special seminars, which are necessary for narrow specialisation to a lesser degree in one subject, and also disciplines of mixed specialisations by the student's choice. The concrete requirements for the special preparation of a bachelor and the content of the cycle of specialised disciplines are established by higher educational institutions (faculties). The obligatory minimum contents for educational–professional programmes of basic education in G.12.303(5212.303) Sociology [are as follows]:

Index	Title of disciplines and their basic didactic units[99]	Hours of instruction
G00.00	Cycle of required disciplines supporting the humanitarian and socio-economic preparation of bachelors	1770
EN.00	Cycle of general mathematical and natural science disciplines	1040
EN.01	Mathematics and informatics	410
EN.02	Concepts of contemporary natural knowledge	102
EN.03	Basic ecology	102
EN.04	Disciplines and courses by student choice, set up by the higher educational institutions (faculties)	426
DN.00	Cycle of general professional disciplines in the subject	2262
DN.01	History of sociology	270
DN.02	General sociology	360
DN.03	Methodics and techniques of sociological research	280
DN.04	Political sociology	180
DN.05	Demography	200
DN.06	Social statistics	150
DN.07	Social anthropology	200
DN.08	Social psychology	200
DN.09	Social pedagogics	100
DN.10	Social modelling and programming	180
DN.11	Disciplines and courses by student choice, set up by the higher educational institutions (faculties)	120
DS.00	Cycle of special disciplines, set up by the higher educational institutions (faculties)	1800
P.00	Practicum	9 weeks
IA.99	Summary state attestation	4 weeks

Notes [Section 5]:

1.   A higher educational institution (faculty) has the right to:

1.1   Change the number of hours allotted to the basic instructional material for a cycle of disciplines by 5%, for disciplines included in the cycle by 10% without exceeding the maximum amount of the weekly load for students under the condition that it preserves the minimal content of the discipline.

1.2   Fix the required depth of mastery of individual sections of a discipline included in the cycle of humanitarian and socio-economic disciplines, general mathematics and natural–scientific disciplines, depending on the profile of that subject.

1.3   In addition to the required disciplines, each student must study disciplines at his or her discretion and follow the forms of attestation established by the higher educational institution (faculty). The general amount of these disciplines corresponds to the number of hours by student choice.

1.4   Faculty disciplines are stipulated by the curriculum (*uchebnyi plan*) of the higher educational institution, but are not required for student instruction.

1.5   Course work (projects)—on the second course in methods and techniques of sociological research and the third course in special sociological theory—is considered a type of instructional work in the discipline and fulfilment of hours allotted to its instruction.

1.6   The cycle of special disciplines is considered professional training, narrower in comparison with the subject. The higher educational institution (faculty) may recommend different variants of this cycle, from which students have the right to choose one. Each of these variants, in line with the required discipline cycle, must include courses by student choice.

1.7   ]The higher educational institution has the right to] use, by its discretion, the time allotted for military training if no military department has been opened in the institution by government decree.

Section 6. Assignment, sphere and conditions for using a bachelor's degree in Sociological Science

6.1   A bachelor in Sociology is prepared for theoretical and applied pedagogical work in scientific institutions having a social scientific profile, in businesses, organisations, institutions, commercial–entrepreneurial structures, organs of mass media, sociological centres, offices for the study of public opinion, committees and branches of social welfare and social support, and in organs working with employment, law enforcement, health care and upbringing work, and others. They are prepared to work in organs of state administration and social organisations, in commercial and economic structures in the capacity of consultants on sociological questions dealing with sociological research and various spheres of social life.

6.2   The professional work of a bachelor-level Sociologist is linked first of all to practical work in organs of administration and the discovery, staging and search for resolutions to social problems; with the informational support of institutes of society and the state; and with the organisation of educational, advertising and commercial work. The

goal of this work is to help businesses, institutions, organisations, commercial structures, legal and physical individuals in discovering and resolving social problems. The concrete areas of work, in the interest of which bachelors in Sociology are trained, is defined by specialised training, the contents of which are set out by the higher educational institution in the framework of this subject. A bachelor in Sociology may work in higher educational institutions as an instructor, senior instructor or teacher under the condition [that s/he had] the relevant training (1 year), in agreement with the requirements for the state standard for these specialisations and having received the relevant certificate.

Section 7. Attestation of graduates for the right to confer the qualification of the academic degree of the bachelor of Sociology

7.1   The final state qualifying attestation is done in accordance with the requirements of the state educational standard 'Higher education— general requirements.' The forms and content of the final state qualifying attestation for bachelors must fulfil the requirements for the content and level of the preparation of individuals completing instruction.

7.2   The system for marking knowledge and abilities of a student in the instructional process, including the final examination in disciplines in this subject, is considered to be a complex state exam in general humanitarian cycles task after the first two years of instruction and an exam by choice in sociology, social work or social anthropology after the fourth year of study, as well as the defence of diploma work [final undergraduate paper].

This standard was established on the basis of the state educational standard for higher education of the Russian Federation in G.12/521/200 'Sociology.'

The standard project was reviewed at a meeting of the Ministry of Education and recommended for certification.

Executors

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Chair of Philosophy at the Kyrgyz State
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Docent in the History Faculty of the Kyrgyz
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First Deputy of the Ministry of Education
and Science

[no signature]

Chief of the Administration of Higher Education

Sh. Dzhusenbaev

Head Specialist of the Ministry of Education
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T. Chubukova

APPENDIX D

ATTESTATION SCHEME FOR EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Translated from the Ministry of Education's
Programma gosudarstvennoi attestatsii vyshego uchebnogo zavedeniia
(ca. 1999)

