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I

I. A. BLÁHA'S FEDERATIVE FUNCTIONALISM

JULIANA OBRDLÍKOVÁ

Men of science are commemorated because of their merits which, though significant for the scientific development at their time, belong to scientific history now. And there are other men of science whose merits are commemorated though the full importance of their work is not appreciated. Such is, in my opinion, the case of I. A. Bláha. During his lifetime he had a great influence in our country in stimulating research work and, simultaneously, offering concrete approaches to the investigated problems in his research projects of the village,¹ the city,² the worker,³ the border country, etc.⁴ What remained rather unnoticed⁵ was his general sociological theory, his federative functionalism, or rather three of its substantial elements: Firstly, an adequate solution of Durkheim's ontological problem of the specificity of social reality or, methodologically, of explaining social phenomena on the social level; secondly, the way how to overcome

¹ Cf. I. A. Bláha: "Sociologický výzkum Velké nad Veličkou" [The Sociological Research of Velká nad Veličkou (a Moravian village)], *Sociologická revue*, Vol. 3 (1932), pp. 92—99.

² I. A. Bláha: "Město. Výzkumný plán" (The City. A Research Project), *Sociologická revue*, Vol. XV (1949), pp. 33—41. See also I. A. Bláha: "Enquête de Sociologie Urbaine en Tchécoslovaquie", *Cahiers internationaux de sociologie*, Vol. X (1951), pp. 168—174.

³ I. A. Bláha: "Výzkumný ústav dělnický" (Institute for the Research of the Worker), *Sociologická revue*, Vol. I (1930), pp. 165—174, 310—315.

⁴ On the research work undertaken by I. A. Bláha and his Sociological School see M. Hájek: "Podíl Brněnské sociologické školy na rozvoji terénního výzkumu u nás" (The Brno Sociological School's Share in the Development of the Sociological Research in Our Country), *Sociologický časopis*, Vol. IV (1968), pp. 402—415.

⁵ In our country, the explanation of this fact may be partly looked for in Bláha's rather late framing of his theory in a rounded form in 1937. Soon afterwards a break in the sociological continuity followed, caused by World War II, and then by the official cancellation of sociology in our country. After this period it was easier to get and read sociological writings coming from abroad than those representing our sociological tradition. This situation has changed only recently when I. A. Bláha's *Sociologie* was posthumously edited towards the end of 1968.

As to other countries, in foreign journals Bláha preferred to publish papers on concrete themes (on the history of the Czech sociology, on the intelligentsia and its functions etc.) rather than on sociological theory, the only exception being his "La vie envisagée du point de vue sociologique", published in *Les Cahiers internationaux de sociologie*, Vol. VII (1949). All his other writings endured the fate of other works by members of small nations publishing in their mother-tongues: only their fellow-countrymen can read them.

the static character of structuralism; and, thirdly, the use of the functional approach in concrete cases. All these questions are, of course, interconnected. First of all, we shall expound Bláha's federative functionalism in its final form as presented by him in his *Sociologie* (Sociology; finished in 1958, published in 1968); then we shall deal with the mentioned problems in the above sequence.

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In principle, Bláha's functionalism⁶ derives from Comte's conception of the social consensus, from organistic analogies in sociological theory and Durkheim's postulate of envisaging the social reality as a reality *sui generis*. These were influences of the sociological thought at the time when Bláha started his scientific work. Another influence can be looked for in our national environment and its preoccupation with the practical problems of the existence of a small nation. Thus from the very beginning Bláha regards social reality as a differentiated social whole the parts of which are mutually interconnected, permeate and influence one another and have specific functions in the superordinated social whole. Bláha applied the functional approach in his study of the town, of the social type of the peasant, in his analysis of the crisis of our society, of the family and, above all, in his treatise on the intelligentsia. It was namely in this work of his (*Sociologie inteligence, Sociology of the Intelligentsia*, 1937) that he presented his conception in a rounded form and then elaborated it in detail in his *Sociologie*.

