CZECHOSLOVAK SOCIOLOGY IN THE 1960s

An Examination of its Historical Background and Contribution to the Reform Movement of 1968

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Mita Castle
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CONTENTS

SUMMARY

This thesis draws on aspects of the history of Czechoslovak sociology prior to 1945. The discipline was then a part of the mainstream of western sociology. It could not however continue after 1948, once Marxism-Leninism had established itself as the leading social scientific theory.

The remarkable come-back of sociology as an autonomous discipline in the 1960s was closely associated with the period of liberalization culminating in the Czechoslovak reform movement of 1968. Sociology both presented a serious challenge to the prevailing dogmatism of the time and symbolized the rising ambitions of the new modernizers.

The problematic nature of this dual role was resolved by the emergence of sociology as an empirical, data-providing discipline. Drawing on the same traditions as those of pre-war Czechoslovak sociology, but without the necessary time to develop its own theoretical basis and maturity, sociology in the 1960s ran into many contradictions. The most serious one was that despite its claim to be scientifically impartial it provided direct ideological input for the reform programme in 1968. It enabled the construction of a new orientation of values towards 'market socialism', thus departing from sociology's detached status and beginning to serve the new - if short-lived - social order under Dubcek's leadership.

The inability of both sociology and the liberal leadership to survive after 1968 raises a much wider question about future reforms in Eastern Europe.

ABBREVIATIONS

CC	Central Committee
CC CP Cz	Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia
CP Cz	Communist Party of Czechoslovakia
CP USSR	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CSAV	Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences
ROH	Czechoslovak Trade Union Federation

Introduction

This thesis focuses on the role of Czechoslovak sociology during the 1960s, and argues that sociology played a vital role in linking the democratic tradition of pre-war Czechoslovakia with the technocratic needs of an industrial society of the '60s. The aim of this thesis is to clarify the connection between the newly emerging sociological ideas, their roots in earlier sociological tradition, and the nature of the practical application of sociology in the reform movement culminating in the events of 1968.

The intellectual and political battles in which Czechoslovak sociologists were involved in the 1960s were indicative of the difficulties associated with the attempted de-Stalinization during that period.

After an almost total silence imposed in 1948, sociology in Czechoslovakia re-emerged in the wake of Khruschev's speech made in 1956 at the twentieth congress of the CP USSR. Khruschev's speech opened the way to a broader debate within the social sciences on the direction of future 'socialist' development. Sociologists in Czechoslovakia encouraged political democratization and contributed to the content of the reforms which have gone down in Czech history as a period of 'socialism with a human face'. It is the ideological content of that 'socialism' which needs to be called in question. Czechoslovak sociology ought not therefore to be seen as a purely

academic discipline.

By considering the 'Action Programme' of the CP Cz, published in April 1968, as the official statement of intent by the Party liberalizers, it is possible to show how their ideas are embodied in the sociological works which preceded it. Certain views which the sociologists propagated, including the so-called 'post-industrial' nature of 'socialist' society, 'non-antagonistic' stratification, and 'achievement orientation' as a new economic drive, had been instrumental in shaping the proposed policies. The Action Programme was a reworking of these ideas. The ability to change policies as well as public opinion from 'bureaucratic centralism' to 'democratic socialism' was decisive for the future leadership. Thus consideration must be given to the fact that sociologists aided the liberalizers by providing them with a utilizable ideology.

The almost spectacular come-back for sociology in Czechoslovakia in the 1960s, after being branded as an undesirable 'bourgeois' discipline, needs to be understood within the broader political tradition of the Czechoslovak intelligentsia.

The pre-war development of sociology was closely linked with the emergence of Czechoslovakia as an independent state from the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918. Its post-war development, particularly in the 1960s, was linked with the reform movement which was intent on creating a self-defined democratic 'socialist' society inside the East European bloc. The character of socio-

logical works in the two periods (pre-World War Two and the 1960s) when sociology flourished could be said to be influenced by the political climate of the time. The interruption of sociology in Czechoslovakia between approximately 1948 and 1962, which did not occur in its East European neighbours, such as the USSR and Poland, adds significance to the sociologists' later involvement in current affairs. The enforced interruption in many ways strengthened the intellectual affinity between the development of sociology in the 1960s and its pre-war counterpart. It is important to note that the work of many sociologists in both the pre-war period and in the 1960s was concerned with abstract humanism as well as preserving links with European thinking and tradition. On the whole, sociology was not forward-looking; intellectually it was rather conservative.

The Czechoslovak 'road to communism' in 1945 had a number of specific features, such as the country's well-developed industrial base, its short-lived yet nationally created parliamentary structure of 1918, and its relatively affluent working class. The bourgeois-democratic coalition government of 1945 included the Communist Party, but by 1948 it had turned into a one-party regime. In the years to follow, Czechoslovakia became one of the most ardent advocates of Stalinist practices, evidenced by the purges in 1952. The scale of changes after 1948 towards total nationalization and the centralization of all decision-making, towards the elimination of all 'bourgeois'

elements, and towards switching economic planning away from domestic needs to the needs of the Soviet system as a whole, contributed to highly uneven development subsequently. Czechoslovakia became for a short time 'the machine shop of Eastern Europe', but by 1962 the whole third five-year plan had to be scrapped and economic production declined severely. A wide-ranging discussion about the imperativeness for economic reform began. Sociologists together with economists came to provide a series of attractive propositions for such reform. The strength of their intervention was in addressing the practical problems of the day, as opposed to the past strategies of administrative directives and ideological apologia.

After the first sociological conference in November 1966, sociology came to be seen not as mainly a theoretical discipline but as one having direct practical application in 'building socialism'.[1]

A member of the Secretariat of the CC CP Cz suggested at the same conference that an 'invasion of sociology into the domain of practical politics' was desirable.[2] This practical aspect of sociology, the acknowledgement of which was accompanied by a degree of openness in talking about the 'real malaise' of society, unprecedented in Czechoslovakia, was also a source of conflict. It was a conflict over who holds the key to the 'truth'. Until this period 'truth' was supplied by official doctrine but was now to be discovered through empirical findings, open to factual scrutiny. Before long this conflict became a real bone of contention between the Party hardliners and the liberaliz-

ers. In one way then, sociologists made an important contribution in defence of the 'new efficient socialism', and in doing so threatened the legitimacy of the existing order. This thesis attempts to clarify the sources and the direction of this emergent empirical sociology.

Chapter One of the thesis deals with the 'founding fathers' of Czechoslovak sociology, and with T.G. Masaryk in some detail. He is undoubtedly better known as a politician than as a sociologist. Being the first president of an independent Czechoslovakia in 1918 as well as the first professor of sociology in Prague in the 1880s, Masaryk epitomizes a philosophically grounded approach to politics as much as a pragmatic approach to sociology. He was passionately concerned with national issues. His influence on the social sciences was in shaping the framework for what he called a 'realistic' sociology. This realistic sociology should be free, he claimed, from all dominant ideological trends, including the current trends of positivism and materialism.[3] Masaryk argued for 'value freedom' which led him to say that 'I can't accept either materialism in general, nor Marx's materialism in particular'.[4] Without singling out his more outspoken critique of Marxism, which tends to polarize 'individual self-determination' and 'collectivist terror', it is important to note that Masaryk's commitment to 'realistic' sociology is little more than a moral stand in support of bourgeois liberalism. The aspirations to 'value freedom' symbolize the clearest link between the 'old' and the 'new' sociology.

Chapter Two looks at the re-establishment of sociology as a discipline in the period 1964-66. In these years there was debate and discussion about sociology's independence from the dominant ideology of Marxism- Leninism. Marxism-Leninism represented the total ideological monopoly of the Party and during this period some aspects of it were identifiied as being too dogmatic and unable to provide a closer look at existing reality. Sociology won its independence from Marxism-Leninism with a promise to remain 'value free'. The chapter covers the initial stages of the institutional development of sociology as well as the conceptual and political controversies surrounding the issues of the dominant ideology, which were current in the early '60s.

Chapter Three of the thesis is an appraisal of a major socio-political study, R. Richta's Civilization at the Crossroads, commissioned by the CC and the CSAV.[5] The role of science and scientific neutrality is at the centre of Richta's work. Science was presented as a means of overcoming all non-scientific approaches of the past, as a universal, non-ideological language, vital for the progress of the coming new 'socialism'. Undoubtedly, this concept of science appealed to a wide audience: from the Party bureaucrats who could issue statements that real solutions were on the way, to the liberalizers and the technical intelligentsia who were coming to represent the future society. Richta's proposals formed a major part of the Action Programme in 1968.

Chapter Four is a discussion of P. Machonin's Czechoslovak Society, the only sociological macro-study produced in the 1960s.[6] Machonin writes in the introduction that he and the team of social scientists with which he worked for several years were acutely aware of the uncritical and often sterile interpretations of social reality up to that time. Furthermore, they argued that Marxism had been stagnating for some time.[7] They responded by developing a new Marxist sociology with an emphasis on empirical data.[8] 'Value freedom' became an important statement of principle promulgated by these sociologists, a cautious move to begin with, as the concept was not totally alien to the guardians of crude empiricism among the Party ideologues. Both the sociologists and the Party officials in their own ways aspired to characterize the world 'as it really is'. The sociologists claimed to opt for 'value freedom' in order to escape the narrowness of Marxism-Leninism, as well as to preserve sociology's acceptance as a legitimate social science. Later in the book Machonin states that the authors had gained a certain theoretical input from other, non-Marxist perspectives, such as structural functionalism. They acknowledged that 'structural functionalism belongs to the tradition of European structural thinking, of which Marxism represents one of the key achievements'.[9] Marxism was thus to be seen as one among many theoretical sources of their work. The new brand of 'scientific sociology' which both Machonin and Richta were proposing, though with a slightly different emphasis, was ultimately a challenge to the Party's veto over what is the 'correct' theory and

the 'correct' practice. Machonin's conclusions however, about the emerging 'socialist social stratification' opening new opportunities to the qualified strata, in no way indicate that he was challenging the basic inequalities of the system as it was.

The Conclusion draws together the link between the sociological works produced in the 1960s and the formulation of the Action Programme in 1968. The shortcomings of sociological analyses of Czechoslovak society could be found in the shortcomings of the Action Programme itself. The Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 put an end to the so-called 'counter-revolution' of the reformers who unsuccessfully attempted to re-define social reality within one country of the East European bloc. The Action Programme attempted to legitimate a new dynamic form of 'socialism' in which the old Party hardliners would be replaced by a group of modernizing experts. Such 'reality' was never to be.

It is interesting to note that the majority of sociologists working in the 1960s were educated in the Institutes of Marxism-Leninism. This gave them access to literature and resources often otherwise unavailable, but it also influenced the content of their work. They treated Marxism not as a philosophical method but as an organizational principle, and this, particularly in the case of Machonin and Richta, paradoxically allowed them to incorporate the 'realistic' sociology of Masaryk's tradition.

The apparent contradiction of trying to reform a Stalinized system while drawing inspiration from the reformism of the '20s becomes more understandable when one

looks at the ambiguities in Marxism-Leninism itself. Marxism-Leninism is not so much a theory as a blend of a crude materialist view of history and a series of associated organizational statements. It is the official doctrine of the Party, which specifies the inevitability of transition from capitalism to communism via the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Party claims to embody the historical interests of the proletariat.

In a textbook on philosophy published in Czechoslovakia in 1964, entitled 'Why and How to Study Marxist Philosophy?'[10], the basic premise of Marxism-Leninism is outlined. A striking feature of the book is that Marx is not quoted once, apart from references to Marx, Engels and Lenin together. The starting point is to present 'Marxist' philosophy as the 'rightful' philosophy of the proletariat. 'Only the proletariat, as the representative of the future classless society can be the carrier of a thoroughly scientific philosophy'[11]; it can 'afford to be thoroughly scientific, even in evaluating its own position and interests because its economic situation does not allow any distortions in the interpretation of the reality'.[12] However, this 'scientific philosophy as the core of the proletarian ideology, has to be <u>transmitted</u> [my emphasis] from science into the labour movement'.[13] Inevitably, it is the Party which is the transmitter. The sheer pragmatism of Marxism-Leninism therefore allowed for 'realistic' piecemeal reforms to be gradually introduced by the sociologists themselves.