1. Self-attestation	**13. Expert evaluation of possibilities for further education**
2. Application to the Ministry of Education with all documentation	**14. Expert evaluation of scientific research**
3. Preliminary expert evaluation of documents	**15. Expert evaluation of scientific-methodological work**
4. Official announcement about attestation and creation of the attestation commission	**16. Expert evaluation of pre-university preparation**
5. Payment for attestation	**17. Expert evaluation of requirements for graduates**
6. Expert evaluation of curricula and educational programmes for each subject	**18. Presentation of tests for marking the quality of knowledge of graduates**
7. Expert evaluation of instructional-material base	**19. Expert analysis of tests in each subject**
8. Expert evaluation of status of technical equipment for instructional process	**20. Tests are checked**
9. Expert evaluation of informational support for instructional process	**21. Analysis of testing results**
10. Expert evaluation of cadres	**22. Attestation commission writes final report**
11. Expert evaluation of institutional means	**23. Members of the Ministry of Education accept the decision on attestation**
12. Expert evaluation of fulfilment of licensing requirements	

APPENDIX E

NEWSPAPERS/JOURNALS IN WHICH
SOCIOLOGICAL ARTICLES APPEAR

Newspapers

Asaba
Ata Zhurt
Betme-bet
Bizinesmen Kyrgyzstana
Vestnik vremeni
Vechernii Bishkek
Delo No.
Zaman
Zhurnalist
Kommunist Kirgizstana
Komsomolets Kirgizii
Kut bilim
Kyrgyz rukhu
Leninskii put' (Osh)
Liberal'naia gazeta
Liudi i svet
Molodezhnaia gazeta
Moskovskom Komsomol'tse
Mugalimder gazetasyb
Nasha gazeta
Nauka i tekhnika
Osh zhanyryty
Pamir
Panerama
Politika i obschestvo
Pravda
Propagandist i agitator Kirgizstan
Piatnitsa
ResPublica
Reforma
Rynok kapitalov

Svobodnye gory/Erkin too
Slovo Kyrgyzstana
Sovetskaia Kirgiziia
Stolitsa
Trudy Kirgizii
Utro Bishkeka
Uchitel' Kirgizstana
Iuzhnyi kur'er
Ekho Osha

Journals

Vestnik Akademii Nauk SSSR
Vestnik—Kirgizskii
  Gosudarstvennyi Natsional'nyi
  Universitet
Vestnik Statistiki
Izvestiia Akademii Nauk Kazakh
  SSR—Obschestvennye Nauki
Izvestiia Akademii Nauk Kirgiz
  SSR—Obschestvennye Nauki
Izvestiia Akademii Nauk
  Respublikoi Kirgizstana
Mektep-shkola
Politsfera
Sbornik nauchnykh trudov—
  Kirgizskoi Gosudarsvennyi
  Universitet, Frunze
Sotsial'nye i gumanitarnye nauki
Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniia
Ekonomika i zhizn'
Ekonomicheskie nauki

APPENDIX F

QUESTIONS FROM A 1994 SURVEY ON PRIVATISATION

(Isaev 1994)

1. What does privatisation mean to you?
2. Do you support privatisation?
3. Is privatisation necessary for the economic recovery of Kyrgyzstan?
4. What influence will privatisation have on economics in the present time?
5. Do you believe that privatisation will be able to facilitate economic recovery?
6. Do you believe that privatisation alone will lead to an increase in the prices of goods in Kyrgyzstan?
7. Do you believe that privatisation can support the continual delivery of widely demanded goods in our stores?
8. Do you think that privatisation alone can facilitate the rise of inflation in Kyrgyzstan?
9. Do you think that privatisation will increase unemployment?
10. If privatisation really leads to the increase of unemployment, then in your opinion do we really need to do it?
11. Do you believe that privatisation can create new possibilities for us to receive economic profit?
12. Do you believe that privatisation can help you (a) increase your income, (b) become an investor, (c) receive dividends from your investments, (d) become an owner, (e) obtain a more interesting and rewarding job, (f) raise your qualifications or make a career?
13. How soon do you expect to receive benefits from privatisation?
14. How can we compare privatised stories, businesses, restaurants with those of the state from the point of view of support for quality goods and services under competitive prices?
15. Is the competitive market (to which, as we say, we are moving toward) better than the planned economy according to which we have lived since 1920?
16. Do you believe that privatisation can create a competitive market?
17. Which of the following economic sectors would you give priority to under privatisation (housing, land, social welfare services, agriculture, industrial production, construction, transport, trade, social support)?
18. Is privatisation moving too fast or too slow in each of the following sectors (housing, land, social welfare services, agriculture, industrial production, construction, transport, trade, social support)?
19. What are special paid means (*spetsial'nye platezhnye stredstva*)?
20. Have you requested your special paid means?
21. If no, why?
22. If you have used your special paid means, then how did you use them (I gave them to my boss at work, I gave them to my representative of a workers' collective, I bought shares in an enterprise where I work, I bought shares in an investment fund, I used them to buy an apartment)?
23. If you haven't used your special paid means, why did you not use them?
24. If you bought some sort of shares in some sort of enterprise, did you receive any dividends?

25. If you have not received dividends from the purchased shares, then how soon do you expect to receive them?
26. If you work to privatise your workers' collective, does it release its shares? (a) if yes, then on what basis do they release shares? (b) are you satisfied with this approach? (c) if you are not satisfied, why?
27. In your opinion, which method is fairest, most open to social discussion, and fastest (making enterprises into joint-stock companies, selling to collective property, selling to private individual property, transfer to lease, open auctions, sale on competitive basis)?
28. In your opinion, how is the process of privatisation going today?
29. Which state organisation does the most for privatisation today?
30. Which state organisation stubbornly puts obstacles to privatisation?
31. Could property owned by the *akimiat* be privatised?
32. From which of the following sources have you received information about privatisation (mass media, *akimiat*, friends, family, managers at work, the State Fund for Communal Property, regional funds for property, other)?
33. Does the government do a good job of informing the population about privatisation? (a) if yes, then in what way? (b) if no, then clarify why.
34. If you were given the chance to ask a question to the chair of the Fund for State Property, what question would you ask?
35. In general, how did you live two years ago?
36. In general, how do you live today?
37. If your life is worse than it was two years ago, what is the reason?
38. In general, what quality of life do you expect to have in the next two years?