Bláha pays much attention to the concept of the social group. His aim is to emphasize that a social group is not just a number, a sum total of separate individuals, but that its social character consists in the links uniting these individuals. These links or bonds are both objective and subjective. Bláha demonstrates the rise of these bonds when describing the origin of a one-functional social group. It originates from a plurel of individual persons under the pressure of some common need, i. e. in a social situation from which processes of assimilation, socialization and cooperation issue. In these processes all influence everybody and everybody exerts influence upon all. In this way a stage of collective individualization is reached when separate individuals become relatively united (unified) in their activities and mentalities (i. e. in feelings, ideas and endeavours); they feel, think and act as one individual with reference, of course, to the specific common task to be performed. There are also processes of differentiation, conflict and isolation, but — Bláha contends — if a social group arises with the aim to fulfil a common task and to persist, the processes of integration prevail over those of disintegration.

In this way a collective consciousness is conceived not as a metaphysical entity, but as a subjective result of the social situation transforming

⁶ Comments on Bláha's federative functionalism are contained in Z. Bystrý (the pseudonym of Bláha's talented pupil of Jewish origin Bruno Zwicker who died in the concentration camp in Oswietim): "Soustava a metoda" (System and Method), *Sociologická revue*, Vol. X, pp. 21—30; J. Macků: "Poznámky k strukturálnímu determinismu v dle Arnošta Bláhy" (Comment on Structural Determinism in the Work of I. A. Bláha), in: *Sborník prací filosofické fakulty*, Brno 1966, B 13; J. Obrdlíková: "Sociologická metoda I. A. Bláhy" (Sociological Method of I. A. Bláha) in: *Brněnská sociologická škola*, Brno 1966, pp. 22—48; and "Sociologická teorie I. A. Bláhy" (Sociological Theory of I. A. Bláha), *Sociologický časopis*, Vol. IV (1968), pp. 316—327.

individual mentalities. It is the subjective bond of the social group: The objective bond consists in the relatively ordered activities (social functions) petrified in social institutions (the social structure is conceived by Bláha as a less solid institution), in the social order.

Beside one-functional social groups there are many-functional social groups such as for instance the family or the nation (or, on previous stages of the development, a tribe). For under the general common need to live together (the general social situation) a number of specific common needs (specific social situations) emerge giving origin to orderly activities (social functions), and their petrifications, social institutions. Thus the social life of a nation (or we could use Gurvitch's term: global society) is a system of social functions and institutions, whilst the society is a differentiated group of persons linked together both objectively (by the ordered activities) and subjectively (by a collective consciousness in the above sense). In a metaphorical sense only Bláha speaks of the society as of an order of orders.⁷

Social needs and corresponding functions and institutions are classified as follows.

<i>Classification of Social Needs and of Corresponding Functions and Institutions</i>	
<i>Social Needs</i>	<i>Social Functions and Institutions</i>
A. <i>Material Needs</i>	A. <i>Material Functions and Institutions</i>
1. The need of providing for material livelihood	1. Economic and Technical Activities and Institutions
2. The need of providing for material reproduction	2. Family Activities and Institutions
B. <i>Spiritual Needs</i>	B. <i>Spiritual-Cultural Functions and Institutions</i>
I. <i>The need to provide for spiritual livelihood, i. e.</i>	
1. the need to regulate group relations to the outward world	Science, Art
a) that we can percept with our senses	Religion
b) that is beyond the reach of our senses	
2. The need to regulate the relationships within the group	Language
a) the need of communication	Law
b) the need to limit partial expansiveness through authority	Morality
c) the need to constitute the group spontaneously	<i>Functions and Institutions Propagating Culture</i> (education, print, radio, etc.)
II. <i>The need to multiply spiritually</i>	
C. <i>The Material-Spiritual Need, i. e. the need to protect the material and spiritual vitality of the group</i>	Politics (and Army Functions and Institutions)
D. <i>The Need of Rest, Entertainment and Recreation</i>	Entertainment and Recreation Activities and Institutions

