

**REGIONAL STUDIES:  
ABOUT THE PERIODIZATION OF THE DISCIPLINE**

**G.P. Pirozhkov**

*Department «History and philosophy», TSTU*

*It is represented by professor A.A. Slezin and  
a member of the editorial board professor V.I. Konovalov*

**Key Words and Phrases:** an ethnographical thought; genesis and the development of regional studies; information institutions; informatization; a scientific and educational discipline; scientific studies.

**Abstract:** The periodization of regional studies as a scientific and educational discipline from the ethnographical point of view is examined in the article for the first time.

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In the literature concerning scientific studies the historical research is given a special place; it is up to it to be a starting point for both the formulation of the general theory of science and practical recommendations in the sphere of science control and its organization [4, p. 3].

In the analysis of regional studies as a scientific and educational discipline from the point of view of scientific studies one of the most important ones is the process of the formation of the history of this science, because as a typical scientific phenomenon regional studies are characterized by their own genesis and development at the same time. A historical approach is required for their examination.

We divide the history of Russian regional studies into two types: 1) the prehistory of regional studies; 2) the beginning and development of regional studies as a scientific and educational discipline. Hence the periodization of Russian regional studies is as follows.

1 The stage of an ethnographic thought – the prehistory of Russian regional studies.

1.1 An ethnographic thought of antiquity and the Middle Ages.

1.2 Ethnographic knowledge.

2 The stage of Russian regional studies.

2.1 The period of general regional studies (XIX – the beginning of the XX century).

2.2 The period of the division of regional studies into socialistic and bourgeois, the victory of communistic ideas in regional studies, the politization of the ethnographic movement, the suppression of regional ethnographers – the exponents of bourgeois ethnographic knowledge, by the state (1917 – 1991).

2.3 The predicted period of the development of Russian regional studies as a general science and an educational discipline on the methodological basis of human values (the XXI century).

Ancient people already had the first ethnographic knowledge: the data, for example, about the place for the construction of a house, were passed from a generation

to a generation. The ethnographic thought, which we define as elementary ideas about a small territory on which people lived, appeared in such a way. These ideas were only the empiric perception of information about the place where a person lived. This was ordinary and not strictly scientific knowledge. This knowledge was fixed when people learned to write. The ethnographic knowledge formed the basis of history in such a way. Ethnographic “literature” appeared in the same way. Russian manuscripts are full of facts with the ethnographic contents. There are interesting ethnographic data in the reports of soldiers, “lists”, books where tolls were written, requests and other documents, which are kept in local archives, in the compositions of foreign authors about Russia and others. Important ethnographic data are included into such specific types of documents as maps and historical and geographical descriptions of the XVI – XVII centuries. Such are the sources of Russian regional studies.

So chronologically an ethnographic thought, various ethnographic facts, given in the documents of pre-Peter- the- Great time are the prehistory of regional studies.

A whole complex of reasons and conditions was necessary for the appearance of ethnographic knowledge. If the first data about a region were not systematized, then with the construction of libraries, archives, museums, in which the data about separate parts of the country were kept, an ethnographic thought develops quicker. The reforms of Peter I encouraged this. In the XVIII century the role of scientific knowledge in the economical, military and cultural life increased. With the development of topographic technics, printing, there was the formation of scientific regional studies and it was closely connected with the development of history and geography, first of all. The typical peculiarities of ethnographic knowledge were: the attention to concrete territories; the setting of tasks of the wide use of ethnographic knowledge for the development of the economy and culture of the country; an important role of ethnographic knowledge in the general system of scientific and educational practice. At the beginning of the XVIII century the tasks of regional studies were defined clearly, they had a state meaning: Peter I demanded that all curious findings should be reported to the tsar and “those who knew the region” should be awarded for the search of antique things. The efforts were made to restore and protect historic monuments.