ENDNOTES

Introduction

[1] The Kirgiz Soviet Socialist Republic declared independence from the Soviet Union on 31 August 1991. In this dissertation, 'Kirgizia' refers to the Kirgiz SSR, while 'Kyrgyzstan' or the 'Kyrgyz Republic' refers to the independent post-Soviet state.

[2] 'Heteronomy' broadly means something 'subject to a law or standard external to itself;' Kant used it to mean 'laws which are imposed on us from without.' Here, it is used in a specifically Bourdieusian sense to refer to a position of economic or political dominance within an intellectual field. It is distinguished from 'autonomy,' which refers to a position maintained by operating within the non-economic logic of the intellectual field itself.

Chapter 1

[3] State investment in education declined dramatically after Kyrgyzstan declared independence. Egorov (2002: 61) reported that government spending for research and development declined from 0.73% of the GDP in 1990 to 0.14% in 1999; Glenady (1995) supports this with her figure of 0.18% in 1994. According to the Kyrgyz National Statistics Committee, in 2000 the state allocated 3.1% of its annual GDP to education—less than half the amount it allocated in 1995 (Reeves 2003: 9). At the 2001 general meeting of the Kyrgyzstan Academy of Science, president Janybek Jeenbaev claimed that the 17 million soms ($345,000) allocated to the Academy by the government was 'not enough to achieve good scientific results' (Radio Free Europe, 2001). In 2002, a local newspaper reported that state universities received only 10–15% of their expenses from the state budget (Osorov 2002). See also Sydykov (1995) on the need to establish a union of scientists to protect the interests of scholars.

[4] Akaev was overthrown by a popular movement on March 24, 2005. For more on authoritarian trends in Akaev's leadership strategies, see Spector (2004).

[5] This statement was made in an interview conducted by the author in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, in the summer of 2003. The source remains anonymous as criticism of high-ranking political figures can be professionally and personally dangerous for interviewees in the contemporary political climate.

[6] The issue, however, has been addressed by a number of foreign scholars working in the region. See, for example, Reeves (2002, 2002a).

Chapter 2

[7] This includes the Frankfurt School's critical theory of science and technology in advanced industrial societies and Habermas' (1987) critique of positivism; social constructivists such as Peter Berger (1967) who popularised the theory of the social construction of reality and C. Wright Mills (1963) who did the same for our understanding of the cultural apparatus; feminist theorists such as Dorothy Smith (1988) who theorised the gendering of scientific knowledge; Marxist and radical historians such as Howard Zinn (1980) who exposed the ideological and political foundations of contemporary historiography; and sociologists of science and scientific knowledge such as Knorr-Cetina and Michael Mulkay (1983) who investigated the nature of science as a social institution and revealed how scientific knowledge is constructed in everyday practice.

[8] For a critical counter-response to the post-positivist approach and an argument for reforming positivism in social science, see Alexander and Colomy (1992).

[9] While Marx used 'ideology' to mean false consciousness, an 'erroneous perception of the world,' the Soviets used it to mean 'the overall conception of the world deriving from what are believed to be the interests of a social class' (Mandel 1969: 24). After independence, however, the definition has been reclaimed to describe something distorted and untrue.

[10] In an attempt to identify the centre or 'core' of international sociology, Alatas (2003: 602) defines 'the west' as 'the contemporary social science powers, which are the United States, Great Britain and France.' The definition in Kyrgyzstani sociology, however, is more fluid. Kyrgyzstani sociologists make many references to 'western' sociology without specifying precisely what they mean; it is a concept rather than an identification (Blum 1993; Fanisov 1990). In most of these cases 'the west' includes Western Europe (particularly Germany) and/or the United States, and may even refer to Russia (Isaev 1998b; Isaev et al. 1997a); Ismailova 1995). However, the terms 'east' and 'west' are also employed symbolically rather than being used to signify geographic locations. There are two main symbolic uses of 'the west': the west representing civilisation, rational progress, modernisation and order (e.g., Isaev 2000), and the west that represents moral anarchy, pornography, consumerism and excessive individualism (e.g., Isaev, Akmatova and Dosalieva 1996a). Likewise, there are two main meanings of 'the east': one representing personalised power, tribalism, patriarchy, and backwardness, and one symbolising national purity, pre-colonial identity, indigenous knowledge and collective humanism. (For a discussion of the difference between 'eastern' and 'western' conceptions of 'open society' based on Gandhi and Popper respectively, see [Isaev 1998e).

[11] Space does not allow for an exhaustive overview of the extensive body of literature in the sociology of science and scientific knowledge, including well-known works by Bloor (1976), Ben-David (1971), Bruno (1987, 1999), Knorr-Cetina, (1981), Knorr-Cetina and Mulkay (1983), Latour (1987), Latour and Woolgar (1979) and others. This section focuses instead on those studies which have contributed directly to my understanding of the sociology of social scientific knowledge and, more specifically, sociology.

[12] Lemaine *et al.* (1976: 13) also use these categories to refer to factors which influence the development of science, but divide 'external–social' into immediate institutional context, specific economic and political factors, and diffuse social influences. See also Ben-David's grouping of the 'interactional' and 'institutional' approaches to the sociology of science, cited in Blume (1974: 12).

[13] This included (1) the expansion of roles for sociologists in society (as distinguished from social reformers, philanthropists, and government statisticians), (2) the institutional recognition of sociology within universities, (3) new 'intellectual structures' that supported the main trends of British sociological thinking, (4) financial support for research (in the form of individual philanthropy), (5) a general concern for social problems, (6) a faith in the ameliorative/corrective power of sociology, (6) group consensus about what sociology actually is, and (7) the demonstration of sociology's usefulness and effectiveness as a tool for social change.

[14] Other sociologists of science place Bourdieu in the 'internalist' category, insofar as his work deals wit h the 'forces internal to scientific fields.' See Steinmetz and Chae (2002: 115).

[15] These goals can alternatively be described as the 'acquisition of intellectual authority and career opportunities; denial of these resources from "pseudo-scientists"; and protection of the autonomy of scientific research from political interference' (Gieryn 1983: 781).