It is not the aim of this paper to discuss the merits or defects of Bláha's classification of social needs and the corresponding social functions (and institutions). Let us only remark that, as elsewhere, even here Bláha endeavours to start

⁷ See for instance his *Filosofie mravnosti (Philosophy of Morality, 1922)*, p. 51 ff.

from the society and not from the individual. He brings forth a classification of social needs to which individual ones correspond, being socially regulated. As to the individual, he behaves as if acting "under" a *norm*. By the term is not only meant a ready made norm (legal, moral, educational, etc.) coercing the individual from without solely. The norm means also the pressure of the common need evoking in the individual an inner pressure to act in order. Thus, although Bláha's norm originates in Durkheim's *contrainte sociale*, it contains also the subjective element, the individual tendency to act in order. And because every person is member of various social groups, his Ego represents a complex social structure, too.⁸

But social life of the global society is a system of federated social functions. The term system means that all social functions are autonomous, i. e. they are directed to their own ends, but, at the same time, being parts of the same superordinated whole, they permeate and condition one another and, consequently, tend to be functional with respect to this superordinated whole, to support its vitality. The term vitality need not of itself lead to the accusation of organistic tendencies in Bláha's theory, though there are some in him, but rather of a rhetoric character. In the above case Bláha fills this biologic term with irreproachably social content of humanitarian ideals implying his concern for the body and soul of every individual person.

This vitality is both a law and a postulate and value, Bláha says, and it is the essence of spirituality (of cultural interest) that it can serve processes of integration implying this vitality as their aim better than political or economic interests do. Thus it is the function of the intelligentsia to unite society, to overcome its tensions in the name of spiritual values, values of order, love, justice, rest, truth, beauty, etc.

It is evident that in Bláha's functionalism the term system equals Comte's social consensus. Yet for Bláha the social life is a system of federated functions. By this term Bláha suggests that all social functions are of equal importance for the social scientist who only studies them objectively. It is the practice of social life which ranks one as higher, the other as lower according to the specific needs of the society. This evaluation is the problem of philosophy, not of science. So far Bláha's social theory.

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The above brief outline of Bláha's theory shows convincingly that one of the main characteristics of Bláha's conception of social reality is that he took seriously and, I should say, applied with success, Durkheim's requirement to explain social phenomena on the social level, i. e. to treat the social reality as a reality *sui generis*.

⁸ Bláha's emphasis on the "social core" of the individual soul led Bláha to a subjectification of the methodological objectivism taken over from Durkheim. He namely recommends the technique of social introspection and he applied it in his own work. He says: "The family, nation, party are not only realities existing objectively beside us, but they are in us, they form a part of our life structure. We know what is law, morality, religion not only because we have been objectively informed about them, but also because we act legally, morally, we live religiously. That is why we understand them".

This problem is considered as a problem rather rarely in the present sociological literature. And if it is considered as a problem, the starting-points of the sociologists prevent its solution or it is solved in a speculative way. To demonstrate our argument, let us point to the view of S. Andreski as the representative of the first approach. Among the three methodological merits of M. Weber, S. Andreski quotes the principle that all sociological concepts can be reduced to the actions of the individual persons and calls Durkheim's "reifications of social processes" (which, ontologically, means their objectification) a step backward.⁹ The second approach may be documented by the views of T. Parsons who, though convinced that "Durkheim in many respects tended to set a 'sociologistic' factor theory over against the individualistic factor theories of his days",¹⁰ emphasizes: "It is essential from the point of view of social science to treat the social system as a distinct entity which must be studied and analyzed on its own level, not as a composite resultant of the actions of the component individuals alone." And he goes on saying explicitly: "One of the most important reasons why it is dangerous to infer too directly from the psychological to the social structure level and vice versa is the extremely important fact that there is not a simple correspondence between personality structure and institutional structure."¹¹ Yet Parsons does not take into account the fact that his psychological conception of social action as a system of action orientations leads to such direct inferences from the psychological to the social structure level and vice versa. But he sees the problem quite distinctly.