It should come as no surprise then, that the socio-

logists drew their inspiration from the past, and also that their theoretical 'Marxism' is far removed from western understanding of its content. The sociologists, together with the reformers, were the 'doers'. Their 'realistic' approach left the doubts of the ideologues behind. What, however, was also lagging behind was the sociologists' own theoretical development. Their Marxist-Leninist education had obvious bearing on their work. They did not feel bound by any existing philosophical principles; on the contrary, they felt encouraged to offer their own practical outline for 'scientific socialism'. Sociology in Czechoslovakia in the 1960s, thus far from providing an alternative, formed the basis for yet another in the series of modernizing ideologies that failed.

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Chapter 1

The 'Founding Fathers' of Pre-War Sociology: Some Comparisons with the 1960s

The comparison suggested in the Introduction between pre-war Czechoslovak sociology and the reinstitutionalized sociology of the mid-1960s requires more than just a list of sociological topics or titles. Many of the non-Marxist theories produced in Czechoslovakia at the start of the century later affected both the flavour of sociological thinking and the shaping of actual events. We must look at these theories in their historical context and examine their influence. What was the role of pre-war sociology, and what was its level of political involvement? Why was sociology officially abolished after World War II and then re-established twenty years later? How did this affect the content of sociology, and in what way were sociologists instrumental in bringing about the new 'liberal' reality of the '60s?

The structural differences in the society from which sociology drew its material gave rise to the divergencies between the sociological thinking of the two periods of Czechoslovak history. The social and political structure, the source of social conflict and change, as well as the requirements for theoretical sociological discipline, were very different in the 1920s and 1930s from how they were in the 1960s. Moreover, the striking similarities in the acceptance of sociology as part of the intellectual super-

structure of society, its applicability to a wide range of social legislation, and its liberalizing effect on political decision-making cannot be overlooked. It is difficult to make a comparison between particular sociological schools, but an attempt can be made to show a certain convergence in the sociological methodology, similarities in social thinking and in the general approach to problems that typified the 1920s-1930s and the 1960s, both periods which were especially fruitful in the development of Czechoslovak sociology.

The beginnings of Czechoslovak sociology cannot be dissociated from the figure of T.G. Masaryk, who is better known internationally as a politician. According to the 1970 edition of the Czechoslovak Sociological Dictionary, T.G. Masaryk (1850-1937) is the founder of Czechoslovak sociology.[1] His role is seen as analogous to that occupied by A. Comte in world sociology. Masaryk pioneered the methodological groundwork for sociology in Czechoslovakia. However, the dictionary also points out that there were other Czechoslovak intellectuals, for example, G.A. Linder (1828-1887) and F. Krejci (1858-1934), who expressed interest in the field of the social sciences. Their work followed the world trend of 'classical positivism', favouring the establishment of specialized sciences, including sociology. These early works were heavily influenced by philosophical positivism and social psychology. Clearly, at that time, contact with western sociology was a major source of information and inspiration.

Undoubtedly though, the institutionalized, systematic development of Czechoslovak sociology can be dated from Masaryk's academic teaching and propagation of sociology. He gave lectures on sociological topics at Vienna University as early as 1878-81 and became Professor of Sociology and Philosophy at Prague University in 1882.[2] Masaryk's emphasis on the need to interpret Czechoslovak society in the light of Czechoslovak history formed an important focus for a politically engaged social science.

Traditionally, social thinking has been a part of philosophy, embracing a critique of society. The strong influence which the Enlightenment continued to have on European thinking in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries resulted in a preoccupation with the ideals of individual liberty as appropriate to democratic political systems. However, the historical development of Europe did not result in the abolition of class differences. On the contrary, more rapid industrial development produced deeper social inequalities, growing division of labour, as well as a sharpening of international conflict. One could argue that there was a parallel differentiation of sciences, whereby divisions became more obvious, resulting in philosophers being preoccupied with philosophy, and sociologists with sociology, all defending their sectional interests. Demarcation lines were erected, and the various disciplines became more and more integrated into the rational institutional order of society. Social sciences did not develop differently in Czechoslovakia. They were a part of a divided academic world and attempts

at a critique of society were emasculated because of the overriding influence of that institutional order.

In the context of the development of the modern Czechoslovak state Masaryk was one of the last personalities to combine both philosophy and politics. He was in 1918 the first president of the first national state of the Czechs and Slovaks. It could be argued that in both of his roles, as a politician and as a philosopher, there were inevitably some anachronistic features, some last glimpses of Enlightenment optimism. Masaryk became famous for his vigorous support of Czechoslovak national independence in a divided Europe, with little possibility of finding allies. At that time, the Austro-Hungarian Empire could never tolerate a pan-slavic movement, and in fact, such a movement never really managed to get off the ground. As with many Czech writers influenced by the Enlightenment, the theme of Masaryk's work remained the meaning of Czechoslovak history and culture in the European context. Masaryk engaged in what he considered to be unavoidable political manoeuvring in order to gain support for his cause amongst the ruling elite as well as amongst the people.[3] His position as a delegate of the Young Czechoslovak Party to the Austro-Hungarian parliament in 1891 enabled him to proceed with his strategies. At this point it is interesting to note the sudden change in attitude and political practice amongst some Czechoslovaks aware of the national question under the Empire's rule. From about 1860, the Czechoslovaks had intensified their struggle for political rights under Austro-Hungarian

domination. Gadourek argues that:

> They pursued the policy of passive resistance while protesting against an unjust constitution by abstaining from the right to send their representatives to the Austro-Hungarian parliament until 1878.[4]

Afterwards, according to Gadourek, they changed their strategy to 'taking an active part in reforming the constitution via constitutional means'.[5] Masaryk could be seen as symbolizing a particular approach to political reform of his time and the times to come. However, after a short time, Masaryk resigned from the position of a delegate and returned to his university post and to freelance journalism. He produced the majority of his theoretical works in the period between 1880 and 1918.

Two of the most important contributions which Masaryk made to Czechoslovak sociology were first, his analysis of the 'moral crisis' of modern society and second, his critique of Marxism. When looking at Masaryk's theoretical sources one needs briefly to mention Comte, Durkheim and Weber. There are two views of Comte's influence on Masaryk. One is that Masaryk shared Comte's fear of sociological subjectivism, while accepting his principles of statics and dynamics.[6] The other view claims that Masaryk overcame Comte's positivism via critical realism.[7] It is true, however, that Masaryk's work gave rise to the Prague school of sociology in the 1930s which combined both of these points of his work. The school tried to achieve an 'objective empirical science', following Masaryk's 'realistic sociology', which would be independent of

positivism as well as any ideology.[8]

The exact influence of Durkheim on Masaryk is more difficult to pinpoint. What they may have in common is their more abstract emphasis on epistemology, attempting to define a specific sociological methodology, rejecting historical materialism, while encouraging a world view of universal harmony.[9]

Inevitably, Weberian sociology, which for many at that time was a strong counter-current to Marxism, also affected Masaryk's thinking. It is claimed that Masaryk adopted Weber's leaning towards typology.[10] More importantly though, Masaryk seemed intent on combining his knowledge of philosophy, the philosophy of history and psychology in an overall analysis of the development of contemporary Czechoslovak society. He was particularly careful not to dismiss the role of religion and ethical influences in shaping the country's structure.

Masaryk's most sociologically oriented study, Suicide, was published in 1881, independently of, and earlier than, Durkheim's study. It was the result of Masaryk's observations of the immediate political situation at that time. In this work, Masaryk analyses the ideological crisis of bourgeois society, or the 'spiritual crisis', as he terms it. In much the same manner as Durkheim, Masaryk studies the 'collective' facts as they manifest themselves. Simultaneously, Masaryk brings in subjective psychological aspects of human society, an approach which was criticized as his 'anthropocentrism'.[11] His emphasis on 'moral' crisis seems to override a concern

for a more thorough structural analysis, and is a weakness which later becomes apparent in his dismissive attitude towards Marxism.

Masaryk views sociology as a useful antidote to 'the sheer speculativeness of philosophy'.[12] He advocates a scientific criticism of existing social evils, and politically he is committed to the notion of an 'ever reforming democracy' and class peace. He opposes both what he terms 'reactionary conservatism' and 'revolutionary radicalism'.[13] Masaryk holds that political realism is positive because it fits into the 'organic continuation' of Czechoslovak humanism.[14]

From both a sociological and political point of view Masaryk's definition of 'social evil' is rather weak. He believes it to be essentially a 'lack of morals, or a crisis of socialization'.[15] Although these aspects stem from the totality of society, they are never studied by Masaryk as a part of the social and political structure, which illustrates how interdependent his theoretical and practical positions are. His 'critical realism' is part and parcel of his pragmatic politics, where the object of criticism is obscured by philosophical and moral abstractions. Masaryk continuously avoided studying structural social mechanisms and their institutional framework. He summarizes his position in the statement: 'The institutions are, after all, only the people'.[16] At the core of Masaryk's analysis is individual consciousness and individual behaviour, isolated from modern social reality.

Masaryk's methodologically valuable monograph on the

'spiritual crisis' of society, Otazka Socialni (The Social Question),[17] introduces his broader, more clearly defined political views. His main preoccupation is with a justification of social democracy and a rejection of Marxism. The theoretical conceptions which Masaryk summarized in this work have continued to play a significant role in Czechoslovak politics. Masaryk's basic contention, that democracy and Marxism are incompatible, has reappeared in the recent history of Czechoslovakia in many guises, whether in the form of elevating 'Marxism' above all else in the 1950s or as a 'positive' appreciation of democracy in the 1960s.

One example of his influence on modern Czech history is the suggestion that the 1968 slogan of 'Socialism with a human face' was a symbolic resurrection of the Masaryk ethos.[18] A less obvious manifestation of Masaryk's political influence, and more difficult to prove, is the suggestion that in Czechoslovak politics there has always been a definite leaning towards moderation. As has been pointed out elsewhere, 'However revolutionary the implications of the ideas (of 1968), reason and moderation prevailed'.[19] This has by no means been restricted to the protesting intellectual strata, or the liberal wing of the Party. The TUC of Czechoslovakia (ROH) voted in September 1969 to support the government's 'normalization' policy on the economic and political front, if this would 'speed up the final withdrawal of the occupying forces'.[20] This attitude of the leadership, in this case the TUC, is comparable to Masaryk repeatedly stressing that 'conscious-

ness of national self-preservation has to come before socialism'.[21]

The roots of this attitude could be traced back more specifically to Masaryk's political evolutionism. At the time of the formation of the Czechoslovak state in 1918, understandably enough there was no desire to undergo further changes or upheavals. Instead, there was agreement on the necessity of building up some form of continuity and integrity in Czechoslovak history. A recognition of the cultural and spiritual values of the Czechoslovak nation was encouraged, together with a renaissance of the ideal of humanity.

Masaryk writes that 'Nations are the natural organs of humanity'[22] and he stresses that 'between nationality and internationality there is no antagonism'.[23] For Masaryk, the universal task of twentieth-century humanity is to create a modern democratic society. This especially refers to Czechoslovakia. Masaryk's assumptions are summed up by his statement that 'Europe and humanity are becoming more unified'.[24] It is astonishing to see how, in formulating a political programme for the new Czechoslovak state, Masaryk expresses support for the persistence of political rivals elsewhere in Europe. His anachronistic blending of politics and philosophy leads him to use 'Humanity' and 'Social democracy' as identical concepts. 'Democracy is the political organization of society resting on the ethical foundation of humanism'[25] is a strong statement of principle, and a point at which Masaryk disagrees with, and rejects, Marxism.