[16] While scientists in the Scopes trial defined religion and science as separate but compatible ways of knowing (thus promoting the expansion of public funding for science while not threatening the religious values of the decision-makers and publics who held the purse strings), in the McLean trial they attempted to distinguish 'creation-science' from 'real science' and brand the former as false science, thus pitting science and religion against one another as competing epistemologies (thus staking claim to the single pot of funding available for education). The relationship between science and religion was strategically constructed differently in each case, illustrating that 'ideological demarcations of science and religion in public science are contextually and historically contingent.' In this study, the authors make a compelling case that what scientific knowledge means in a particular time and space is heavily shaped by scientists' own professional agendas and how they respond to threats to their

professional legitimacy and access to resources. For another model of the 'market model of professionalisation' approach to boundary–work, see Camic and Xie's (1994) study of the simultaneous appearance of statistics in four social science disciplines at Columbia University in the early twentieth century.

[17] These dimensions have been extracted from a longer list of factors that Torres (1999: 108) argues should be taken into account when evaluating the 'ideology framework' of particular policies of educational reform.

[18] This I discovered through the 'accidental' acquisition of a whole variety of materials—journals, conference proceedings, unpublished papers and reports, raw data, and personal collections of newspaper clippings—from individual informants who, having little faith in official record-keeping systems, have maintained their own personal archives.

[19] Some (though by no means all) state archivists and librarians in Bishkek work to control knowledge rather to disseminate it. A good example of this is my experience in the National Archives, where I quite optimistically hoped to see documents related to the formation of state and Communist Party policies on social science during the 1980s. Permission to enter the archives required a precisely formatted and stamped letter from a respectable figure, and access to the materials required an 'application' on which one must specify the exact topic of inquiry, including the time period of interest. I was denied catalogues from 1969 because I had specified 1970–89. Furthermore, there are no catalogues in the archives. One requests a 'record book' from a particular year and searches randomly through chronological entries for something of topical interest (a process that can take hours), items which can then be delivered (in more hours or even days). I quickly learned that the information which was available through this process was no more than the bare-bones, logistical public records of Communist Party meetings—dates, times, those in attendance. I was told once (and only once) that the proceedings of the meetings *did* indeed exist, but that they were not available for public use.

[20] The term 'epistemic negotiation' is borrowed from Reeves (2003a) and reflects a more sophisticated understanding of the way in which knowledge structures and power relations underlie what some anthropologists refer to as cultural 'misunderstanding.'

[21] For more on the importance of 'situating ethnography within its historical and geographical context,' see Buroway (2000: 25).

Chapter 3

[22] There were approximately 4,000 students in higher education in Central Asia in 1927, compared with 228,900 in 1960 (Nove and Newth 1967: 79).

[23] Articles have recently begun to appear on regional differences in Soviet sociology. See, e.g., Zborovskii (2001).

[24] For a full discussion of Muslim regions of the Soviet Union, see Panarin (1994).

[25] For example, during the nineteenth century, Central Asian historians produced some fairly radical scholarship about the history of Turkistan, particularly the history of Islam. However, those that received training in newly established Soviet universities in Russia in the early twentieth century re-branded these narratives as reactionary, and the Communist Party eventually banned the use of the name 'Turkistan' after the Turkistan ASSR was dissolved in 1923 (Allworth 1998: 70; Shahrani 1994: 64). At its most extreme, the attack on Islam involved the physical destruction of Central Asian Muslim scholars, educational and social institutions, libraries and texts (Shahrani 1994: 65). Gradually, favourable or politically neutral references to Islam and all mention of 'national' events and heroes were abolished from Central Asian history, as were local styles of narrative, and replaced with Marxist–Leninist theories of historical development and Soviet events and figures. Later, in 1968, an Uzbek scholar was reprimanded by the Communist Party for publishing work on Tamerlaine (Allworth 1998: 72). Soviet secularization propaganda began to incorporate 'scientific'

theories about the relationship between Islam, feudalism and imperialism (Ro'i 1995: 18). Throughout the 1980s, in fact, the Communist Party conducted research in Muslim regions to determine what type and degree of 'religious prejudices' still existed among the populations (Ro'i 1995: 14).

[26] The Soviet system of academic degrees progresses from *bakalavr* (the equivalent of a bachelor's degree) to *magistratura* (master's) to *kandidatura* (similar to the PhD) and finally to *doktor* (conferred after completion of a second major dissertation). Those studying for a *magistratura* are called *aspirant*, while those studying for the *kandidatura* are called *candidate* and for the *doctorskii stepen' doktor*. For convenience, I will use English variants of these terms throughout this dissertation: bachelors, masters, candidate and doctoral. Those studying for a candidate degree will be called candidates, and those for a doctoral degree, doctorants.

[27] The Institute of Public Opinion, sponsored by *Komsomol'skaia pravda*, sponsored opinion surveys as early as 1961 (Simirenko 1969a: 398). The Institute of Concrete Social Research was founded in June 1968 (Mandel 1969: 44). Before this, there was a Division of Concrete Social Research (paired with a Division of Historical Materialism) located within the Institute of Philosophy at the USSR Academy of Science (Simirenko 1969a: 397).

Chapter 4

[28] 'Laboratories,' or unofficial groups of scholars, teachers and students set up in lieu of (or in addition to) academic departments or institutes, were historically the most common type of sociological establishment in the Soviet Union and remain widespread in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan even today. See Matthews and Jones (1978: 8).

[29] For more detail on the practice of *vospitanie*, see note 55 below.

[30] Others give this recognition to Rakhat Achylova, who defended a thesis in sociology in Leningrad during the Soviet period (Asanova 2003).

[31] The production of hydroelectricity, specifically for use in the defence industry, was one of the Kirgiz Republic's specialised functions in the Soviet economy, along with shepherding and wool and cotton production. See Dabrowski et al. (1995).