As the illustration of the third approach may serve the view of G. Gurvitch who takes Durkheim's collective consciousness as the most valuable part of his sociology¹² and tries to rid the concept of its metaphysical character, but in a speculative way which reminds the reader of his phenomenological beginnings. He namely assures the transition of "the individual" into "the social" and *vice versa* by the "openness" of one individual consciousness to another and even to the collective consciousness, or, in other words, by the immanency of the individual consciousness in the collective one.¹³

Since his scientific beginnings up to his *Sociologie*, Bláha emphasized the impossibility of reducing "the social" to "the individual" and his problem was how this could be true when only individuals act and have mentalities. Bláha says explicitly, that three traits are characteristic of a social phenomenon: the activity, its order and the mental state of individuals active in this order.¹⁴ It is certainly

⁹ As an example he gives unemployment which, according to him, equals circumstances under which a great number of workers are without work. Cf. S. Andreski: *Elements of Comparative Sociology*, London 1964, pp. 76 ff.

¹⁰ T. Parsons: "The Present Position and Prospects of Systematic Theory in Sociology" in: G. Gurvitch and W. I. Moore (eds.): *Twentieth Century Sociology*, New York 1945, p. 58.

¹¹ T. Parsons: "Psychoanalysis and the Social Structure" in: *Essays in Sociological Theory*, rev. ed. 1964, pp. 337, 338.

¹² G. Gurvitch: "Le problème de la conscience collective dans la sociologie de Durkheim" in: *La vocation actuelle de la sociologie*, Vol. II, 2nd ed., 1963.

¹³ G. Gurvitch, op. cit., Vol. I, Chap 3.

¹⁴ This conception of social reality emphasizing both its collective and individual sides, i. e. mediating between the sociological objectivism and subjectivism, is termed in Czech sociology as critical realism. The term was popularized — among others — by Bláha himself and he derives it from Masaryk's epistemological critical realism (cf. T. G. Ma-

no misinterpretation of his view when we say that it is the order which is the characteristic trait of the social phenomena. Of course Bláha does not conceive it as static, but in a constant change, in its making, remaking or destruction. That is why it is closely connected with the social activity and the social situation. In a way the social activity unites of itself "the individual" and "the social" (the order) for in it the individual initiative, formed socially, is applied in a social environment and its pressures. But only social situation, connected with the group needs (and goals), allows the explanation of the origin of a new social order (or its remaking or destruction). Methodologically, it allows the explanation of the social phenomena on their own, i. e. social level, and prevents all reductionism.

For methodologically, the social situation of a social phenomenon potentially contains all its determinisms. These determinisms follow, according to Bláha, from the place of the given social phenomenon in the complex social structure (social determinisms) and from the fact that men, endowed biologically and mentally and living on some kind of the geographic basis and in specific "technical" conditions (namely in smaller or larger groups, in transient or permanent, simpler or complex ones, etc.), are active in these structures, create, transform, replace or destruct them. In concrete social situations only some, even one or two, such factors may be important while the others are negligible. And because each social phenomenon is a process in a broader social process, Bláha distinguishes the internal and external sides of the social situation. They are what later on G. C. Homans terms as the internal and external social systems. Bláha himself connects his social situation with M. Mauss's "phenomène social total" and points to its similarity with G. Gurvitch's' *conjoncture sociale particulière*.

In a concrete way Bláha showed the application of this approach of his when analyzing, for instance, the generation or feminism as sociological concepts. The sociological concept of the generation is discussed by Bláha in a review of books dealing with problems of the young generation after World War I.¹⁵ For the definition of this young generation Bláha demands that account should be taken of its *biological determinism* (i. e. the extent of its age, the quality of physical health), the *psychological determinism* (i. e. how far the adolescence of the young has been affected by the war or by the postwar disorders). Then

saryk: *Grundlagen der concreten Logik*, 1885, in Czech in 1882) which emphasizes both the objective (reality) and the subjective (cognizing subject) elements in our knowledge and the critical attitude of the cognizing subject towards reality as it is presented by our senses. If such a critical attitude is taken with regard to social reality, said Masaryk in his university lectures, according to Bláha, both the collective and the individual share can be distinguished in it.