Masaryk contends that Marx's materialism is a refutation of all ethical considerations, and that for him, Marxism is nothing more than moral 'nihilism'.[26] The contradictions in Masaryk's critique of the 'moral vacuum' of communism can to some extent be attributed to a false dichotomy which he posed between 'materialism' and 'ethics'. In many ways Masaryk's more direct rejection of Marxism reveals the falsity of his 'realistic sociology'. One cannot simultaneously be opposed to materialism, defend democracy and make claims for 'value-freedom'. Masaryk, like many others around him were locked in the 'paradigm' of a rationalism that aided the modernizing of twentieth-century capitalist systems. This 'rationalism' was, they claimed, based on science, not ideology. Masaryk himself, however, never sought a solution to social conflicts by investigating the social structure of society. A statement by the writer Karel Capek, a friend of Masaryk, illustrates how abstract was their preoccupation with social change and social morality: 'Poverty is not an institution, nor a class, but a misfortune'.[27] Masaryk adds: 'the social question is not merely the problem involving workers ... [it] involves a decision between morality and immorality, between violence and effective humanism'.[28] For Masaryk the 'social question' is a question of individual morality, not one of social conditions. He stresses conscience, not social consciousness. It is clear, I think, that Masaryk's misunderstanding of Marxism was a result of the dominant social trends of his time.

'Evolutionism does not correspond to the idea of

dialectics and historical materialism'[29] writes Masaryk. 'There is no such thing as an objective dialectics. There are no dialectical contradictions in things themselves'.[30] The so-called theoretical criticism of Marxism that Masaryk offers is based on his assumption that Marxism is characterized by reductionism and fatalism.[31] Masaryk attacks the 'objectivism' of Marx's thinking, as it leaves 'no room for feeling', and the 'individual means nothing and the mass everything'.[32] This psychologically loaded argument affected future visions of socialism in Czechoslovakia to a considerable extent, and it also helped to create a certain methodological distrust of Marxism as a whole. Masaryk expresses his views in a concise form when he says that the theory of socialism carries a basic conflict within itself, a conflict between the 'individuality of its aspirations and the collectivity of its practice'.[33] Masaryk's alternative is to offer a concept of moral reform, not just economic reform. It is the socialization of human activity which has meaning for him, not socialism. This is because socialization is deeply rooted in the concept of evolutionary change, a concept which he always supported.

Although it is rather a crude comparison, nevertheless it is interesting to look at Masaryk's emphasis on the socializing role of education in shaping the future man in a 'morally better' society, and the later ideas of Richta, for whom an evolutionary development would lead to a more perfect form of socialism through the general application of scientific knowledge. Emphasis on education and knowledge was certainly one of the themes of the reform move-

ment in Czechoslovakia in 1968, which echoes Masaryk's beliefs. There are a number of closer similarities between Masaryk's reformism and that of the 1960s. 'I cannot become enthusiastic about economic centralization', Masaryk writes. 'Both in politics and economics, I support autonomy and federalization ... I acknowledge the usefulness of competition'.[34] He adds that it is a 'moral duty to support specific political and social demands ... made by our workers'.[35] However, Masaryk might also be indirectly exposing the contradiction of the reformist approach when he writes:

> The state is a positive and lasting organization of society, a thought out, worked out co-ordination and subordination of individuals and their associations into one whole .... The state was and is legitimate.[36]

An evaluation of Masaryk's contribution to the social sciences is still an open question in Czechoslovakia. Taborsky argues that because of his strong political and philosophical influence

> ... his ideals of humanitarian democracy and social justice for all are bound to appeal strongly to Party members disappointed with the gospel of dialectical materialism and searching for a better alternative.[37]

Though, of course, nothing of this sort has ever been publicly admitted. Today, Masaryk is described as belonging to the Czechoslovak 'bourgeois past'. However, there have been many fluctuations in the official interpretation of Masaryk's role. These have coincided with the greater

or lesser rigidity of the official doctrine. In 1948, attempts were made to posthumously claim Masaryk as some sort of 'non-Party Bolshevik'.[38] Later though, he was to be an enemy of socialism and of the working class.

The lack of a real critique of Masaryk has had the effect of surrounding him with an almost mystical aura. It is not so much Masaryk himself as the political and philosophical spirit of his time which had not completely disappeared from the political practices of Czechoslovakia in the 1960s. The 1960s witnessed a highly selective appraisal of Masaryk's sociology and thinking, and the idea of 'Socialism with a human face' also left many fundamental questions unanswered.

Turning to the development of Czechoslovak sociology as an independent science in the inter-war period, one could begin by looking at sociology as it was being taught at the philosophical faculties in Prague, Brno, Bratislava and other, smaller centres. Sociology had penetrated into theological seminaries, commercial academies, agricultural colleges and even high schools. The bulk of the theoretical work was centred on two major journals, Sociological Review, founded in 1930 and Social Problems, founded in 1931.[39] Much research was undertaken on empirically based topics, and the sociology of small groups and 'middle range' sociological theory flourished. Sociology continued to grow around the work of a few key personalities, such as B. Foustka and J. Kral in Prague, I.A. Blaha, E. Chalupny and J.L. Fischer in Brno, and A. Stefanek in Bratislava. Together, their influence spanned the

period from the end of the last century to the 1960s and even the 1970s.

Kral's main interest lay in the documentation of the history of Czechoslovak sociology. He edited the journal Social Problems, and a group of younger sociologists gathered around him.[40] His main contribution was to the teaching and defence of sociology during the 1950s. The so-called Prague school of sociology, of which he was a member, concentrated on an 'objective empirical' sociology, equipped with an exact method, and free of 'subjective prejudices'.[41] The Prague school conceived the role of a sociologist as that of describing and defining a given set of facts. It studied those social phenomena and processes which would enable it to arrive at a generally applicable theory. In contrast, the Brno school propagated an involved and evaluative sociology.[42]

Chalupny, a member of the Brno school, synthesized the results of the sociological knowledge of his time in his extensive work, Sociology. He defined sociology as the science of culture, and so for him, sociology was a branch of anthropology.[43]

The main representative of the Brno school was Blaha, who concentrated on questions of general sociological theory. He was a pupil of Durkheim, and in some ways he can be said to have transplanted his teacher's influence into Czechoslovak sociology. Blaha was also influenced by Masaryk's ideas of 'critical realism', which led him to overcome to some extent the 'ontological and methodological subjectivism' of his French teachers. Blaha

helped to perfect the technique of 'social introspection'. In 1930 he founded and edited Sociological Review. This journal, besides keeping abreast of trends in world sociology, included a regular section on the theory of socialism.[44] This section was supervised by one of the earliest pro-Marxist Czech sociologists, L. Svoboda*.[45] Blaha's contribution to Czechoslovak sociology can be summarized in those parts of his writing where he combines the knowledge of classical sociology with his own elaborated general theory of society. He tried to formulate what the 'constants' were in a changing social world. He was interested in studying 'the autonomous reality' and the 'phenomena of social association and human aggregation'.[46] In his definition of the structural phenomena of human society and collectives, Blaha gradually moves towards a particular structural functionalist view. He advocates concepts like 'unity' and 'harmony', keeping well in the tradition of Masaryk, Spencer, Znaniecki, Merton and Lazarsfeld, from whose sources he readily draws. His best known works are The Town (1914), The Sociology of the Peasant and the Worker (1925), The Sociology of Childhood (1926) and The Sociology of the Intelligentsia (1937).

The nascent functionalism of Blaha is said to have its roots in three main areas: (1) Comte's conception of social consensus; (2) the organizational theories of Durkheim; and (3) Blaha's own interest in the practical problems facing the existence of a small nation which seeks harmony

* L. Svoboda was one of my teachers at Charles University, Prague, in the period 1966-67.

within itself and with others.[47] However, Blaha rejected a static functionalism, and his position is more comparable with that of some modern sociologists who manage to incorporate the theory of social change into their 'grand theories' of society. Blaha introduced 'function' and 'disfunction' to Czechoslovak sociology in his work Sociology (1968).[48] In this work he defended orderly activity as an expression of the self-preservation of a group, in addition to being an integrating agent.

Several sources attribute to Blaha a 'Marxist dialectical historical' method.[49] He claimed himself that he was an 'ideological socialist'.[50] It is difficult to accept this, though, because the political content of Blaha's writing is very ambiguous. He is similar to Masaryk in rejecting 'revolutionary violence', but in contrast, he supports the establishment of a new economic order that would 'give equal opportunities to all'.[51] It is claimed that Blaha adopted the motto 'Now, not then; realism, not historicism'.[52]

In such a brief account there is no room for a thorough criticism of Blaha's contradictions. However, Blaha's influence on a whole generation of modern Czechoslovak sociologists must be mentioned. Blaha was an academic sociologist, and so, unlike Masaryk, he could not later be criticised on the evidence of his political activities. Despite its 'bourgeois' origins, Blaha's theory was incorporated into the revival of sociology in the 1960s, even if its presence was largely unacknowledged. Many of the sociologists in the '60s were either Blaha's students,

students of his colleagues, or else had become acquainted with sociology through his books. As has been mentioned since, Blaha's advocacy of a socialism suffused by liberalism is very reminiscent of the ideas of 1968.[53] Blaha was convinced that a revival of political life presupposes 'good leaders, good party membership, and good practice'.[54] There is nothing here alien to the 1968 reform notion of the possible renaissance of the Party, with its optimistic 'new practice'. An area of convergence between the attitudes of 1968 and Blaha's general observations is his view of the role of the intelligentsia. The function of the intelligentsia, Blaha said, was to unite society.[55] The specific task of the intelligentsia should be 'to fulfil a rationalizing and harmonizing function'.[56] This theme recurred, albeit differently phrased, in many a manifesto and proclamation of 1968.

Inevitably, Blaha's contradictory liberalism runs through his sociological work. There is a current of scientism in Blaha's work, the emphasis on a positive role of science, while disregarding it as an ideology. This is analogous to some of the ideas current in the 1960s among sociologists and political scientists. 'Besides the class-determined truths, there exists scientific knowledge which is beside and above social classes'.[57] Clearly, knowledge of Blaha's ideas and those of his contemporaries can provide some insight into the sociological thinking of the 1960s. The main linking theme is the emphasis on the importance of 'horizontal', e.g. 'cultural', aspects of social structure rather than on 'vertical' social differ-

entiation. A structural analysis is largely missing, because 'a scientific approach compares like with like'. In this respect, Blaha in his Sociology, like Machonin in his Czechoslovak Society leaves similar problems open.

J.L. Fischer was one of the most active sociologists in the 1930s, and he also contributed to sociological works of the 1960s. He put an extensive entry into the 1967 first sociological dictionary, where he summarized his own position, using predominantly Parsonian terminology.[58] Although a 'functionalist' of a kind, Fischer could be seen as typical of the left-orientated intelligentsia of the 1930s. His view developed in an atmosphere of ideological conflict between social democratic and fascist ideologies. His theory is rooted in the tolerant 'scientism' of many of his colleagues, but his insight into the rise of fascism forced him to present his ideas in a more radical manner. In his book Crisis of Democracy[59] Fischer attacked the anti-democratic regimes of his time, including the Soviet system as well as fascism. During the 1950s, after he had been expelled from his academic posts, Fischer openly criticised Stalin's writings.[60]

To summarize the contributions of this period of Czechoslovak sociology, I would like to suggest that although there was a hiatus in the development of sociology beginning in 1948, the connections between the sociology of the 1920s and 1930s and that of the 1960s remained intact. The social circumstances from which sociology grew were very different; nevertheless, the picture of society which was being offered during both of the periods

rested on similar abstract criteria. Both in the 1920s and 1930s and in the 1960s sociologists issued calls for the recognition of the universal value of equality and freedom. Their moral standpoint seems to have overridden their concern with structural analysis, at least as far as putting the notion of moral 'improvement' above that of class is concerned. They worked as 'honest' scientists who felt that they had some professional responsibility to aid moral and national unity. Examples of this attitude in the 1960s are Machonin and Richta. Machonin stated that the role of sociology was to describe the malaise of society, which was principally to rid it of any inherent conflicts; while Richta advocated the restructuring of society on a scientific basis, leading to an 'improved' version of democratic post-industrialism.