[32] Inkeles (1958: 41-43) defines propaganda as the 'elucidation of the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, and the history of the Bolshevik party and its tasks,' which was directed toward the 'more "advanced" segments of society, the party members and the non-party intelligentsia; to leaders, directors and responsible officials in all sphere of national life.' Agitation, on the other hand, meant the 'chief means for the political education of the broad working-class masses in the spirit of communism.' This focused mainly on explaining party decisions and mobilising participation. 'Propaganda develops the more advanced members and natural leaders of the masses, the agitators and organisers, who in their turn bring the party's message to the people through agitation.' All intellectuals and party members were responsible for agitation and 'political education.'

[33] Translation compliments of Nienke van der Heide.

[34] The crackdown on empirical research in Kirgizia was part of a larger u-turn throughout the Soviet Union, most notably the infamous 1972 'Levada affair' in which a number of sociologists (including Yuri Levada, then secretary of the USSR Institute of Concrete Sociological Research) were dismissed for attempting to 'separate' sociological research from historical materialism and producing theories that were potentially damaging to the party's official image of social reality. See Hahn (1977: 40).

Chapter 5

[35] Although there are earlier references to a 'Central Asian and Kazakhstan' division of the SSA (Sovietskaia Sotsiologicheskaia Assotsiatsiia AN SSSR 1977), there are no records that this was ever functional in Kirgizia.

[36] Public criticism and self-criticism were part of the socialisation of Soviet morality and the creation of group consensus and self-censorship (Bronfenbrenner 1969: 290). In Kyrgyzstan, during early perestroika, this took the form of enforcing conformity; 'naming and shaming,' and discouraging nationalism in social science. For example, in his article on the 'highest mission of sociology,' Sherstobitov (1987: 4) criticised Kirgiz social scientists for writing revisionist histories that did not acknowledge the class-based nature of social conflicts, for being seduced by the practice of writing in 'idyllic tones' about 'reactionary-nationalistic and religious survivals,' all of which were 'against our ideology, the socialist way of life, and the scientific world view.'

[37] See also Shalin (1990: 1020-25) for a discussion of how Soviet sociologists renegotiated the balance between scholarship and advocacy during this period, and Brym (1990: 213) on the 'ambiguous relationship to power' and 'ongoing tension between ideological commitment and scientific distance.'

[38] Shaimergenova (2000: 8) define engineering sociology, one branch of applied sociology, as the use of 'large-scale, inexpensive surveys, series of field experiments and the development of social projects for the social transformation of small communities working on planning and design.' This is contrasted to the second branch of applied sociology, clinical sociology, which is used 'to create a diagnosis and suggest alternatives' as well as to suggest alternatives and outline 'therapeutic measures.'

[39] It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to go into detail about this event. Interested readers may consult Elebaeva and Dozhusunova (1991) for a detailed analysis.

Chapter 6

[40] An 'open society,' according to the Open Society Institute, is a society in which no individual holds claims to absolute truth, and which is 'characterized by the rule of law, respect for human rights, minorities and minority opinions, the division of power, and a market economy.' From the OSI web site, 'Concept of Open Society,' http://www.osi.hu/index_files/promo.html.

[41] Genov (1989) distinguishes between 'weak' and 'strong' definitions of national sociology. The first refers to the 'specificity of intellectual and institutional development in a given national social and cultural context,' while the latter means 'outstanding contribution to the development of world sociology.' In Kyrgyzstan, the term is used somewhat differently: it incorporates elements of both 'weak' and 'strong' definitions and adds to them a moral imperative of national service in the face of colonial power.

[42] The concept of 'national sociology' is also common in other Central Asian republics. For Kazakhstan see Toschenko (1998) and for Uzbekistan, Luk'ianova (1990).

[43] See also Abdyrashev (1994), who proposed to create a centralised research centre to replace the system of 'separate and uncoordinated services in various organisations, which from time to time conduct studies of public opinion on isolated issues.'

[44] Isaev (Baibosunov 1998) identifies the main 'directions' in sociology as being family sociology, cultural sociology, conflictology, national customs, social structures and institutions, the study of the elite, national reforms and the middle class. These fields, however, cover the range of topics addressed by well-known sociologists working within the state system of government universities, research centres and the Academy of Science, and

exclude the interests of sociologists working in private universities and non-governmental organisations.

[45] Bekturganov et al. (1994) have expressed similar concerns, stating that 'Kyrgyz sociology does not have its own requisite theoretical-methodological equipment that corresponds with local conditions…[there is] no language about new social phenomena…no specialists who can understand new methods…[and] individual scholars who, while you might think from their writing struggle only for truth and pure science, [also] celebrate the strengthening of their own position and cheap popularity.' To this they added the dominance of 'percent-o-mania' and 'anket-o-mania,' or the fetish of survey research, over more sophisticated advancements in statistical analysis.

[46] Most work in the field takes 'Soviet sociology' as its primary unit of analysis. When institutions are mentioned, it is generally by way of narrating the institutional development of Soviet sociology. The importance of regional and local variation within Soviet sociology is intimated by critics such as Shlapentokh (1987) and Popovsky (1979), who look at qualitative inequalities within Soviet science, and revealed more explicitly in post-Soviet analyses of the social sciences in discrete former communist republics (Keen 1994; Toschenko 1998) and institutional histories (e.g., Boronoev 1999; Grigorev 1999). Beliaev and Butorin (1982) have theorised the role of institutional actors and power relationships in the development of Soviet sociology; however, there are still few resources on the development of sociology in the Soviet Union at the level of individual or national institutions.

[47] For more on the diversification and decentralisation of the Soviet educational system during perestroika, see Kerr (1992), Sutherland (1992) and Tomiak (1983).

[48] A colleague once demonstrated this for me visually. First he drew a straight line to indicate linear time. He made a mark at the bottom of the line to represent pre-Soviet sociology and, after a brief journey up the line, abruptly diverted it to create a parallel line. This represented Soviet sociology—a deviation of what might have been. He then rejoined the lines and made a mark at the top of the original one to represent post-Soviet sociology: a discipline 'back on the correct path of development.'