Accordingly, Bláha conceives sociology as dealing with the objective aspects of social phenomena, while the subjective aspect (psychology of social groups and other collectivities, both crystallized and uncrystallized) is the subject-matter of social psychology. Though, of course, neither can be treated without an account being taken of the other aspect. This is well documented by Bláha's own studies of social types of the worker, the peasant, the member of the intelligentsia. In all these cases he studies the influence of the respective occupations on the material, mental, social and cultural habitus of the members of the respective occupations and then tries to assess their social functions, viz. such effects of their activities as are advantageous to the vitality of the superordinated social whole (global society).

¹⁵ See for it *Sociologická revue*, Vol. V (1936), pp. 117 ff.

it should be found out "what of this biological and psychological material has been processed by the *social situation* in its hygienic, economic, political, cultural and moral components". This task should be performed with respect to the youth of the workers, peasants, civil servants, etc. And the main task is to ascertain "whether the interference of the environment has been such as to give rise to a certain common mood, to common ideas and a certain common consciousness of the life goal and programme (it is the generation in its philosophical sense) with the resulting characteristic behaviour of this generation which criticizes, and fights against, the older generation". On similar lines proceeds Bláha's analysis of feminism.¹⁶ Bláha's emphasis on the social activity, i. e. on the production, shows a similarity to Marx's idea as to economic production, in which also "a plus" is produced in comparison with the individual work. It would not be true to contend that Bláha generalized Marx's idea, since the idea of a whole containing more than the sum of its parts was taken over from E. Durkheim and confirmed by philosophical holistic and emergent theories; and the emphasis on social activities, which are the central concept of his system, is characteristic of the Czech practical thought which had to base its social theory on the practical problems and needs of an always precarious situation of a small nation. In this respect, again, especially T. G. Masaryk, the first President of the Czechoslovak Republic and the founder of our sociology, was Bláha's teacher.

It is only natural that his conception of the union of the social and the individual had developed and that in his younger works Bláha had difficulties with the problem. Especially his extensive and deep work *Filosofie mravnosti* (Philosophy of Morality, 1922) is stigmatized by it.¹⁷ Because he does not root morality in the social situation, and falls back to the individuals making up society, and behaving morally, he has to look for its roots and obligatory character in the organic and cosmic spheres with their natural laws.¹⁸

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Bláha's social situation and the processes issuing therefrom give a basis for the social change in, and of, social structures. It is true that Bláha regards all social life as dynamic. With agreement he repeats Dewey's idea that structure is a slowed down and regularized process, and Eubank's reverse statement that process is structure in action.¹⁹ He formulates his own ideas in the following way: "Structure is an abstract expression for a system of processes, of mutual relationships between individuals, or between specific partial structures forming a more complex structure (e. g. a nation or state) directed to one interest and ordered in such a way as to create a formal unity,"²⁰ And he continues: "It is

¹⁶ See "Problém ženského hnutí" (The Problem of Feminism), *Sociologická revue*, Vol. V (1936), pp. 345 ff.

¹⁷ Cf. the discussion of Bláha's ethics by K. Hlavová in his "Etika I. A. Bláhy" (The Ethics of I. A. Bláha), *Sociologický časopis*, Vol. III (1968), pp. 349—359. See also H. Steiner: "Comment on I. A. Bláha's Conception of Evaluation" in the present volume, pp. 25.

¹⁸ This statement is still more valid of his *Laická morálka a mravní výchova* (Lay Morality and Moral Education, Praha 1940), a work in which Bláha follows practical ends, namely the education to morality. Consequently, Bláha has to deal with the individual situation of "the actor" in order to take into account all factors which influence his behaviour.

