

## **SOCIAL ACTION FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF MARXIAN SOCIOLOGY**

The chief subject of the presented work is "social action" as one of the basic categories of sociological theory. The problem of the ability of marxian sociology to grasp social reality in the terms of social action is solved. The author starts from the indisputable fact that for many non-marxian sociological schools of the twentieth century it is just the "social action" that forms the accepted starting point of their theorizing.

This situation leads the non-marxian sociology to the feeling of certain monopoly in the interpretation of meaningful action. In the same time there is the whole series of works written by contemporary soviet philosophers and sociologists, which calls for deeper interest in social action and for the use of this category in various fields of theoretical analysis.

The aim of the author is to formulate the conception which would be able to point out the deficiencies of non-marxian approach to social action. He states that it can be done in the terms of their own thinking.

In the chapter of Max Weber as a founder of sociology, which starts explicitly from the social action of concret individuals acting in course of their encounters, the author deals with the ideological context of Weber's understanding sociology. The analysis made with help of "social action" is presented by Weber as a new dimension of the study of practically all social phenomena. Translating the problems of genesis and nature of capitalism into the level of social action Weber wants to demonstrate the priorities of the "nominalistic" approach to social phenomena compared with the marxian one.

One of the central thesis of the presented paper is that some works of the classics of marxism implicitly content the main principles of such conception of social action with the help of which it is possible to solve theoretical problems that cannot be solved with the means of the schools starting from Weber's approach.

First the author presents some preliminary survey of the principles of historical materialism which are to be respected by every marxian conception dealing with social aspects of human activity. Pursuant to the works of "young Marx" he formulates the demands of sociability, historicity and materiality as the necessary basis of every marxian conception of social action. He also polemizes with many non-marxian approaches which deal only with various partial aspects of these determinations and which formulate by this way the onesided conceptions of social action. In this connection the author emphasizes the necessity of complex under-

standing of the whole set of presuppositions which only in their sum form the basis for adequate grasping of the problems of human activity.

The real model expressing the basic principles of social action can be found in Marx's economical studies, in his analysis of the nature of exchange contained in *Manuscripte Grundrisse*. The author understands Marx' analysis of behaviour of the producers as the case which can be generalized and from which the whole series of postulates expressing some basic features of social action in general can be deduced.

This central idea is made accurate in the course of the criticism of chosen positivistic and anti-positivistic theories of social action (Homans's theory of social exchange, symbolical interactionism, phenomenological sociology, the conception of Berger and Luckmann and the theory of social reproduction which was formulated by Anthony Giddens).

The theory of social exchange is blamed for the effort to construct the theory of macrostructures only after the exhausting analysis of microstructures is made and only with the help of categories obtained by this analysis. Homans's typical isolating of a small group from the wider social relations must lead to desinterpretation of the nature of macrostructures themselves. The author comes to a conclusion that Homans's theory of social exchange expresses much better the mentality of the bourgeoisie than the objective forms of social structures of real capitalist society. The chapter is enriched by the methodological excursus dealing with differences of Homans's and Merton's approach to so called theories of middle range.

In analysis of symbolic interactionism is stressed the undisputable dialectical character of the thought of G. H. Mead. The dialectical features of this conception are pointed out in the relation with Mead's analysis of the nature of meaning, further of the nature of relations prevailing between Self and Others and in the relation with duality of inner structure of Self.

Onesided evaluations of Mead's scientific activity based only on the knowledge of his famous "Mind, Self and Society" is surmounted thanks to the reflecting on some less known Mead's lectures published as late as in the early eighties. The tendency of symbolical interactionism to ignore the mechanisms important for the reproduction of the whole groups became the subject of the criticism. This criticism is directed against some tendencies of post-meadean interactionism rather than against Mead himself.

The changes of the category of social action itself from Weber to Schutz are mentioned first of all in connection with the phenomenological sociology. At the same time the author tries to differentiate the pure phenomenological type of analysis from positivism on the one side and from the ethnomethodology on the other. Here he puts stress on strong dialectical potentiation contained in phenomenological analysis of everyday interaction. At the same time he states that it is the dialectic which is only few influenced by materialism. For example the social structure is identified with series of interpretative accomplishments which are constituted by actors in the flow of continuous interactions. The ordering of social world is deduced from the principles of constructing of interpretative schemes by ordinary actors.

The discussion with the interpretative sociologies is further developed in studying Berger and Luckmann's conception connecting some elements of interactionism with the motives of phenomenology. Here he points out certain modifications of sociology of knowledge that can be seen as the result of the fact that this discipline started to look for its inspiration not in relativism of German historicism but in relativism of cultural anthropology. At that connection certain ethnomethodological elements of Berger and Luckmann's theory are mentioned. The principal marxian objection against this theory is concluded into the statement according to which

Marx's man is oriented towards creation and re-creation while the man of Berger and Luckmann only creates and re-creates his orientations.

Following the criticism of Giddens's conception of production and reproduction of social structures the author summarizes the principal objections that can be used in the case of all discussed interpretative sociologies. The nature of superindividual social structures cannot be grasped in the language which is adequate in description of the cause of meaningful action. Social structures are reduced to the sedimented products of symbolic action in these conceptions.

The chapter on the unanticipated consequences of intentional action confronts some non-marxian approaches (Merton, Boudon, partially Popper) with the point of view of marxism. In the case of Merton, the author deals with the relation of his early studies to the works of Max Weber and further with the genesis of his famous conception of manifest and latent functions as well as with the conception of the self-fulfilling prophecies. Merton is presented as functionalist who was not able to appreciate the conflict aspects of unintended consequences of purposive action.

It is precisely this aspect that is pointed out in the theory of so called "effets pervers" by Raymond Boudon. The study shows some concret social roots of Boudon's conception (as the consequences of mass democratization of French school system). It also shows the tragical personal position of Boudon himself, who predicts the catastrophical consequences of "effets pervers", but who at the same time consciously refuses the possibilities of their control, because there he sees a serious danger for the classical values of liberalism.

A great attention is paid to Marx's and Engels's ideas dealing with mechanism of non-intentional consequences of purposive human action. Marx's point of view is analyzed on the level of the philosophy of history, of economical analysis and of politics. On all mentioned levels the mechanism of non-intended consequences serves to Marx as the proof of historical state of condition of the capitalist government. Engels's statements are illustrated mainly by his ideas expressed in the second half of the eighties and in the beginning of the nineties.

In Marx and Engels's conception of non-intentional consequences of human action the author finds sociological operationalization of principle of inner dialectical contradiction as the moving power of social development.

In the last part of his work the author deepens the marxian conception of social action the main principles of which he had outlined in the beginning of his study. He does not simply try only to transfer Marx's analysis of the production of goods to further sectors of human action. He formulates some general principles that can be best seen just on the level of "economical action". It means the principles that are necessary for meaningful course of any conscious action even if they themselves transcend the sector of human consciousness.

From the point of view of this conception the author criticizes some presuppositions of the theory of social roles. In this connection he modifies the category of "interaction" which is usually used in sociology. He shows in which sense various ways of conceptualization of this category depend on different strategies in construction of sociological theory. Further he criticizes differentiation of social reality into micro- and macrosphere which is quite common in western sociology. He demonstrates that this differentiation is the direct consequence of disability of non-marxian sociology to penetrate from the surface to substance of social reality.

In conclusion it is showed the way in which this differentiation is overcome by the marxian conception of social action.