The national preoccupation remained a focal point for Czechoslovak sociology. The vision of a national revival, however, was often linked with a less imaginative idea of the inevitability of linear progress through technical innovation. The Czech sociologists in both periods were showing signs of being close to the mainstream of western sociology. This meant that they were, at different times, reproducing the patterns of structural-functionalist and positivist thinking. Empirical reality was seen as something more or less 'neutral'. Science was the key to technological revolution; it was to enhance social equilibrium. It is my contention that the selection of basically conservative aspects of western sociology had an impact on the sociologists' interpretation of Marxism

itself in the 1960s. Their tendency to see Marxism as inseparable from 'Marxism-Leninism' is both surprising and understandable. The fact that an analysis of 'Marxism-Leninism' as an ideology of the ruling strata is lacking prejudiced Czechoslovak sociologists towards uncritically accepting the existing political reality. I shall deal with this issue in more detail in the conclusion when looking at the sociologists' reinterpretation of the content of 'socialism' in 1968.

Perhaps one could also add that Czechoslovak sociology was more directly influenced by neo-positivism through the Vienna circle of linguists.[61] Twice in the period 1929-38 they held their conferences and seminars in Prague. Their critique of traditional philosophy and their espousal of utilitarian pragmatism can be seen in Masaryk's writings as well as among many of his followers. After 1938 many European social scientists sought asylum from Marxism in America. These included some Czechoslovak sociologists, e.g. Machotka, Ullrich and Mertl.[62] There was a genuine disintegration of the sociological community in the war-time period. Many of their experiences and writings, however, lived on.

After the end of World War II the newly opened universities in Czechoslovakia reintroduced sociology.[63] However, after 1948, sociology was proclaimed to be a non-'socialist' discipline, and so most of the work was stopped. All remaining research in the social sciences was taken over by the departments of 'Marxism-Leninism', and this was the situation until the late 1950s.

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Chapter 2

The Institutional Development of Sociology During the 1960s

During the 1950s sociology in Czechoslovakia managed to survive under the guise of 'Marxism-Leninism' in much the same way that pre-war sociology existed under the protective wing of philosophy. However, the limitations on theoretical work imposed by political and ideological changes in the 1950s were obvious. The emphasis on historical materialism and scientific communism along the official lines of 'Marxism-Leninism' prevented any original work from emerging. Sociological work in this period was largely repetitive in nature.

From 1948 to 1950 sociology was still taught in academic institutions, but even then legislation was proposed for a 'reformed study of sociology' in the Prague philosophical faculty.[1] From 1950 until about 1958 the study of social problems was suppressed, and in fact the very existence of such problems was denied. The political and economic dominance of the Party's official ideology became apparent and emphasised. The 'building of socialism' became a task to which all sciences were to address themselves. During that period political opportunism was expressed in formulations supporting the official 'Marxist-Leninist' line, which was that Czechoslovakia was a 'relatively homogeneous and conflict-free' society. In the arts, for example, it was expressed through 'socialist realism'. The thoroughness and seriousness of the Czecho-

slovak transition to 'socialism' was manifested in 1960 by the government's adoption of a new constitution. It gave Czechoslovakia the title of 'Socialist', making it the only country in the Eastern European bloc to share that appellation with the Soviet Union.

Several sociological studies began to appear in the late 1950s and early 1960s, written by social scientists intent on bringing about a so-called 'Marxist' science. They attempted to go back to 'authentic Marxism' in contrast to the dogmatic, Stalinist version of 'Marxism-Leninism'. The impetus behind this shift of emphasis was the twentieth congress of the CP USSR in 1956. This congress cleared the way for a closer examination of the domestic social and political life throughout Eastern Europe. However, this stimulus was not felt in Czechoslovakia very strongly until 1964, when the Czechoslovak Communist Party cautiously approved of using 'scientific research to improve economic production'.[2] Khruschev's secret speech to the twentieth congress included an amendment favouring professionalism, and the need to reintroduce academic research.[3] The Czechoslovak CP, though following the given guidelines closely, nevertheless left the scope of scientific research to be defined by others, for example, the newly emerging scientific strata. The effect of this slow 'de-Stalinization' was a form of decentralization producing a more tolerant attitude in the Party and making the idea of a reform more acceptable. By the early 1960s the Czechoslovak Party appeared to be split, and different groups formed amongst the Party members and the dissenting intell-

igentsia.[4] These represented differing viewpoints on exactly how and to what extent any economic reform was to be carried out. Two camps can be distinguished: the bureaucratic modifiers and the reformers, the latter represented by Ota Sik, the economist. A number of professional economists prepared a series of economic suggestions which later formed the foundation for several team projects centred at first around Sik, and then also around Mlynar and Richta. The theme common to these groups was a call for greater efficiency coupled with rational decision-making based on scientific criteria. These teams included prominent Party members of a new kind. This is not surprising as the composition of the Party itself was changing; according to Hejzlar: 'In 1946, the Party counted 58% of workers, 13% of farmers and 9% of the intelligentsia, (while) in 1965, it was 39% of workers, 6% of farmers and 23% of the intelligentsia.'[5] This shift indicates the importance of the new interest groups. Most significant was the growing proportion of white collar workers - e.g. the 32% unaccounted for - and their potential coalition with the technical intelligentsia. In fact, that was the scenario in Machonin's and Richta's later works. These changes also meant that it was now less meaningful to talk about polarization between the Party and the 'undifferentiated masses' (as, for example, Aron and Parkin do). The realization that the intelligentsia was emerging as a separate interest group is shown by the fact that several studies on the role of the intelligentsia were conducted during the 1960s.

In the economic sphere, Selucky argues that the years '1953-58 represented the biggest increase in the living standard since the war'.[6] However, in 1962 there was an unexpected combination of unfavourable factors which led to the cancellation of the third five-year plan, and to a return to the centralist management methods of the early 1950s.[7] This 'neo-Stalinist' upsurge brought political opposition from the 'de-Stalinizers'. The polarization of the opinions of the 'hardliners' and the 'reformers' became more pronounced. In the social and political sciences, 'de-Stalinization' became manifested in the

> self criticism of a generation who had bona fide served wrong goals and now wanted to prove, both to itself and to others that it (Stalinism) was not its mistake but merely an abuse of a brilliant theory.[8]

Thus the participation of sociologists in the reform movement was initially characterized by a return to a rigorous conceptual analysis, which would mark a new era. Studies of the so-called deformations led to investigations of the past, and then on to the then current political practice. These studies laid the basis for a new interpretation of 'socialist' Czechoslovakia, leading to Machonin's rejection of class analysis as inadequate.

The earlier studies produced in the Party institutes, or published as dissertations, mainly attempted to justify 'Marxism-Leninism' as a tool of class offensive. These publications centred on questions of class 'subjectivity'

and scientific 'objectivity'. Scientific 'Marxism' was equated with Party spiritedness.[9] Some people argued that Lenin's 'quantitative methods', if correctly employed, would provide a 'qualitative analysis'.[10] There were also criticisms of neo-Hegelianism as a 'deformation of materialist dialectics', published in the Party's theoretical journal, Nova Mysl.[11] Though these were the voices from among the Party apologists, nevertheless the confusion as to what constitutes 'Marxism' persisted. Alongside this 'official' theoretical development, an independent critique was also emerging, notably Karel Kosik's attack on the vulgar interpretations of the relationship between economics and morality.[12] Kosik consistently criticised what he called a metaphysical belief in the future, which degrades the meaning of the present.[13] This could be directly translated as a reference to the Party's insistence on the importance of future goals which became transparent as little more than empty promises. More generally, a critique of the manipulative role of ideology was being developed by the philosophers, typified by Cvekl. He attacked the idea of substituting society for the individual, arguing that the two are of identical substance and thus equal, though never reducible to one another.[14] These criticisms began to be coloured with political undertones, reflecting some individual dissatisfactions with economic and other shortcomings of the system.[15] Examples were Fibich's critique of bureaucratism and Mlynar's analysis of the state. Mlynar saw the state as a social phenomenon, and not just as a means for holding political power.[16]

However, these issues were still being raised predominantly in abstract terms.

Some attempts were made to set philosophical questions within a broader social context. Sociologists in particular began to use 'Marxism-Leninism' as a tool for the analysis of existing social reality. This was a breakthrough of a kind, from a previously defensive attitude in theoretical works. It was also pointed out that the everyday politics of the Party may not necessarily be scientific, and therefore historical materialism should not be confused with its activity.[17] Though a sign of fundamental dissent, a temporary truce was reached between the Party and the dissenters on the ground that scientific knowledge must of necessity favour progress and hence 'socialism'.[18]

Although much of the groundwork for sociology had been done in the early 1960s, in 1966 it was admitted by the same people who had taken part in the 'Marxist' debate that there was still no clarity on basic Marxist concepts.[19] There was still confusion between the diversity of views that existed on the role of historical materialism and its relationship to the emerging social science. However, the questions were no longer about the official recognition of sociology. In 1964 the Czechoslovak Sociological Association was founded. There was difficulty in preserving and defining the areas of competence for different scientific fields. The compartmentalization of subjects and specializations remained and became a source of competition and

prestige-seeking rather than cooperation. A prolonged debate took place about the methodological independence of historical materialism and sociology which went further than academic debate. On the one hand there was the view that sociology could not replace historical materialism because the latter dealt with crucial philosophical questions such as 'objectivity' and 'subjectivity', being and consciousness.[20] On the other hand, historical materialism was said to be too general and 'encyclopaedic'[21], and there was therefore a need for an exact scientific sociology. Some historical materialists directed their efforts to insisting that all social sciences should be based on the classics of 'Marxism-Leninism'.[22] The majority of their works utilized a deductive method, and allowed some specificity of outlook only when the methodological priorities, for example, class analysis, had been stated. Sociologists on the other hand insisted on their own definition of their research methods and research content. A gap developed between different methodologies, largely corresponding to the approaches of the 'hardliners' and 'liberalizers' to current problems. Some of the dispute centred around the theoretical work of Dubska, who stressed the 'scientific' and political aspects of sociology in their 'dialectical' unity.[23] As it was agreed to favour an empirically oriented sociology the dispute subsided. Exactly how successful this resolution in favour of empirical sociology was cannot be assessed without first looking at the process by which sociology came to be recognized by the Party Central Committee itself.

It was no coincidence that 1962 marked a watershed in the official acceptance of sociology. In 1962 Czechoslovakia had allegedly completed the first phase in the transition to 'socialism', and this meant that 'antagonistic' classes were expected no longer to exist. This was the background to Machonin's argument for the necessity of studying the 'non-antagonistic' social relationships anew. This was mentioned in a report from a conference organized by the Philosophical Institute of the CSAV in 1962. At the conference several areas were suggested as suitable for sociological analysis. These included the changing structure of the working class, and its consequences for a 'socialist' society. However, there still remained areas which were debated in a rather more polemical manner. The leading papers were presented by Machonin, Slejska and Mlynar. Machonin's paper contained the outline of his Czechoslovak Society. His 'scientific', detached position is shown in his statements on the importance of understanding the 'socialist' present, by evaluating it in the light of the 'capitalist' past, and the 'communist' future. Politics is, for Machonin (and here he refers directly to Lenin) a part of and an expression of social structure.[25] This position was later to become a focus of disagreement between Machonin and Brokl. However, the net result of all this discussion was that the Party agreed before the twelfth congress of the CP Cz that sociology could proceed as long as it provided an analysis helpful to the formation of the Party's own prescription for change. The required compatibility between 'Marxism-Leninism' and sociology was

then to be accommodated within a framework of a 'non-ideological', 'value-free' science, ready to lend its hand to 'progressive' social planning.