[49] However, those working in the state system tend not to recognise AUCA as a legitimate educational institution and therefore know little about its sociology department. Omuraliev (2003), for example, argued that there are three 'centres' of sociology in the republic—the Centre for Social Research in the Academy of Science, the Sociology Department at KNU (re-established in 1999), and the laboratory at BHU. 'Perhaps it is possible that they have a laboratory or centre at AUCA,' he said in an interview, 'but I don't think they do.' Similarly, in a meeting at BHU, university Vice Rector Soltan Kurmanbaev asserted that BHU was the only university in the country to offer a full sociology programme. When the head of the Faculty of Socio-Political Sciences pointed out that AUCA also had a sociology department, he dismissed it by clarifying that he was talking about *gosudarstvennye* (state) schools.

[50] These four categories are largely reiterated in a report by the Council of Europe called Social Sciences and the Challenge of Transition (1997), which also added inexperience in organising autonomous research projects (drafting proposals, negotiating with funders, etc.) and the 'lack of rational management of teaching and research.'

[51] For more on competition from more 'marketable' disciplines see Reeves (2003: 11) and Raiymbekova, K. (1999: 51-56), cited in Reeves.

Chapter 7

[52] There is some ambiguity about the exact date that this department was established—1989 (Osmonalieva 1995) or 1991 (Baibosunov 1998).

[53] A 'faculty' in Kyrgyzstan is a unit of departments.

[54] For example, in August of 2002 the faculty met to discuss a proposal to amend the Kyrgyz constitution. Records indicate that 'all members of the department welcome the initiative to balance the three branches of power and in particular the transfer of authority of the president and parliament.' They did take a view that it was 'necessary to exclude statutes such as the subordination of government work except that of the president and parliament' and that 'parties also need to participate' in order to avoid the return to a Soviet-style single-party system. 'But we know,' it continued, 'that the government stands outside all parties and movements and protects the rights of all' (BHU 2002b). A year later, it met again to discuss a proposed referendum on the same issue. At this meeting, faculty members publicly affirmed their intention to vote in the referendum, which was defined as 'fully natural in all civilised societies,' and one member shared the results of a recently conducted survey which suggested that the opposition was shaping public opinion in 'dangerous' ways (BHU 2003a).

[55] From 1995–98, annual reports specified that 'teachers of the department have conducted definitive work toward obtaining grants.' These included a Soros grant won through competition by A. I. Ismailov to produce a textbook in sociology (1995), a MacArthur grant awarded to Ibraeva (1996), a grant from a Russian organisation awarded to aspirant Alamanova (1996), and travel grants for Asanbekov to attend a conference in Moscow (1996) and Isaev to attend the World Congress of Sociology in Korea (1997).

[56] Here, *vospitanie* refers specifically to social and moral education, or socialisation. It includes activities as diverse as supervising students, mentoring and 'curating' groups of students, encouraging them to participate in educational and departmental activities, taking them on fieldtrips to libraries and museums, training them for academic olympiads, helping them to plan and participate in holiday celebrations (such as Nooruz and student balls), and evaluate their thesis defences. This definition is from a list of *vospitatel'naia rabota* [upbringing work] listed in BHU(1997).

[57] Many programmes for educational or research exchange set age limits, often thirty or thirty-five, on applicants.

[58] 'Politology' can be translated as 'political science.' However, the Soviet politological tradition is distinct from American and British forms of political science. It was oriented primarily toward training in practical diplomacy. According to Isaev (1999b: 10), political science was underdeveloped in the USSR because 'problems of power were on the whole reduced to [questions about] the leadership of the Communist Party in all aspects of state and social life, which found expression in the special discipline of partinoe stroitel'stvo. The problems of state administration were looked at primarily through this prism.'

[59] The Russian term *distsiplin* refers to a specific body of knowledge attached to a specialisation, e.g., demography, social statistics, social anthropology, social psychology. The more general term *napravlenie* (literally 'direction' but also used to mean field of interest) is more analogous to the English understanding of an academic 'discipline' like sociology.

[60] Elective courses at BHU are courses offered by the department which are not required by the Ministry of Education. They are selected either by the department or a cohort of students who make a collective decision about which courses to take.

[61] According to Tishin (1999: 6-7), these functions 'determine the significance and role of this science in modern society life. Precisely they answer the question why and for what do people need this science.' They are: (1) theoretical–cognitive ('accumulates knowledge and synthesises it, strives to present the fullest picture of the structure and processes of contemporary society'), world view ('gives a general representation about the world of people'), ideological ('sociological research is often used in political struggles either for kindling or overcoming social tensions; sociological data is not seldom seen as a means for stabilising society; sociological concepts are for various groups of people tools for the argumentation and struggle in preserving their interests and goals'), humanistic ('expressed in the development of goals for social development, programmes for scientific-technological, socio-economic and cultural improvements in society; sociology can mediate the improvement

of human life'), predictive ('on the basis of data gathered, [it] can determine the prospects for the regularities of life and development of society'), communicative, economic ('studies the state and dynamics of economic life of various categories, that is the living components of the social structure'), administrative ('work out and help to realise social policies, oriented either toward the hastening or inhibiting of social-economic development of the state, which cooperates in the hands of one political force to form a homogenous society, and others to in the differentiation of society into unequal socio-economic classes and groups'), critical ('warn politicians about deviations in the laws of the development of social phenomena and processes and possible consequences of these violations'), applied ('directly participate in developing and even realising various social recommendations, projects and experiments'), Informational ('give primary data about individuals and groups of people, their needs, interests, value orientations and motives of behaviour, about the public opinion and concrete conditions and situations'), activisation ('form public opinion, to induce groups of people to act as someone needs, as it is advantageous').

[62] The use of the categories of 'concepts, topics and skills' to analyse the construction of disciplinarity in sociology is adapted from Wagenaar (2003).