¹⁹ *Sociologie*, Prague 1968, p. 16.

²⁰ *ib.*

the essence of everything living that it constantly creates new external situations and, of course, within the structures elements of their changes to a new and different state (under manifest structures newly born latent structures) which sometimes may even seem to be the destruction of the old state."²¹

Yet the two quotations refer to two different kinds of processes of change which Bláha's conception of the social situation allows to distinguish. In the first case, the existing structure is maintained through the functioning of individuals active in it and/or preconditions are created for the other kind of processes which mean social change in its proper sense, i. e. the change of the social order either in its parts or in its totality. In other words, in the first case we can start from the sum of the individuals; each of them functions in his individual situation under the pressure of the existing norms, of certain expectations of his environment. Thereby he asserts the existing order or does not comply with it or transcends it — according to his personal disposition and initiative and the pressures of the environment. His activity does not affect the existing social order or orders, unless it evokes both agreeing or disagreeing reactions from individuals facing identical or similar individual situations, identical or similar social needs and interests so that a social situation can arise with processes resulting in a transformation or destruction of the existing social order. Or struggles for such a change ensue, if other social groups (or categories) in the same superordinated whole, or its power centre, oppose such a change.

It is not our intention to discuss all the technical possibilities of social changes in a given social reality. Our aim was to point out Bláha's view that social change *sensu proprio* refers to "the social", i. e. to the social order. And though the initiative comes from the individual or the individuals, it becomes social through the social situation.

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Finally, we should like to comment on Bláha's concept of the social function. From what was said about his conviction that science should state what is, and leave to philosophy to decide what should be, it is evident that Bláha took over Durkheim's objectivism in method.²² Yet he certainly introduces a teleological element into sociology through the concept of the social function. This concept is namely connected — as we have seen — with social needs and thereby with social goals. (The vitality of the society and of the individuals forming it are also such goals or we may say: ideals.)

Yet, Bláha is very careful not to explain social reality teleologically, i. e. from social goals, the less so from individuals aims. Functions are for him only tendencies towards certain social aims, towards effects necessary for the vitality of the society. "The social reality is so constituted that there exist lawful tendencies to functions in it," said Bláha in his university lectures in 1928. That is the reason why functions leave space for disfunctional activities which are implied in the autonomy of various social functions, the tensions between the two being a stimulus of a further social development. And because social functions are only tendencies towards social goals, Bláha — as Durkheim required it —

²¹ ib.

²² Although with a qualification referred to in Note 8.

empirically ascertains functional effects (functions) of various social phenomena deducing them from their analysis, from their influences on the social environment in their development in time and in their varied forms in space. These influences can, of course, be also dysfunctional or afunctional — to use Merton's concepts — as to the superordinated whole (the global society).

Bláha's *Sociologie* assesses the functions of every cultural component (of economy, family, science, religion, law, language, etc.). Yet it is necessary to remark that Bláha had applied his functional approach even before. It can be well discerned already in his first larger work *Město* (1914).²³ It deals with the town as a social group characterized, firstly, by the "township", a trait of constant mobility and changeability which arose in the specific circumstances of the town life and is manifest in all its constituent parts; and, secondly, by specific functions in the life of the whole nation.

Let us give two other examples of Bláha's functional approach to concrete social phenomena: to the family and the intelligentsia. The first case takes place in his *Dnešní krise rodinného života* (*The Present Crisis of Family Life*, 1933). Here Bláha attempts to show in what way both the internal and the external social situations of the monogamic family affect its social functions: its eudaimonizing function as to the parents, its protective and educating functions as to the children and its reproductive and socializing functions as to the society (i. e. global society).²⁴

In the *Sociologie inteligence* (*Sociology of the Intelligentsia*, 1937) the intelligentsia is defined by its functions the complex of which Bláha calls its spiritualizing function. It means that the intelligentsia aims at the creation of spiritual values, at the criticism of the society, at its organization and unification in their name and at their propagation.²⁵ And again Bláha tries to follow up conditions which cause that those who by their education and work should be members of this social group (for Bláha takes it as a group with definite subjective and objective bonds) do not fulfil this spiritualizing function.