Russian scientists V.N. Tatischev, M.V. Lomonosov, who played an important role in the activization of ethnographic research, were also the first in the search, collection and systematization of local materials of the past. Their ideas were developed in the second half of the XVIII century: the descriptions of regions and provinces, done in those places, appeared. The works on cartography led to the publication of the first Russian atlas of the empire by I.K. Kirilov. Cards have been an important source of regional studies since. The works of the Academy of Sciences have a big amount of ethnographic data and this developed regional studies more and more on the scientific base; the collections, found by scientists during expeditions also encouraged this. Ethnographic publications appeared in the “Works” of the Free economical society. The general separation gave ethnographers the most interesting sources: the descriptions of territories differ by their general characteristics and essays on history. The materials from these descriptions were used when dictionaries were written. Ethnographic works were paid attention to on the pages of central periodic papers. Even bigger ethnographic aspect characterizes the first local magazines “Lonely peshehonets” (Yaroslavl), “Irtish, transforming into Ipokrena” (Tobolsk), a newspaper “Tambov news”. The appearance of bibliography is connected with the development of private publishing houses, a big amount of ethnographic literature. Together with writers and scientists the representatives of the democratic movement also began to find information about separate territories, populated places. The resident of the Archangel posad V.V. Krestinin (1729 – 1795) published a number of books about his region. Trying to attract his countrymen’s attention to regional studies he together with a merchant’s son A.I. Fomin founded “The society for historical research” – the first in Russia ethnographic organization, in Archangelsk in 1789.

So in the XVIII century there were the main premises for the emergence of regional studies as a science: a rather rich empiric base was accumulated, the basic sciences such as History, Geography, Literary studies and others developed quickly, some important ideas were formulated and they could be placed into the basis of a new – ethnographic – science. It was just the time when the second, scientific stage in the development of regional studies began and it is still lasting. It is divided into three periods: the first period is defined as bourgeois according to its theoretical contents and due to the fact that norms and values of the capitalistic society formed the basis of regional studies at that time.

In the development of regional studies of the XIX century we can notice its remarkable educational aspect – though the discipline was not taught in the process of studying, however ethnographic knowledge was used widely. The proof of this is a quick development of school regional studies. At the end of the century the first signs of the separation of regional studies as a science from practice appeared. Like any science which separates from the general human knowledge, acquires system, becomes integral, forming disciplinary, systematic knowledge, regional studies also became the aggregate of all knowledge concerning various parts of the country. Under the influence of practical needs empiric knowledge, accumulated earlier as well as ideas about territories were transformed into a definite scientific system, which soon was called “Motherland studies”, at the beginning of the XX century – “regional studies”.

The opinions of contemporaries about them were different. Many of them, who didn't understand the difference between them continued to actively study their region (from 1861 up to 1900 more than 500 bibliographic manuals were published concerning practically all regions of the country). A number of ethnographic museums appeared as well as provincial scientific archival committees. Some teachers and philosophers (for example, a German teacher Gustav Vineken, a Russian philosopher S.I. Gessen) saw in “Motherland studies” a step to the studying of the systematic course of sciences, the extension of the “Motherland” to the boundaries of the “world” and not only nationalistic or regional deliberate limitation of a pupil's outlook by the boundaries of this “region” (“regional studies”) [2, p. 138; 3, p. 235, 288, 402-403]. Methodists considered “Motherland studies” not as a special method of teaching a given subject, but as a system of primary education. In other words, at the beginning of the XX century regional studies began to expose themselves not only as “practical knowledge”, but also as an aggregate of scientific knowledge. The formation of primary ideas about the structure of regional studies as a scientific discipline began. If it was understood before as something unseparated, unclear, then now there were parts in it: teaching about sources, the methodics of ethnographic lessons, ideas about excursions and etc. The scientific and professional approaches of ethnographers became more complicated, their research practice became wider. If in the middle of the XIX century ethnographers were, first of all, those, who described events and nature, then ethnographers of next generations were analyzers: they base their considerations and conclusions, using various archival documents, applying various methods of research, formulating a concentrating method of the studying of a region. Gradually regional studies acquire the form of a structured integrity, though they were far from perfect from the modern point of view. Certainly they were closely connected with other disciplines (library studies, bibliographic studies, archival studies and others), and were developed under the influence of basic sciences. The sources were actively studied: historical and studying books direction appeared (K. Dzyatsko), material sources – archeological, ethnographic and other monuments of old times were collected. Archives were founded everywhere. Local researchers intensively developed the ethnographic theory on the base of practice. The process of the development of an ethnographic science was accompanied by the increase of works on regional studies, the movement of