Even though a form of victory had been won over the more conservative forces of 'Marxism-Leninism' it was not complete. A commission for sociology and scientific communism was established in 1964, with Machonin as chairman. The commission was drawn from different departments of the philosophical branch of the CSAV.[26] In the opening meeting it was stressed that there was a need to coordinate any work done in sociology with that done in scientific communism. The work should no longer concentrate on any further discussion on the subject and method of sociology as such, but on solving the practical problems of constructing a sound scientific discipline in Czechoslovakia.[27] A resolution on the development of sociology, presented to the Secretariat of the CC CP Cz had been revised by the commission and this revised draft was shortly to be discussed by the ideological commission of the CC.[28] The commission was also developing proposals for the fields of research that the new Sociological Institute (to be established in 1965) should pursue. The first two main areas of sociological research were to be areas in which there was practically no empirical information available. One was to do with the puzzling lack of information on the poor economic performance, including the low productivity of the workforce. The other was to be an attempt to glean information on people's motivation - or lack of it - in participating in the 'socialist relationships of production'. How-

ever, at the same time, the Party sounded a clear warning. 'The (sociological) journals can not create or inspire new social values, without first consulting the Party.'[29] The commission on sociology and scientific communism therefore presented the CC with suggestions not only on what future centres there should be, but also on the content of their work. There were to be several new institutes, divided into seven main categories: a) those concerned with theoretical work and the education of sociological cadres; b) a central commission for demography and statistics; c) institutes for specialized sociological disciplines; d) faculties of Marxism-Leninism to develop special sociological disciplines and collective team work; e) Party departments concentrating on team research; f) institutes concerned with theoretical problems arising out of scientific communism and sociological aspects of historical materialism; and g) institutes dealing with other related disciplines, e.g. social psychology.[30] It was also suggested by the same commission that qualifications in scientific communism should be changed henceforth into sociological qualifications.[31] To this end, the ministry of culture was informed of the suggested incorporation of sociology as a subject to be taught at university level.[32] The first intake of students for sociology at the Charles University in Prague was in 1965. By that time, there were also 50 registered sociological work places throughout Czechoslovakia.[33]

The Sociological Association, like western associations, provided an important back-up role for academic

work by disseminating information. In addition, it was envisaged that it would coordinate research.[34] It is interesting to note that the process of setting up this function was analogous to coordinating economic production or any other activity in a centralized society. Sociological research was to be coordinated from one centre as an insurance against the possibility of controversial results. It was stressed time and time again that sociology was not only a science but a means towards understanding our social reality, and hence part of the scientific management of social life.[35] Indeed, in that respect, sociology was defended in the Party journal as no longer a luxury but a necessity.[36]

A new debate had also opened about the professionalism of sociologists and the required 'code of conduct'. Examples were drawn from the Soviet and Polish experiences in particular. It was pointed out that Soviet academicians had long been utilizing 'Marxist political economy' together with sociology for making 'scientific predictions in Soviet planning'.[37] Polish sociology too was looked up to as a 'respectable science'. For example, a proposal for the professional training of sociologists in Czechoslovakia was modelled on the Polish system. An article in the Czechoslovak Sociologicial Journal stated that it was important that sociologists should learn from their colleagues in Eastern Europe not to stand aside from the world they study.[38] On the contrary, they should be incorporated into the team work at places of work at all levels, including directorship level, as this would be

more effective than their individual activity.[39] The criteria to be observed in the preparation of professional sociologists were thus specified as: training for maximum effectiveness and training in decision-making techniques. However, the article also stated that there may be some negative consequences from the integration of sociologists solely on the level of enterprise management. One more useful lesson from the Polish experience was the success of the centres of decision-making above the enterprise level, directed straight from the academy of sciences.[40] Under such a scheme the sociologist becomes divorced from the immediate group interests of the enterprise and so can obtain an overall 'neutral' view of the existing problems.[41] This was a clear statement of political loyalty to the Party. The author of the article did not fail to mention that 'democratic centralism'... 'not only requires, but ensures that highly specialized cadres are not wasted'.[42] This and many other statements repeatedly emphasized that the new 'Marxist' sociology should be viewed as the Party's ally in the struggle against 'bourgeois' ideology by providing it with the much needed 'scientific' insight.[43]

With this background then, it is really not surprising that the Party developed a more open attitude towards sociological research. This change of attitude, however, was not born of benevolence. In fact, the Party commissioned several sociological investigations with the aim of sustaining and enlarging its ideological control.[44] In 1960 one of the first collective projects was launched at

the giant heavy engineering enterprise, CKD Sokolov in Prague.[45] The purpose of this investigation was to enquire into

> the elements of communism in working life, and the social relations of the Czechoslovak working class, with particular emphasis on the problems arising from the new attitudes to work.[46]

Even though the research had commenced, it had its shortcomings. Due to the short preparatory time available, and because of the lack of theoretical background, most of the empirical work was not utilized.[47] In fact, it was noted that the general boom in research projects resulted on the whole in 90% of them being wasted, with no direct practical application.[48]

In March 1965, after final approval by the CC CP Cz, a report was published drawing up proposals for the division of labour and of work in sociology.[49] It was stated in the pages of the Sociological Journal that a precondition for the successful development of sociology would be close contact with 'progressive socio-political praxis'[50] and that 'the fundamental link between sociology and practical life is empirical research'.[51] The report stated that illusions cannot be fostered about sociology providing a universal social remedy. It was suggested that the main areas of research to be concentrated on should be: the material and technical infrastructure of society; social changes resulting from the changing nature of work; social structure; problems associated with social management; the cultural revolution; and the problems

associated with the teaching of sociology.[52] It is interesting that the proposal also supported a classical division of sociology into sub-disciplines, such as the sociology of law, of youth, etc. This allowed the academic faculties to specialize in fragmented areas, more easily controllable from one centre. The view of sociological development around 'micro-sociological' areas was propagated by M. Kalab, the director of the Sociological Association.[53] However, a wider view of the social structure and stratification was beginning to be seen as essential by several circles. One was based in the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, and the other in the Institute of Scientific Communism.[54] Ironically, it was from these institutes that the major, and perhaps the most original, work in Czechoslovak sociology had originated, namely the above-mentioned work of Machonin's and Richta's teams.

Earlier phases in the theoretical rehabilitation of Czechoslovak sociology, however, consisted of 'catching up' with the main trends in western sociology. Klofac and Tlusty filled the much needed gap in sociological textbooks, which were virtually non-existent in Czechoslovakia in the 1960s. In their two-volume book, Contemporary Sociology[55], they introduced a review of mostly outdated western sociological literature. 'Bourgeois' sociology was criticised for its a-historical approach, and its pseudo-humanitarian leanings.[56] Klofac and Tlusty regarded structural functionalism, the theory of conflict and Dahrendorf's theory of class conflict as being among the major systematic sociological theories.[57] Although

these theories were seen as inadequate in themselves, the evolution of western sociology from what was described as speculative sociology to an empirical science was seen as positive and worth following. What was described as neo-positivist, quantitative methods were considered as being useful, if 'used in a correct balance with qualitative social perspective'.[58] The book provides an illuminating insight into the methodological background of many sociologists who were ready to digest western sociological thought second-hand, and making no reference to the original sources. The authors of the book expressed a general agreement with the development of 'global sociological theory'[59] and indicated that: 'A new evolutionary conception of society has been added to previous conceptions, and this renews continuity in sociological thinking.'[60] On this point, Czechoslovak sociologists themselves could identify with western sociology by joining in with the development of its theory. In fact, development of the continuity of sociological thought became a legitimate aim, and it was mentioned that some 'Marxist' sociology was actually becoming respected in the West. The role of what the Czechoslovak sociologists saw as a 'genuine Marxist' sociology was thus to deepen and enrich other theories.[61] Conversely, theories such as those of conflict were seen as instrumental in deepening the analysis of social phenomena in 'socialist' societies. Although conflict theories were seen as somewhat fragmented, partial theories, their analysis encouraged 'Marxist' sociologists to develop further their views on 'dialectic-

al contradiction'.[62] The authors of the book Contemporary Sociology expressed their views on the compatibility of western and 'Marxist' sociology even more clearly in their comments on the contemporary western revision of traditional functionalism which had led to the incorporation of the theory of change. According to Klofac and Tlusty, a model that accepts change as well as stability as being 'normal', i.e. functional, is one that has become less dogmatic and more dialectical.[63] They view the development of functionalism from being a theory of 'static equilibrium' to one of 'dynamic equilibrium' as being unquestionably positive. The authors thus see little real difference between functionalism and dialectics, this being the clue to many of the theoretical inconsistencies among their contemporary so-called 'Marxist' sociologists.

A hybrid theoretical position seems to have been emerging - one which drew on a critique of 'Marxist-Leninist' dogmatic thinking, but which did not want to deviate from the 'natural' equilibrium model. In a separate article justifying sociology in a Party journal, Professor Klofac argued that sociological work could provide the Party with an accurate analysis of the extremely complex social phenomena of modern industrial society.[64] It would only be with this information, he continued, that the Party could reach decisions which would adequately solve the problems of ever-changing social relations. As sociology was an analytical, empirical science, it could form 'the basis for the formulation of general societal laws'.[65] In so doing, it

would form 'an integral component of the Party's rich life, and in particular its cognitive processes'.[66] A tentative conclusion can be drawn from these statements that the battle to increase the respect of the Party leaders for expertise and for 'the facts of life' had still to be fought. It was a battle for more academic freedom. The Party, in return, was given the promise of a 'faithful picture of the situation in the most delicate and most pressing spheres of our contemporary life'.[67]

By what means were the sociologists to provide such a picture? Expressions of dissatisfaction with the prevalent state of the analysis of Czechoslovak society were becoming more and more widespread. Klofac and Tlusty pointed out that although we have both Marx's and Lenin's analyses of class conflict in capitalist society, an 'objective' analysis of our own society was still missing.[68] They went on to say that although we were witnessing the emergence of a classless society in Czechoslovakia, as yet no research had been done to investigate the process of transformation with the new social conflicts arising in such conditions.[69] The conditions for such research had to be created. The authors were fully aware that during the so-called period of dogmatism it was impossible to discuss any conflicts or antagonisms existing in a 'socialist' society, and they warned against the continuation of that position.[70] They insisted that 'we need to draw on every objective finding of the western theory of social conflict'.[71] Klofac and Tlusty appear to assume that 'dialectical contradictions' and indeed 'socialist'

structure can be adequately studied through the 'achievements' of western sociology.