[63] The national standards for sociology were developed as a more flexible alternative to the Soviet institution of *uchebnye plany*, which were created to institutionalise conformity in higher education across the USSR. Under the Soviet regime, faculty working in state universities were expected to implement centrally-issued *uchebnye plany* in all of their programmes. As Ryskulueva (2003) remarked, 'everything went through one Soviet Ministry of Education in Moscow. We were sent documents that we had to implement and deliver, and everything had to be done according to form: we either had to give them to people or transform and adapt them and then give them to people. […] They created them in Moscow [where] they had scientific institutes, large-scale administration, state structures…and everyone in the Soviet Union simply had to approve them; they had to implement these pre-prepared plans. Therefore, the [Kirgiz] Ministry of Education didn't have any sort of influence on the development of sociology during this period. […] You could go anywhere and you would find that sociology was the same in all…the republics of the Soviet Union.'

[64] For more on this agreement, see Aidaraliev (1995: 8), who argues that the republic is developing a form of education that will 'enable us to preserve all our past successes and master new technologies of instruction. This will depend on our integration into the world community. The scale and level of connections with foreign countries in the sphere of education is constantly growing. The most important direction is the Russian Federation and the CIS. […] In the framework of the CIS, on 10 June 1992, there was an agreement of cooperation to set up a single educational space, based on the principles of sovereignty and integrity of national educational systems.' However, this agreement had little practical effect on the development of the discipline of sociology in Kyrgyzstan during the time period under consideration.

[65] Many students, however, feel that the diploma itself is worth less than personal and family connections, which are often required to gain employment (Personal communication with final year sociology students, BHU, 19 March 2003).

[66] Whereas the 1994 version of the standards stipulated eleven required disciplines, the revised version requires that students study in five: history, physical culture, philosophy, foreign language and Kyrgyz or Russian. Individual universities are free to determine whether students must take courses in the humanities and social sciences, in accordance with the overall structure and philosophy of particular degree programmes.

[67] These figures are from 2003 departmental records which specify the number of courses taught by each member of the department.

[68] While Tishin's own textbook received both positive and critical reviews from the faculty of BHU, it was argued that he included only national research projects in which he had participated while excluding the research of others (BHU 2001).

[69] During 1995, the third theme was changed to 'the social-spiritual face of the people of Kyrgyzstan.'

[70] Aspirant dissertations on social groups: A. Alimanova, 'Ways of life of Germans in Kyrgyzstan,' supervised by Isaev; Zh. Bokontaeva, 'Farmers as a social-professional group,' supervised by Isaev; G. Gorborukova, 'The Russian diaspora in Kyrgyzstan: the historical-sociological aspect,' supervised by Isaev; A. Aldasheva, 'The socialisation of women in mountainous conditions,' supervised by I. S. Boldzhurova; S. Zhunusheva, 'Problems of the formation of an entrepreneurial class among young people, on the example of Kyrgyzstan,' supervised by Isaev; S. Osmonov, 'Students as a social-demographic group,' supervised by Isaev; Zh. Aitbaeva, 'Entrepreneurs as a social-professional group,' supervised by Isaev. Dissertations on the elite: A. Zhigitekov, 'Particularities of the formation of the political elite of Kyrgyzstan,' supervised by Isaev; B. Saitbaev, 'The influence of family relations on the establishment of a Kyrgyz national elite,' supervised by Isaev. Dissertations on the general theme: M. Mamirkanov, 'Problems of modelling humanitarian education in Kyrgyzstan,' supervised by A. Elebaeva; Ch. Goshoeva, 'Particularities of the national integration of Kyrgyz society in the conditions of democracy,' supervised by Isaev.

[71] A. Tsarov, 'Tendencies of change in the standard of living of the urban population as a settler community,' supervised by Nurova; N.; Iu. Tserbak, 'The value orientations of the young people of Kyrgyzstan,' supervised by Omuraliev; G. Plakhotnikova, 'Problems of social stratification in Kyrgyzstan in the conditions of the transition to the market,' supervised by Isaev.

[72] G. Zhumabekova, 'The democratisation of Kyrgyz society: national and general human values,' supervised by Isaev; B. Kachikeeva, 'The role of women in the democratisation of Kyrgyzstan,' supervised by Boldzhurova; and T. Sharshembieva, 'Education and young people's value system,' no supervisor listed (Annual report 1996–97); B. Satkynaliev, 'Deviant behaviour of minorities: the status and ways of prevention,' supervised by Isaev (Report 1997).

[73] E.g., A. Beishembieva, 'Non-governmental organisations as institutions of civil society,' supervised by Isaev; M. Aripov, 'The open society: creation and development in Kyrgyzstan,' supervised by Nurova.

[74] Botoeva ultimately wrote a dissertation entitled *The Social Causes of the Internal Migration of Youth in Kyrgyzstan* (BHU 2002).

[75] This insight emerged during a Soros-sponsored sociology summer school course in Almaty, Kazakhstan, which dealt specifically with issues of the disciplinary canon in classical sociology and whether is can or should be reconsidered in the Central Asian context.

Chapter 8

[76] For more on the history of the university, see Reeves (2003) and Sharshekeeva (2001).

[77] In 1998, in addition to sociology, programmes also appeared in psychology, economics and international relations.

[78] During the early years of AUCA's existence, there were few discrete departments within the university. Instead, two major departments—one of English language and another general department—housed a diverse array of degree programmes, ranging from mathematics and culture to ethics. Sagynbaeva taught sociology in the latter.

[79] Information about the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) can be found at http://www.irex.org. The American Councils for International Education (ACTR/ACCELS) is online at http://www.americancouncils.org, and the Soros Foundation Higher Education Support Program HESP) at http://www.soros.org/initiatives/hesp.html.

[80] In the 2002–03 academic year tuition fees were $1800; however, the vast majority of students receive some sort of financial aid and do not pay full fees (Reeves 2003: 19-20).

[81] In 1998, the library of the Kyrgyz-American School held 43 titles in sociology, approximately one-quarter of which were in English and had been donated by visiting professors. By 2000, this had expanded to include 55 English titles, 62 Russian titles and 17 non-sequential numbers of *Sotsiologicheskie Issledovaniia* dating from 1997–99. All of the books were donated or purchased through special one-off grants given by the Soros Foundation for instructional materials. This collection was supplemented by 72 English titles donated by faculty members and housed in the newly-established International and Comparative Politics Library.