ethnographers changed, choosing optimal organization structures, the number of ethnographic organizations grew. Regional studies already represented an aggregate of scientific knowledge about a single part of the country, and had a liberal and bourgeois and democratic aim in the social and political light. So in the XIX – the beginning of the XX centuries regional studies were formed as a scientific discipline. At the same time regional studies represented mainly a formal and technical discipline, characterized by a high specific gravity of problems, having a practical aim. On the whole, local ethnographic organizations of the early 1917-s, not depending on their social and legal status, were based on enthusiasm and creativity of individuals. It is up to them, interested in the scientific research, tasks of the rescue and protection of invaluable provincial archival documents, other monuments of the past, that regional studies received a great impulse in their development and rose to a higher level. The public opinion, a real interest to regional studies, shown during mass events and scientific discussions, attracted more and more enthusiasts to them. A pragmatic interest of state structures to the ethnographic movement mainly as to the instrument of the solution of problems of keeping archival, museum and library funds didn't encourage the activity of provincial scientific societies. Only some representatives of Russian bureaucrats due to their high intellectual level were seriously anxious about the spiritual development of the country and understood a great educational role of regional studies. It is up to them that favourable conditions for the ethnographic activity were created.

The XX century in the development of regional studies is the most difficult and productive time. Their principal difference from the regional studies of the previous period is that they were divided into bourgeois and socialistic. Both directions represented closely connected from the professional point of view and irreconcilable from the ideological point of view concepts.

Soviet regional studies are considered to be a type of activity and an important stage in the history of a scientific and educational discipline "Regional studies" on the territory of the USSR in 1917 – 1991. Their basis were ideological (a communist doctrine) and political (a united state) premises. The methodological basis were dialectic materialism, the requests of belonging to the class, to the communistic party, the dependence of the ethnographic theory and practice on the tasks of the socialistic construction, irreconcilability to all signs of the bourgeois ideology and etc. At last this resulted in the total censorship of socialistic regional studies, the transformation of ethnographic organizations to the principles of the Communistic party of the Soviet Union.

Soviet regional studies had a definite evolution and some typical changes, which, with some degree of approximations, can be divided into the following stages: 1) 1917 – the end of the 1930-s; 2) the end of the 1930-s – the middle of the 1950-s; 3) the middle of the 1950-s – the end of the 1960-s ("thaw"); 4) the beginning of the 1970-s – 1986 ("stagnation").

The evolution of the regional studies of the first twenty years of the Soviet power had several stages, stipulated by both the general orientation of regional studies, which changed according to these or those tasks of the social and economical development of the country, and the level of the organizational form of regional studies.

In 1917 – 1921 the main direction of the ethnographic movement was the activity, controlled by the state, in the sphere of the protection of cultural valuables, and this led to the mass foundation of museums. The organizations which studied the local region were actively opened; the activity of scientific societies, which had existed before the revolution, continued. But there was no control of the ethnographic movement, it was not formed as an organization.

1921 – 1929 – a new step in the development of regional studies, the beginning of their formation as an organization. The main characteristics of regional studies: the

theoretical comprehension and the search of new organizational forms; the elaboration of a conceptual apparatus; the development of separate directions in connection with the tasks of the socialistic construction; the coordination of the activity of libraries, museums and ethnographic organizations; the excretion of the scientific and propaganda activity as a leading direction of the ethnographic work. A special role was given to the studying of the revolutionary movement in connection with the activity of committees dealing with the collection of the material about the revolution and the party, they played a prevailing role in the public and ethnographic consciousness. The development of regional studies defined the structure of ethnographic museums, and very often libraries, which kept documents, studied and demonstrated objects, collected in the process of the ethnographic activity. Museums of this period were like neighbouring organizations of ethnographic societies – specific scientific laboratories of the ethnographic movement. Libraries and archives provided researchers with ethnographic sources. This is the peculiarity of the correlation between information institutions and ethnographic organizations.