The first volume of Klofac's and Tlusty's textbook, Contemporary Society, opens with a historical outline about the 'founding fathers' of sociology. The work then goes on to deal mainly with Parsons' sociological theory. Parsons is given credit for his attempt to construct a 'global' theory. He is also appreciated for the revival of 'Weberian methodology', focusing on subjective aspects of social behaviour.[72] Some Parsonian concepts appeared later in Machonin's work, for instance, Parsons' distinction between different types of authority, and a reference to authority merging with power due to technocratic competence as 'not being typically bureaucratic'.[73] Both of these ideas were seen as appropriate to Czechoslovak conditions.[74] Also, the categories of status, and the role of status in social differentiation, as described by Klofac and Tlusty, have been widely used in Machonin's research on social stratification.[75] Some aspects of Dahrendorf's theory of class conflict were said to positively complement 'Marxism' with funtionalism.[76]

The debate on theoretical 'Marxism' was combined with an investigation of how best to resolve conflict within 'socialist' management. Klofac and Tlusty suggest that

> If a socialist society should surpass a modern industrially developed capitalist society in its productivity and effectiveness of labour, then it has to provide motivation for the behaviour of individuals which would be directed towards higher achievement, responsibility ....[77]

and they go on to call for the ending of the process of levelling of material rewards together with the elimination of the administrative-bureaucratic system.[78] It was accepted that in an industrially advanced society the division of labour does not wither away. On the contrary, the differentiation and specialization based on 'scientific qualification' creates a new kind of division of labour, corresponding to the development of a scientific 'socialist' society.[79] Klofac and Tlusty state that

> It seems that higher professional and scientific qualification carries within itself a tendency towards more democracy, cooperation and social justice....[80]

'Socialist' society can create a climate for the 'government of expertise', which is inherently more democratic because it overcomes the traditional relationships of authority based on inherited positions of status.[81] The authors viewed the changes that would apparently be needed in the emerging 'socialist' Czechoslovakia as being primarily changes in the social 'function and roles' of individuals, who would then be behaving in accordance with the accepted 'socialist norms and values'.[82] The argument for a 'socialist' morality to achieve a 'conflict-free' society seems to have been shared by many Czechoslovak sociologists in the 1960s. Klofac's and Tlusty's book almost preempts Machonin's concern with the 'lack of concrete action'. They mention that so far resolutions about changes have been passed, but they have not been implemented in practice. In order to forestall any ideological controversy over the possible convergence of

'socialism' with 'capitalism', the authors argue that science, technology and 'rational management' are politically neutral. They are common to all industrial societies. It is their inherent quality and so there is no need to fear convergence just by the acquisition of a similar social organization.[83] Under 'socialism', they continue, what is important is not who manages, but how.[84] It is no longer important who owns the means of production but what the consequences of ownership are for the development of production and general social welfare.[85] If 'socialism' was to become more progressively managed than capitalism, it has to give its managerial strata a new chance.[86] In fact, Klofac and Tlusty had echoed many of Richta's ideas. They issued a warning that if we were not capable of putting 'scientific' management into practice, we would end up with a progressive ideology but a 'backward economy'. Thus our 'socialist' ideology would acquire a more and more utopian character.[87] Klofac's and Tlusty's book thus seems to point out the general concensus among the small number of prominent Czechoslovak sociologists in the 1960s. The proposal for a 'scientific-technological' revolution had been put forward by them as a moral obligation.

One of the most notable events for Czechoslovak sociology was a conference on the social structure of 'socialist' Czechoslovakia, organized by the Institute of Marxism-Leninism and the Philosophical Institute of the CSAV in June 1964.[88] A number of East European contributors took part in this conference, and many of them part-

icipated later in Machonin's study of social stratification.[89] In fact, material for this study was presented in outline at the conference. The diverse nature of this material has been criticised. Indeed, some of the contributions were seen as conservative, deductive and non-empirical, while others were seen as 'already grasping' the specific sociological concerns.[90] The problems of combining theoretical and empirical analysis was seen as acute. It was stressed throughout the conference that sociology had two fundamental functions. Firstly, to be the repository of 'social expertise' and secondly, to provide the 'self-knowledge of society'.[91] In his discussion, Machonin outlined his basic terminology, which was adopted from Polish sociology, mainly from Wiatr. He centred on the 'decreasing relevance of the dichotomous class model' of society, and the new differentiation of the division of labour in 'socialist' societies. The Polish sociologists, he said, were instrumental in clarifying the concept of non-antagonistic social relationships.[92] For example, Z. Bauman saw the basis of social differentiation in the professional division of labour.[93] An interesting contribution from Mlynar and others questioned the relationship between social structure and the method of formation of the political-administrative system. Mlynar pointed out that the electoral structure was based on regional divisions formed during the time of 'antagonistic' class structure and class struggle. He questioned the extent to which this structure corresponded to the structure of contemporary 'socialist' society.[94] He mentioned the Yugoslav system

where representation was based not on regions but on the social groups arising from the social division of labour.[95]

In November 1964 another conference took place in Warsaw.[96] Its main topics were the 'division of labour under socialist conditions' and 'alienation'. Wiatr's statement that politics had begun to play a primary role under 'socialism' created a heated debate. Hirszowics and Morowsky referred to their research in which they had shown that the division of labour limits a worker's identification with the aims of an organization and that this situation is not automatically resolved under 'socialism'.[97]

In the mid-1960s the Sociological Journal became a platform for the most outspoken groups of sociologists, providing continuity for their debate and publicising the discussions from the now more frequent conferences. A substantial summary of Machonin's proposed research project on the social stratification of Czechoslovakia was published in the journal in 1965.[98] He boldly identified Czechoslovakia as the first country to approach the form of a 'socialist' industrial society, and therefore the most suitable one to study for the general characteristics of other 'socialist' societies.[99] He stated that the first moves to study stratification arose under the auspices of 'scientific communism' in the late 1950s. Machonin was among those at the Institute of Marxism-Leninism. He then explained that his team understood social differentiation to be an aspect of social structure and its change. Therefore, he said:

> we consider it fruitful and serving our purpose in the expansion of Marxist theory of social structure to use some of the suggestions of the structural functional school, e.g. Parsons and Merton, as well as those of pre-war Czechoslovak sociology, e.g. Fischer and Blaha.[100]

This by now acknowledged 'symbiosis' of Marxism and functionalism had begun to characterize much of the team's work.

The second issue of the Sociological Journal published Richta's notes on the future division of labour under 'socialism'. In these notes, he presented his view that the division of labour was not only a form of production relationships but that it developed as a specific form of the social productive force.[101] For Richta, specialization of functions had less to do with the division of labour than with the 'universal law of human development'.[102] This degree of generalization for a self-proclaimed empirical 'Marxist' is rather astonishing, even if consistent. In later issues of the journal, Richta summarized the rest of his view of the 'scientific-technological' revolution. These were then published in book form in 1966.[103]

A broad debate on the role of the intelligentsia in Czechoslovak social life took place in the pages of the Party theoretical journal Nova Mysl (The New Mind). It emerged as such an important topic that in 1966 the political school of the CC CP Cz organized a conference on the socialist intelligentsia.[104] The report of the conference stated that the utilization of the mental potential and knowledge of the intelligentsia was a major way forward.

Under 'socialism', it was declared, the intelligentsia was becoming part of the progressive forces.[105] This view, so clearly in line with the current development, was subsequently reinforced by the work of L. Dziedzinska. She argued that until now the relationship between the intelligentsia and the working class had been interpreted in the light of traditional class analysis.[106] Class differences had been overestimated, and had been considered as the only approach to the problem. Under 'socialism', though, the intelligentsia is a 'co-producer' of social wealth, and the management of social wealth is done in 'favour of all'. It was due only to the low level of automation and mechanization in Czechoslovak industry, she continued, (2-4 times lower than that of other industrial societies) that new professions integrating manual and mental labour had not developed to any great degree. Thus, even though the division remained between manual and mental labour, it was an artificial one.[107] This line of argument was taken up again by Richta, who thought that the so-called 'collective worker' formed a dialectical unity under 'socialism'.[108]

The first national sociological congress was organized by the Sociological Institute, the Sociological Association and the Institute of Marxism-Leninism. It took place in November 1966 in the town of Spindleruv Mlyn and drew 500 participants.[109] Among the topics were yet again methodological questions. One of the contributors argued that the multi-dimensional perspectives of current structural functionalism were also present in 'Marxism', which could not be looked on as a 'monistic philosophy'.[110] It was

also necessary to repeat that only dialectical materialism could help us to understand social structure, though social structure could be described by means of structural functionalism.[111] The level of theoretical as well as political confusion here was publicly evident. The general tone of the contributions was mostly self-congratulatory. The participants applauded the completion of the institutionalization of sociology in Czechoslovakia, and the end of its alliance with 'dogmatism'. The need to utilize sociology in political praxis was stressed, as was the need to end the relative isolation of sociology from political life. The introductory report stated that initiatives were coming from other disciplines, when in fact they should have been coming from sociology.[112] It was noted that at the time of the congress 40% of sociologists taught, and 30% worked at research institutes; and so the majority of them were divorced from practical life.[113] The main report stated that it would be a progressive move if Czechoslovak sociology could find a common language with world sociology.[114] 'Marxist' sociology was gaining a world reputation, it was said. Thus the conference endorsed Klofac's and Tlusty's conclusion that the building of the 'Marxist' conception of social structure was a higher stage of understanding than either functionalism or conflict theories alone.[115] A prognosis for Czechoslovak sociology until 1980 was given, assuming generally favourable conditions for its continuing development.[116]

By the mid-1960s sociology had been institutionalized to such an extent that it was no longer regarded as just a

marginal science. Even the Party ideologues involved with the shaping of the coming economic and social reforms took more than passing notice of sociological findings. The selection of Richta by the CC CP Cz in 1965 to examine the 'scientific-technological revolution' and the presence of sociologists in the preparation of material for the twelfth Party congress in 1966 are two significant examples of a trend which continued up to 1968.[117] Several sociologists participated in the preparation of, and later in the defence of, the Action Programme of the CP Cz.[118]

A brief review of the sociological and socio-political journals from the mid-1960s demonstrates that the majority of the debates among sociologists remained highly abstract and academic. Political discussion on the nature of 'socialism' often stressed the advantages of 'socialism' over 'capitalism', in the same vein as the more cautious views of Machonin and Richta. An article in Nova Mysl[119] as late as 1968 praised the involvement of the technical intelligentsia in 'socialist' development. We now had at our disposal a revised interpretation of a 'socialist' social structure, it said, but there was also the Party's increased dependence on expertise. This was followed by a warning that there might be a danger of reducing the Party's role to that of an 'ideological figurehead'. Although it was said that 'We have already learned how much we would pay for any sectarian relationship to the technical intelligentsia'[119], it was made clear that the Party's role in any reform movement was to provide ideological clarity, to regulate and to stabilize the present structure.[120]

There were other more critical studies circulated amongst the small groups of sociologists, but censorship interfered in the popularized versions intended for larger audiences.[121] In 1968, the general debate on political issues, of course, extended beyond sociology. The historical context of the October revolution and indeed many classical political theories previously suppressed were debated in the pages of the Sociological Journal. This was part of the process of reinterpreting the many historical and political issues which had been either misrepresented or else totally ignored during the years of ideological 'dogmatism'. Nova Mysl carried a substantial study on the politics of the 1950s, together with details of the cold war, which ended with an appeal for a renaissance of political consciousness.[122] It was quite safe to discuss the past. Kulturni Tvorba (Cultural Weekly) presented a discussion on pluralism.[123] The principle of plurality, it said, is in harmony with the 'Marxist' idea of development as a struggle between contradictions, which brings to the surface the question of opposition and thus of the division of power. It was pointed out, though, that the debate was not about 'anti-communist parties, but a variety of non-communist parties'.[124] The same journal published another article condemning bureaucratization, and it urged that it be replaced by the 'moral qualities' of responsible politicians. Power would not necessarily corrupt, if we were capable of regenerating the 'moral' thinking behind politics as such.[125] This was an unmistakable reference to the ideal type of politician,

as represented by the figure of T.G. Masaryk.

There were specifically sociological articles, centred around isolated issues such as the sociology of youth, the family, management, and so on. These reflected a tradition in Czechoslovak sociology of studying small groups.[126] Other debates discussed more topical proposals for workers' self-management.[127] One of the periodicals to print such discussion was the literary weekly, Literarni Noviny, where debate went on throughout June, July and August, 1968.[128] This paper allowed genuine attempts to express the various ideas and uncertainties about the workers' councils. It is evident that sociologically informed journalism had a direct impact on the selection of issues for debate in the reform movement as a whole.