[82] According to the Civic Education Project's 2001 brochure, the organisation, funded primarily by the Open Society Institute (OSI), was 'founded in 1991 [as] a private, non-profit educational organization that helps to educate a new generation in Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia in the principles and habits of democracy. Believing that critically minded and informed individuals are fundamental to a thriving democratic society, CEP works with universities throughout the region to bring western-trained social science academics and lawyers to their institutions.' The programme was dissolved in 2003 and reorganised by the OSI's Higher Education Support Program that would place more emphasis on institution building and streamline CEP activities into other HESP projects (CEP 2000, 2003).

[83] This is a long-standing problem in the republic. In the 1960s, for example, the pro-rector of the Kirgiz State University wrote an article on the 'preparation of teachers for Central Asian VUZy' (Islamov 1964). He argued that apprenticeships did not work because 'few research institutes or universities were willing to cooperate with young researchers in reality, and pressured them into work instead.'

[84] He and a number of others from the Sociology Department also initiated a faculty–staff union, which had a strong start but dissolved during the autumn of 2003 as a result of the university's administrative crisis.

[85] While a 2003 report on the centre lists seven local and foreign full-time staff and two research assistants, most of these are on paper only. The vast majority of the work in 2003, for example, was in actuality conducted by Ablezova, Botoeva and research assistant Kanybek Konokbaev, with assistance from foreign researchers who were once part of the on-site team and who are now living abroad.

Chapter 9

[86] For a full listing of the papers in which articles on sociology appear, see Appendix E.

[87] For a different interpretation of sociology in the media, in particular its 'destructive effects' and efforts to regulate the publication of sociological work, see Fond zaschiti glasnosti (1996).

[88] Many individuals and organisations that have conducted and published public opinion surveys in Kyrgyzstan during the last decade are unregistered, and many groups or centres are short-lived and dissolve within a few months or years. There have been no regularly produced academic periodicals in the republic since the early 1990s and studies are often published in newspapers; these articles, however, often lack even the author's name or are printed under pseudonyms. Furthermore, many research centres do not keep accurate accounts of the studies they themselves conduct, and those that do are often unwilling to share their archives with outsiders.

[89] *Prikhvatizatsiia* is an ironic pun on 'privatisation,' stemming from the Russian verb *prikhvatit'*, or 'to seize up.' It translates loosely into 'crony capitalism' and refers to the fact that after independence, state land in Kyrgyzstan was simply redistributed to wealthy *apparatchiki* and oligarchs rather than genuinely privatised.

[90] Isaev 1994, 1994a, 1994b; Isaev, Abagynova and Abylgazaieva 1994; Isaev and Abylgazaieva 1994; Isaev and Asanbekov 1994; and Osmonalieva 1994.

[91] Under the VPP, or Voucher Privatisation Programme, each Kyrgyzstani citizen could request a voucher that could be used toward purchasing either the property s/he lived in or shares in collectives, joint-stock companies, or other properties which were being privatised. For more, see Dabrowski (1995: 287).

[92] It must be noted that 'national-level' sociological studies in Kyrgyzstan are not necessarily based on representative samples of the entire national population; in fact, many use localised samples and generalise them to the 'nation.' The somewhat different practice of using proportional as opposed to representative samples in sociological research, and its justification as being superior for studies in the largely rural republic, will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter.

[93] This set of twenty articles is comprised of Bakir Uluu (1994, 1997); Bekturganov (1994, 1995); Isaev (1996b); Isaev and Ibraeva (1996); Isaev, Ibraeva and Madalieva (1995); Isaev et al. (1993b, 1994b, 1994d, 1994e, 1994f, 1994g, 1994h, 1996, 1996a, 1996b, 1997, 1997a); Razguliaev (1995); Zhorobekova et al. (1995).

[94] It is unclear when exactly these surveys began; one source traces them back to 1991 (Isaev 1991b), another to 1992 (Isaev and Ibraeva 1995), and yet another to 1994 (Isaev et al. 1997). During 2003, political ratings were regularly published in the weekly newspaper *Obschestvennyi reiting* (*Social rating*).

[95] It is worth noting that *Propagandist i agitator Kirgizstana* (*Propagandist and agitator of Kirgizstan*) regularly published articles about sociology or written by sociologists during the 1980s.

[96] The Democratic Movement of Kyrgyzstan (DDK) was founded in 1990 and 'served as an umbrella for a number of pro-democracy and nationalist groups. [It] backed the election of Akaev to the presidency in 1991, but later withdrew its support. The Democratic Party of Free Kyrgyzstan (Erkin or ERK) was 'founded in 1991 as a splinter group of the DDK on a platform of moderate nationalism and support a liberal market economy.' From Swiss Agency (2000).

[97] Quote excerpted from Bakir Uluu (1994).

[98] While Merton's (1942) 'Ethos of science' is often accepted as a descriptive model of the culture of western science, sociologist of science Mulkay (1976, 1979) reinterprets it as a normative prescription for scientific practice, one which is tied in with the professional and societal conditions of modern science. See also Gieryn (1983: 783).

Appendices

[99] Each discipline has an extremely detailed list of topics that are to be covered in each. For example, the history of sociology must include 'the stages of development of sociological thought, the socio–historical preconditions for the emergence of sociology as a science, the institutionalisation of science, the general characteristics of positivism, the Durkheimian sociological school, the sociology of P. Sorokin in [both] the Russian and Harvard periods, T. Parsons' theory of social action, functional concepts of the sociology of action, psychoanalytical concepts including A. Adler, S. Freud, developments on the ideas and paradigms of S. Freud and tracts of S. Freud's sociological understanding; the understanding of sociology, naturalism and Marxist sociology, the general orientation of sociology, and schools and subjects of contemporary sociology.' For convenience, the more detailed descriptions of what each discipline should include have been excluded from this summary.

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