The activity in the sphere of regional studies at the end of the 1920-s – the beginning of the 1930-s, when the principles of “independence of class”, “cultural belonging” of the ethnographic work were greatly criticized, led to the final affirmation of communistic positions in them. All- Russia Communistic party (of bolsheviks) demanded that regional studies should be enriched with the achievements of Marxist and Leninist science. Under this banner ultrarevolutionaries destroyed regional studies themselves and ethnographers together with monuments of history and culture. And in the 1930-s they practically liquidated them so that nobody could interfere with their Utopias.

The main feature of the development of the ethnographic movement in the 1930-s was its centralization: in 1937 it was ordered to liquidate the bureau of regional studies and small organizations, to carry out the ethnographic work in collectives in cultural and educational institutions, educational institutions and museums. The reorganization of regional studies was executed by authoritarian methods under the control of not only party organizations but also People’s committee of internal affairs, what led to the uselessness of the execution of this activity. The liquidation of regional studies as a public movement did the activity of information institutions harm, it practically preserved the museum and library system. The archival system also changed towards centralization and the prevention of the access to documents. So museums, libraries, archives, which under the influence of the development of regional studies looked for the ways of independent development, after the loss of the scientific and public environment which was necessary for them, turned out to be in isolation.

So in the USSR the idea about regional studies as an independent social science, the methodological basis of which was Marxist and Leninist ideology, was formulated. Ethnographic research was temporarily closed. Mass repressions of ethnographers, in fact, were the struggle with bourgeois regional studies. This struggle continued only there where “theoretical” and “practical” regional studies were concerned (it finished in the ideological sense – old regional studies went away together with ethnographers of the bourgeois direction). The supporters of the “theoretical” direction (the echo of the old Russian regional studies) still tried to carry out the research of the scientific basis for the ethnographic knowledge, to study the problems of the subject of regional studies, methods and sources of the ethnographic science. The supporters of “practice” – “enthusiastic revolutionaries”, underestimating the theoretical research, examine regional studies only from the point of view of their practical meaning, thus diminishing the role of this science in the life of the society. Regional studies as a system of knowledge, revealing the contradictions of public processes of the local character were not needed by the regime of the personal power. The totalitarian society lived well

without studying many social problems on the local level, using ethnographic knowledge, first of all, in the agitation and propaganda work and political education. Ethnographers-bolsheviks correlated the truth of science not with life, but with the revolutionary doctrine, many of them joyfully called “white” “black” and vice versa. Their slogan was “The aim justifies means”, hence there was an intention to find such a thing in their ethnographic research, with the help of which they could delight authorities, show what they wished as the reality. Certainly the regime didn’t put up with the fact that in the works of many Soviet researchers on the local material (first of all, ethnographic, historical) one could notice the influence of the ethnographic movement of the American historical school of Frants Boas – a linguist, ethnographer and anthropologist. Boas influenced greatly the ethnographic research of such famous Russian scientists as V.G. Bogoras and L.Ya. Shtenberg, and on the whole the formation of the Russian regional studies. The Soviet scientists – the supporters of Boas were destroyed. During the next practically thirty years regional studies were not only developed but turned back. Bolsheviks didn’t recognize the rich traditions of Russian regional studies [5].

During the Great Patriotic War and after it the ethnographic movement became a bit active. Ethnographers collected the material about the participation of the population in the war. Ethnographic organizations appeared in educational institutions. Libraries, clubs, houses of culture gradually began to take part in the ethnographic work.