A philosophical and theoretical critique of Stalinism and 'vulgar Marxism' entered a second phase when Nova Mysl published an article which characterized 'Stalinism' as the 'fetishization of an ideological position' which was kept in existence by a repressive apparatus. This was compared to the previous critique of 'Stalinism' as merely a form of nationalism.[129] There was also a condemnation of 'allowing Leninism a monopoly of interpretation'.[130] A postscript to the whole debate was provided by Machonin, writing on the teaching of 'Marxism'. His view was that 'Marxism' could be changed into a science of society by 'ridding it' of any institutionalized form of state ideology.[131] A clash between 'Marxist-Leninists' and the self-defined 'Marxists' of Machonin's type was now taking

place in the open. The controversy over the ideological direction of the reform movement was illustrated by a 'dialogue' between Machonin and Svestka, a journalist on the Party daily, Rude Pravo. The hard-line position consisted of clinging to the old party line by making references to the welfare of the working classes. In his article, Svestka stated that

> the most basic attack on socialism in Czechoslovakia at the moment is not an attack on the social ownership of the means of production, but an attack on the working class. It is an attack on its social position and an attack on its role.[132]

Svestka accused the reformers of not paying any attention to the working class, as the most powerful social force in the country. At the same time, though, he offered no opinion of his own on the relationship between ownership and the working class. He mainly criticised the reformers for not giving the workers what had been promised in the Action Programme. They were being excluded and pushed out. The workers were the main losers of the policy. Indeed, he continued, there had been no clear statements on what the workers could expect from the new policy, only statements on freedom and democracy.[133] These accusations from a worried spokesman for the apparatchiks provoked a prompt reply from Machonin. In defence of the post-January '68 policies, he declared that there had never been so many activities taking place at factory level, nor so much working class support for the next Party congress. (An extraordinary, fourteenth, congress had been called for August

1968.) Nevertheless, Machonin could not help but make a reference to an abstract working class. This is consistent with his sociological writings and his description of

> the workers (as) sober people, (who) know that it is not in their interests to maintain inefficient production, unjust prices, artificial privileges, and technical backwardness.[134]

One could almost say, then, that Svestka by default was right in pointing out how the reformers perceived the working class as passive receivers of the suggested changes. Yet, what was made clear in these debates was that the apparatchiks were fighting their own battle over the control of the working class. The political intentions of the two groups, the reformers and the hardliners, became exposed. Neither could sustain its influence without directly manipulating the productive working classes.

The sociological debate was therefore very much part of the political movement in Czechoslovakia during these years of political ferment. It revealed the influential position of a few prominent 'theoretical leaders', as well as many of the political shortcomings of the reform movement as such. A worker's reaction to the major political document of the 1968 period, the Action Programme of the CP Cz, summarizes some of the feelings 'from below':

> There is a little bit about free enterprise, a bit about abolishing the old system of directors, and giving the enterprise some autonomy. This does not help you to solve anything ... in actual fact, the only thing that is happening is that we can write a little bit more now.[135]

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Chapter 3

R. Richta's 'Civilization at the Crossroads': An Appraisal

The intellectual frustrations as well as the growing political involvement of sociologists in the 1960s was partially evident in the socio-political and socio-philosophical studies they produced. R. Richta's work Civilization at the Crossroads[1] illustrates the relative freedom that 'scientific' workers acquired in the process of economic change. The economic difficulties which the Czechoslovak government faced brought the technical intelligentsia to the forefront. Initially, theoretical works attempted to 'catch up' with western sociology, and later, to re-establish the reputation of Czechoslovak sociology itself. Out of the many works produced by authors involved in multi-disciplinary research, Richta summarizes most of their aspirations. His work was a statement of the political attitude of the new 'scientific-technical' intelligentsia, which was gaining social respect among the liberalizers.

The repeated economic crises which Czechoslovakia faced throughout the 1960s helped to produce an atmosphere in which qualified people were now called upon. Nevertheless, it was never clearly stated what exactly was required from the newly qualified university and technically trained people. Their brief lay between regenerating the 'socialist' economy and attempting to propose remedies once the social problems had been sociologically defined.

Richta himself was a well-known personality who had previously conducted research for government ministries and institutions. His theoretical and practical approach to what would be required under the prevailing conditions depended more or less on his own political judgement. This was the time for a redefinition of the role of the 'scientist', and at the same time Richta's work and ideas were growing in popularity and were accepted almost without criticism. His work has been translated into several languages and is still regarded as one of the most outspoken and original contributions from Eastern Europe on the theory of 'scientific-technological' revolution.

In his work Richta argues that by its inner logic the epoch of the 'scientific-technological' revolution is intimately connected with the birth of 'communism'. Such people as Sik favoured an application of Richta's ideas wholeheartedly. At that time, Sik was head of the governmental commission for economic reform. In fact, it was the ideological commission of the CC CP Cz and the praesidium of the CSAV that commissioned Richta and his group of collaborators to commence work on Civilization at the Crossroads in 1965. Richta and his interdisciplinary team constituted themselves under the umbrella of the Philosophical Institute of the CSAV in Prague. It was no accident that the CC and the praesidium of the CSAV took an interest in research on the 'technological revolution'. In 1966 special commissions were established to ensure effective control over the economy by the Party apparatus through a body of 'reliable experts'.[2] It must be noted,

however, that Richta is among the very few people at present, in the 1980s, still able to carry out research and contribute to the only official sociological journal in Czechoslovakia, Sociologicky casopis. There has been hardly any change in his professional position, compared with that of others like Klofac and Kosik who lost their jobs (Klofac died in the late 1970s presumably from the effects of enforced manual labour).

The principal objective of Civilization at the Crossroads is to re-evaluate the role of science in a technologically developed society. One of the main reasons for the book's popularity was its thorough criticism of existing industrial society and its 'dehumanizing' effects. In many ways, Richta's starting point is a loose reference to Marx's theory of alienation, though only in an abstract outline. The aim of the book was to highlight the missing 'human' factor in industrial production.[3] While the Czechoslovak experience occupies the major part of the study, many general points emerge, and references are made to American, British and French papers published in the 1950s and early 1960s. It is undeniable that the theoretical conclusions of the book were influenced to a considerable extent by the trend of early Taylorism, by cybernetics and the managerial revolution. Civilization at the Crossroads first appeared in Czechoslovakia in 1966, followed by several revised editions. The preparatory work began earlier and coincided with the rapid expansion of sociological disciplines during the mid-1960s.

During the course of the book it becomes apparent

that Richta's most serious disagreement is not with the organization of the political superstructure in Czechoslovakia but more with what he calls the 'misuse and mismanagement' of the country's economic and technological resources. 'Dogmatism' to him is an obstacle to technical progress. Richta classifies Czechoslovakia as an industrially developed society. When discussing the development of advanced industrialism he makes little distinction between East and West. Their common characteristic, according to Richta, is that they are moving away from the period of rapid industrialization to a period of planned automation. To Richta, the 'scientific-technological' revolution is a social and historical necessity. It is the next stage after the industrial revolution, but does not have identical aims; it follows different objectives.[4] While a fully industrialized capitalism is a necessary precondition for the development of the 'scientific-technological' revolution, Richta places his emphasis on establishing the 'qualitative' differences between 'capitalism' and a society that would 'utilize science to its maximum potential' for the emancipation of man. In his opinion, Czechoslovakia as a 'socialist' society has the prerequisites for this emancipatory society to emerge. However, Richta goes on to say that in spite of the level of industrialization in Czechoslovakia, the present economic system, based on administrative directives, is unable to initiate any fundamental change. What is needed, he elaborates, is a change in the relationship of society to the development of 'civilization'.[5] Science in future

would no longer be just another product of industrial development but would directly affect all spheres of human life and creativity.[6] Science itself, Richta contends, will become a primary productive force, instead of a 'by-product' of production, and as such it will play a direct role in the process of social transformation.[7] In Richta's words, in the light of 'Marxist' analysis, we must first of all re-define what is meant by productive forces. The old notion of productive force as productive means plus labour is fully identified with the period of industrialization and can now be seen as outdated. In the contemporary situation, Richta argues that we have to understand the concept of productive forces as a changing complex of all human activity, including the old concept of productive forces, plus all human creative faculties, including science.[8]

Furthermore, Richta elaborates the implications of this view. The success of a 'scientific-technological' revolution lies in its reliance on the development of specific social conditions conducive to advancing the human creative potential.[9] Richta presents the view that once science has become the central productive force, it will trigger off the creative development of every individual, as well as that of mankind. Science will become the 'decisive parameter in the development of civilization'.[10] As the direct relations of production change, so will the whole structure of human life. That is, the whole structure of human life will change with the new productive force, that is, scientific knowledge. According to Richta, this

will mark the start of a qualitatively new stage of civilization. Up to a certain point in the development of civilization, material production and reproduction were the primary determinants, while the development of man's creative faculties was regarded as a 'material or time loss'. Now, the whole relationship is going to be reversed. With the growing opportunity to apply a whole variety of human activities, the 'scientific-technological' revolution would make the 'investment into man' an exceptionally profitable and hopeful enterprise.[11] Any omission in the utilization of man's creative faculties would, for Richta, become economically harmful.[12]

No doubt, many western political and economic reformers would like to share in Richta's vision of science becoming the all-powerful productive force. Richta argues that science will not only become a part of the new 'reality' but will be its main regulating agent. Science, according to him, will play the decisive role in the 'prediction, regulation and programming' of production. Historical development itself will no longer be a 'natural' phenomenon, but will assume a 'purposeful' character. Richta maintains that this, of course, will have a direct effect on the restructuring of social systems and the pattern of decision-making. This argument, in my opinion, is a key to understanding Richta's political alliance with the new 'progressive' decision-makers.

The attractiveness of Richta's theory to some of his adherents lies in the presentation of science as 'giving a new chance' to a 'new future'. He specifies the sphere

of leisure and self-education as crucial creative areas in the 'de-alienated' society. However, he omits to mention how this creativity would become a part of the 'democratic process of participation', particularly among those involved in production. In Richta's work the discussion is unmistakably dominated by a cult of managerial expertise, while he uses terms such as 're-division of labour' to forestall accusations of elitism.

Moreover, Richta argues that man's position within the production process cannot be simply improved by bringing in the 'socialist human factor'. There is, he suggests, a need for technology to take over the actual production, while science will supervise the planning and preparatory stages of production. The problem is, what will become of the working or producing class. It will not just disappear, says Richta. His solution is to elevate the producing class to a higher level, along with science; that is, 'the only solution will be to make professionals of us all'.[13] This is a similar concept to Machonin's 'qualified worker', who is expected to unite with, and ensure support for, the scientific-technical intelligentsia. Heilbroner makes an appropriate comment on Richta's solution, and says that it 'reminds us of pious suggestions in our society that everyone should become a capitalist'.[14] What Richta is trying to do, however, is to link up his ideas of 'scientific-technological' revolution with a vision of a 'classless' social structure. The 'classless' future Czechoslovak society is where a unification of the working class and the intelligentsia could take place. If the unification of the

working class with science could proceed, it would mark 'the total emancipation of man'.[15] This, on closer examination, represents a sort of cautious revision of a 'Marxist-Leninist' principle. The statement refers to an abstract concept of the abolition of classes in a 'socialist' society through the identification of the mass of the population with one class, in this case, the scientific strata. Further on in Civilization at the Crossroads Richta elaborates on the advantages of the intelligentsia's inclusion in a 'classless' society, whereby they become a part of the 'total worker' and not just a class 'in between'.[16] He not only believes in the intrinsic value of science as a progressive force, but takes his belief further by attributing progressive characteristics to a whole society run on a scientific basis. It is important to note that such views were regarded as a contribution to contemporary sociological thinking in Czechoslovakia in the 1960s.