Because of his functional approach Bláha was criticized for idealizing the social phenomena he studied (i. e. the family, the intelligentsia). Although there are inconsequences in his approach which cannot be discussed here, in reality his critics did not understand the term function. It represents a certain empirically derived functional optimum by which all existing phenomena of the same kind are measured. This means that conditions are sought for which cause these functional effects or which explain why these functional effects have not taken place. In this way the social scientist can work with an ideal without impairing the "stating" character of science.²⁶ Of course, the choice of this ideal (e. g. the vitality of the society or monogamic family) depends on the social commitment of the scientist.

²³ For the discussion of this work see K. Gallá: "I. A. Bláha's Sociological Studies of the Town" in the present volume, p. 43.

²⁴ I. A. Bláha: *Dnešní krise rodinného života*, Brno 1933, pp. 10—11.

²⁵ For more details on this work see J. Macků's paper "On the Problem of Intelligentsia in the Process of Social Change" in the present volume, pp. 114.

²⁶ In this connection we should like to draw attention to an original and philosophically well founded treatment of the "ideal type" by the Czech philosopher and sociologist J. L. Fischer in his *Krise demokracie* (*The Crisis of Democracy*, Brno 1933) and *Tři stupně* (*Three Degrees*, Brno 1946).

However, it is the fate of science that it begins and ends with philosophy, if it is to be of use for the practice of social life. And I. A. Bláha required of the social scientist to give directing lines for practical measures, based on his knowledge. A sociologist, Bláha contended, is the one who as a member of the intelligentsia knows the complex relationships of the social life better than any other man (and even any other man of science) and who, consequently, can see the elements of new emergent structures which will better comply with the needs of the society, or its constituent parts, than the existing structures. That is why he does not take them as pathological cases, but works for their materialization. His initiative in discovering real social forces and formulating and propagating new social goals ought to prepare social situations that will call forth a new and better social order. Let me end by stating that Bláha's life endeavours were an example of the sociologist's initiative in creating social situations which would result in making life continue in the direction of a better vitality of the social whole, i. e. of each of its members.

FEDERATIVNÍ FUNKCIONALISMUS I. A. BLÁHY

Autorka konstatuje, že není dosud doceněn přínos Bláhova federativního funkcionalismu pro obecnou sociologickou teorii. Vidí jej ve třech skutečnostech. Za prvé Bláha, navazuje na Durkheimovu "contrainte sociale", správně vystihl povahu sociálních jevů, jež jsou jevy činnosti. Vidí ji v jejich řádovosti, uspořádanosti, jež ovšem má doprovod v individuálních duševnostech. Bláha se tak vyhnul psychologickému redukcionismu, který je stále běžný v dnešní sociologii. Nijak tím nezmenšil význam individuální iniciativy a aktivity, jež se ovšem jako podnět ke změně projevuje jen skrze sociální situaci jako příčinu vši skutečné sociální změny, tj. změny sociálního řádu v částech nebo v celku. V tom je druhá zásluha Bláhovy teorie, že dovoluje pojmem sociální situace překonat staticnost strukturalismu. Třetí Bláhova zásluha je v použití funkcionálního přístupu při studiu konkrétních sociálních jevů (města, rodiny, vesnice, globální společnosti, inteligence). Sociální funkce sociálních jevů, vztažná k sociálním potřebám a ideálům, je vyabstrahována z empirického materiálu funkčních optim. Sociolog nepřekračuje konstatující charakter vědy, zjišťuje-li podmínky, za jakých tyto funkce mohou být plněny, respektive podmínky, za nichž plněny být nemohou. Ideál, jenž je ve funkci implikován, představuje pronikání filosofického hlediska sociologova do vědy a jeho sociální angažovanost.