In the second half of the 1950-s one could notice the revival of the ethnographic movement due to the democratization of the public life, mass interest to the studying of the small motherland aroused. Regional studies were divided into state, public, higher educational and school, in the school regional studies there were educational and out-of-class regional studies. The underestimation of the scientific base in regional studies was eliminated. Ethnographers began to set problems of the correlation of regional studies with other sciences more actively and thought about the methodology of ethnographic research. When the ethnographical material was included into the school programmes on the history of the USSR (1966) there was a necessity to elaborate a new methodology of teaching not only History, but also some other disciplines. The scientific and research work in regional studies was aimed at the complex studying of the region. Regional studies (geographical, historical and others) gradually become an important educational discipline. Researchers-theoreticians and methodists who dealt with practice talk about regional studies as a method of teaching basic disciplines – History, Geography, Literature and others. However as an educational discipline regional studies of that time were still characterized by more practical aim. In the 1970-s the course of the historical regional studies was introduced in higher educational institutions – the preparation of historians-ethnographers began.

So in the 1960 – 1970-s interesting scientific research was carried out in regional studies, educational ethnographic manuals appeared, the scientific (higher educational) regional studies developed, the preparation of ethnographers began, ethnographic centers were organized, many ethnographic works were published. Ethnographic articles appeared in the local press.

In the conditions of the further democratization of the society in the second half of the 1980-s a more favourable situation for ethnographers emerged. There was an opportunity to discuss the weak points of ethnographers’ movement, to estimate the state of the ethnographic research on the whole. It was said in public that the local history was rarely “populated” by real persons, there were no wide generalizations and conclusions, reflecting the peculiarity of the local history as a fragment of the general historical development, in most ethnographic works. It was evident: the history of the region (especially after October) is strongly dogmatized and simply twisted. In educational institutions, press, already known materials, certainly, only positive, were

used. There were no elements of the research in the ethnographic practice. The richest creative inheritance of scientists of archival committees was not studied. They began talking loudly about the unsatisfactory state of monuments of nature, history and culture. Libraries and museums had a very complicated and contradictory period. On the one hand, it was connected with the general crisis in the sphere of the museum and library work, on the other hand, it was stipulated by the negative processes in the development of the provincial culture after 1917. Many employees of local archives were for the carrying out of constructive reforms. We can not but notice that most ethnographers were for the uniting, both within the country and horizontally, hoping that the cooperation of efforts would allow to reanimate regional studies in some spheres. Town and regional ethnographic societies were organized (it is true, that more often on the initiative of party organizations). The activity of the Union of ethnographers of Russia began.

It is doubtless that for the scientific analysis the following aspect is also principal: in the second half of the XX century the concept about the ethnographic activity as a political and social institute and an instrument of the communistic upbringing was finally formulated. Regional studies began to acquire features of a real public science. Their infrastructure changed greatly. The ethnographic knowledge was used not only in the educational process but also in the ideological activity of communistic organizations, concerning the party, Komsomol and pioneers. Ethnographic publications were characterized by a clearly expressed social and political aim, they corresponded to the ideology. The example was shown by text-books on regional studies. All reasons to consider regional studies as a formal and applied discipline disappeared. All-Union scientific conferences on historical regional studies (Poltava, 1987; Penza, 1989) gave an impulse to the comprehension of the theoretical and methodological layer of home regional studies. Many scientists spoke about the necessity of “the review of the methodological arsenal of regional studies” [1, p. 189-190].

Meanwhile from the point of view of the main paradigm regional studies had had a traditional character up to the end of the 1980-s. Only then the change began gradually what was stipulated by the unprecedented increase of the importance of information in the life of the society (informatization). Some signs of the transfer to the new – information – paradigm in regional studies appeared only in the 1990-s, when they were outside the borders of political limitations.

So let us make conclusions. The history of science for science itself is a way of self-cognition, which is required by regional studies now greatly. We connect the urgent need of the wide study of the historical experience of the ethnographic construction in the Russian empire and the USSR on the part of ethnographers with the process of the revival of regional studies in the Russian Federation.

The ethnographic thought, written in various documents of the time before Peter the Great, developed like the prehistory of regional studies. And only reformations of the XVIII century gave the main premises for the formation of regional studies as a science. It is up to this time when the second, i.e. the scientific period in the development of regional studies, which is still lasting, opened.

In the Russian empire regional studies had an applied character, and this corresponded to the small role of the ethnographic knowledge in the public life, to the limited – elite – character of the movement of those who knew the region, to the primitive forms of the organization of regional studies. The science of that period didn't set a task of the deep analysis of the ethnographic process.

After 1917 the prevailing position in Russia was taken by Russian regional studies. It was considered to be a public phenomenon, taking an important place in the system of socialistic reforms and public and political events, carried out by the authorities. It made regional studies an important public, necessary educational

discipline. However there was no integrated concept of the ethnographic discipline. The ethnographic theory, studying the principles of the ethnographic activity, explaining its peculiarities, synthesizing and predicting the contents, forms, methods and ways of regional studies, developed traditionally – in the Soviet way: it was based on the main principles of Marxism-Leninism, developed within the limits of the communistic ideology. The ethnographic practice developed in accordance with the reality of the Soviet Union and the party. The distinctive features of the Soviet regional studies were: the ideologization of the activity of ethnographic institutions and ethnographers – public enthusiasts and the belonging of the ethnographic movement and its organizational structures to the party. Regional studies have developed within the limits of one – socialistic- direction since the 1920-s.

We can speak about the revival of the ethnographic movement only in connection with the democratization in the second half of the 1950-s. In the 1960-s – the time of “thaw” and on the whole in the 1970 – 1980-s, in spite of the negative, “stagnating” phenomena, positive changes took place in the Soviet regional studies. The separate parts of regional studies have been developed actively since the end of the 1980-s, new branches of the ethnographic knowledge appeared at their junctions with other scientific disciplines. New branches of regional studies grew stronger and stronger. There was a gradual change of the paradigm of regional studies, stipulated by the increasing importance of information in the life of the society.

At the turn of the XX and the XXI centuries the activity of many ethnographers, who accepted the democratic principles of the organization of regional studies and the construction of the ethnographic movement, was aimed at the assertion of the principles of democracy and intellectual freedom in the ethnographic theory and practice. Regional studies become the symbol of democratic Russia. Now the most important task of regional studies is the transfer to the methodological basis of human values, which requires the substantial review of principles, which were adopted earlier and become traditional, and the solution of several problems, connected with this transfer. The main peculiarity of the modern regional studies is the predicted period of the incorporation of directions of the ethnographic science (socialistic and bourgeois), which contradicted to each other before but are interrelated, on the new and integrated methodological basis of human values. It will require the refusal of some principal statements, the review of many postulates, which have seemed quite true recently. The main task of regional studies is the elaboration of a scientifically explained, a fundamentally important for regional studies themselves and the ethnographic activity, perspective from the theoretical and practical points of view, answer to the question of our time, connected with the informatization of the society. Regional studies as a scientific discipline must provide a theoretical foundation for the development of the ethnographic activity in its new form – one of the branches of the information industry.

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## **Краеведение: о периодизации дисциплины**

**Г.П. Пирожков**

*Кафедра "История и философия", ТГТУ*

**Ключевые слова и фразы:** генезис и развитие краеведения; информатизация; информационные учреждения; краеведческая мысль; науковедение; научная и учебная дисциплина.

**Аннотация:** Впервые в литературе рассматривается периодизация краеведения как научной и учебной дисциплины с науковедческой точки зрения.

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## **Heimatkunde: über Periodisation des Faches**

**Zusammenfassung:** Im Artikel wird die Periodisation der Heimatkunde als das Wissenschafts- und Lehrfach vom wissenschaftswissenschaftlichen Standpunkt zum ersten Mal in der Literatur betrachtet.

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## **Ethnographie de la région: sur la périodisation de la discipline**

**Résumé:** Pour la première fois dans la littérature est examinée la périodisation de l'ethnographie de la région comme une discipline scientifique et celle d'enseignement du point de vue de la compétence scientifique.

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