What would Richta's rational scientific society be like? He sees the essence of the 'scientific-technological' revolution subsuming a whole spectrum of philosophical and economic questions. Essentially, the majority of his proposals are a foundation for a reform policy. His distinction between the present and the future is blurred, and the whole work has the appearance of a timeless prophecy, which in my view makes Richta's proposals applicable at any time under any system. According to him, the fundamental achievement of the 'scientific-technological' revolution would be a reversal of the traditional relationship between the object and the subject of production. Man, by becoming

dominant over the production process, would determine the consequences of production, and thus his environment. Therefore, according to Richta, he will be controlling his own future evolution.[17] This change would be reflected in changes in the composition of the work cycle, that is, in a restructuring of the labour force (his 're-division of labour') and in changes in qualification.[18] Richta envisages a shift away from the traditional occupations such as agriculture to a growth in the tertiary sector, in such activities as business, finance and administration (my emphasis). Scientific research will assume a new importance. Inevitably, Richta thinks, the bulk of changes in the division of labour would involve a stress on qualification, with a concomitant reduction in 'non-qualified' labour. This proposal involves two aspects. In the first instance, Richta expects the transition to 'qualified labour' to be a transition to scientific expertise, and in the second, he assumes the 'humanitarian' development of individual creativity and potential. He combines these two aspects to the point where it becomes impossible to distinguish between them. In other words, he implies that scientific development cannot mean anything else but an upsurge in creative emancipation. Moreover, he argues that

> if the whole process of the scientific-technological revolution is scientifically and purposefully directed, then it can contribute to the as yet incomplete process of humanizing man.[19]

Richta speaks further of a 'scientific socialism', where a complex scientific management will be an inevitable form of social life.[20] However, he warns of a danger during the

transition period of modernization, stemming from 'vulgar egalitarianism'.[21] This is manifested by an aversion to science, technology and education by the conservative 'unqualified strata'.[22] It is the fear of social pressure by the 'unqualified' working strata which is in direct contradiction to Richta's stated belief in a democratization of decision-making, and in fact reduces his proposal for an open 'humanitarian' society to a rather dangerous utopia.

Since Richta himself had long experience of bureaucratic administration he is able to make a clear distinction between bureaucracy and expertise. Bureaucratization and mechanistic administration, he says, should be avoided. It is up to science to provide a remedy. The problem would be solved for him once a proper flow of information had been established. Richta thus sees cybernetics as central in overcoming the problems of communication. The actual developments and technological discoveries in such fields as audio-visual telecommunication were welcomed by Richta with an innovator's pride. He was quite plainly a forerunner of the 'micro' revolution. Richta made it very explicit that his concept of science penetrates all spheres of life. He even mentions that the new technical conditions will force people to acquire expertise in such fields as 'human relations'.[23] Richta makes this comment without reference to the 'managerial revolution' and 'human relations movement' theories with which he was acquainted. Contrary to his declarations, his concept of participation seems to be confined within the narrow area of actual production. Any attempt to exceed his described areas of 'expert' responsi-

bilities turns participation into a threat. The limits to self-management expressed in many later proposals seem to reflect this attitude.

In his book Richta produces some interesting information from the USSR on worker participation in decision-making, and he notes that in 1924 the average worker spent 109 hours a year in 'decision-taking', and that by 1959 the figure had dropped to only 17 hours a year.[24] Richta says that the situation is almost the same in other East European countries; his explanation is that the participation dropped after 'the elementary problems of the revolution had been solved'.[25] Although he concedes that the present society is not without its problems, he concludes that this level of participation will be insufficient for the needs of the 'scientific-technological' revolution. He then retreats again into theoretical abstraction when he writes of co-ordination in decision-making no longer being a one-way process. According to him, participation, democratization and even self-management are becoming more and more a 'functional necessity'.[26] As such, it is inescapable that the 'scientific-technological' revolution will place an 'exceptional demand on the scientific selection of people for various specializations'.[27] Everyone, including the Party, says Richta, will have to adapt to new circumstances. The Party's credibility in carrying out its role will rely more and more on the utilization of science, and on the creation of conditions beneficial for scientific expansion.[28] This was, however, a good prescription for the actual economic reforms in 1968. Once the Party had been subjected to the same criteria of 'selection' and 'specialization'

as the rest of society, the way was opened for a reform movement to be headed by economists and scientific experts.

It is interesting to look at the ways in which Richta's other views coincided with those of the economists. One of the first solutions proposed by Sik and other reformers for the revitalization of the stagnating Czechoslovak economy was to change the traditional (for Eastern Europe) extensive mode of production to an intensive mode. By implication, Richta seems to have believed that this change would mark the start of the transition from the industrial phase of development. A large section of Richta's book describes a society where constantly expanding productive forces provide for more than a limited satisfaction of people's needs. Richta asserts that the 'motive' force of the 'scientific-technological' society would be the real interest that the mass of the population has in the growth of productivity. In an intensive economy productivity would no longer be solely dependent on increased production but to a growing extent, on consumption too. Thus, one could argue that Richta believes that the people's 'real interest' in modernization lies in nothing more than extended consumption and full satisfaction of basic needs. Undoubtedly Richta is right to argue that material scarcity is dehumanizing, but he also rejects the western version of mass consumption. Nevertheless, his belief that consumption could create the conditions for further production had far-reaching economic and political consequences which will be discussed more closely in the Conclusion.

For Richta, consumption as a precondition of growth presupposes a market economy with a free flow of supply and demand. This would be in opposition to the existing system, where only production can be a precondition for growth. Therefore, it must signify a qualitatively new stage of development. Although Richta does not give blanket approval to 'consumption for consumption's sake' neither does he consider the possibility that his 'cultured' consumption could lead to an individualistic version of an affluent society. Extended consumption cannot simply buy the motivation of people to work. This is clear both from the examples of contemporary Czechoslovakia, where increased consumerism in the 1970s did not lead to greater productivity, as well as from many western countries. Consumerism, even as a 'transitional' measure, inevitably creates different social requirements. These show themselves in the socio-political structure, as they cannot be separated from wage price policies and other market criteria.

Richta's 'futuristic' attitude is reflected in his continuous emphasis on the 'human dimension of contemporary civilization'.[29] Under this heading he discusses at some length the increasing problems of urbanization, pollution, ecological crisis, and so on: the very problems which western planners have been grappling with since the 1930s. When speaking of overcoming alienation, Richta mentions the 'aesthetics of the early craftsmen'[30], implying the importance of the 'total' working environment. He emphasizes the physical and mental health of individuals as well as active leisure and cultural fulfilment. Richta refers

to the successes which were achieved by British and American applied industrial sociology[31], and he praises the psychology of work and human relations which, he says, has a considerable 'objective value'. He gives this praise despite the fact that in the west these disciplines have been continuously used 'against the working class movement'.[32] But then, Richta does not - and cannot - credit modern capitalism with the capability of dealing with the 'human factor'. However, his explanations for the need of a 'scientific' revolution are not fundamentally different from the programmes put forward by western social democratic reformers. Richta does not consider the abolition of the hierarchical division of labour, nor does he reconsider the category of wage labour, even when he talks of an increased 'cooperation and participation'.[33] How he conceives 'socialism' to be superior to 'capitalism' never becomes clear.

If we look a little deeper into Richta's self proclaimed 'Marxism' there too is an inconsistency. There is a gap between his employing 'Marxist' economic categories and their social application. This could be due to the fact that Richta's prestigious position in Czechoslovakia meant that his theories had a direct unquestioned applicability, because he offered to 'cure' the stagnating Czechoslovak economy; or it could have been a result of Richta's uncritical incorporation of some of the ideas produced by western 'Marxists' in the 1950s. Perhaps the explanation lies in a combination of the two. A comparison can be made between Richta's 'Marxism' and the Marxism of some of

his western predecessors. Among those who influenced him was J.D. Bernal, and it may be worthwhile pointing out some similarities between the ideas of Richta and Bernal. Bernal published many works lauding Soviet 'socialism' and proclaiming its unshakeable victory. Both Richta and Bernal share what is, I think, an elementary mistake. Both automatically identify technical progress with a new revolutionary social order. Bernal's scenario for the future 'humanitarian' society is similar to that of Richta. For Bernal science is to play a major emancipatory role as a productive force, a social institution and as a basis for democracy.[34] Although Bernal and Richta argue that science practised under 'socialist' conditions will overcome class differences, and is inherently more progressive because it is no longer associated with 'private interest', they both give a very unconvincing description of class relationships. Particularly, when Bernal discusses the 'modesty' of future scientists, 'subordinating themselves' to a common interest, making their collective contribution to the economic and political decisions of the country[35], he is contradicting his views on the 'leading role' of science in overall social changes. He explains that while 'In earlier times, science followed industry, now it is tending to catch up with it and lead it ....'[36] Bernal's ideas are strikingly similar to those of Richta, as is the general tone of their work. Bernal concludes in his book Science in History that 'No modern state can exist at all without science'[37], and states that

> though the first growth of science itself was a product of the economic and political factors, once science was established as a means of securing economic and political power, its very progress became a factor in political and economic life.[38]

There seems to be a falsely 'socialist' ethics in the 'democratic' character of science about which both Bernal and Richta are concerned. It is generally accepted that 'scientists have more status ... because they can acquire positions in business, government, university circles, etc....'[39] The acceptance of hierarchical social differentiation is implicit in Richta's work and in that of other Czechoslovak sociologists of the 1960s. Moreover, Richta does not hesitate to state the obvious, that is, that expertise and professionalism will stimulate upward mobility. In fact, together with Machonin, he totally approves of it; there is only a difference in emphasis. Whereas Richta argues that a consequence of the 'scientific-technological' revolution will be social differentiation, Machonin calls for a 're-stratification' of society before the phase of the 'revolution' is entered.[40]

Richta's own analysis never questions the actual mode of production in Czechoslovakia. While criticizing the inadequacies of the centralized administrative system, he assumes that this same system could incorporate 'self-management'. His suggestions represent only a partial structural modification of the existing Czechoslovak economic system. Although he stresses the positive aspects of 'socialist' automation, automation under

capitalism is seen as purely a mechanism for accumulation, an increase in the rate of exploitation, as well as an increase in the ratio of technical and maintenance workers to direct production workers, and he concludes that these tendencies lead to a growth of bureaucracy.[41] What prevents 'socialism' from falling into the same trap is, again, never fully explained.

In conclusion, a picture emerges of a close affinity between the economic and social reformers in Czechoslovakia in the 1960s. What they hoped for was to create a stable 'equilibrium' economy in Czechoslovakia which would enable an otherwise failing economy to become transformed into a 'crisis-free' expanding economy. Such an economy would be competitive with other world economies. A stimulated demand for consumer goods was put forward as a prerequisite for a greater demand for labour, and an expansion of production. It cannot be denied that many of Richta's ideas sprang from different sources and were a combination of many different aspirations. In discussing the role of science, however, Richta clearly indicates the necessity for society to move in a direction where morality and ideology would come together. He states that: 'The new technology, new science, can no more be run with the old morality than it can be with the old economic and political system'.[42] Richta's 'technological' society gives a raison d'etre for a new 'market socialism'.

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Chapter 4

P. Machonin's 'Czechoslovak Society': An Appraisal

It is clear that Czechoslovak society had undergone visible changes since the 1950s and that by 1965 the economic and political situation had altered considerably. Czechoslovakia was thought to be the most stable of the East European countries, and its political system was one of the most faithful to the Soviet model. The more radical changes of the 1960s were brought about by the economic difficulties that the country faced, and although the situation was to culminate in a dramatic event with the invasion by the Warsaw Pact forces in 1968, what was happening in Czechoslovakia was by no means a radical alteration of its social structure.

One of the outstanding contributions to Czechoslovak sociology in the 1960s was the work produced by P. Machonin's team, in their book Czechoslovak Society.[1] This was a 'macro-sociological' study of Czechoslovak social stratification, giving a more or less accurate description of what was happening in Czechoslovak society at that time. For this project to be feasible in the first place, full official backing was necessary, including access to materials, provision of statistics and close cooperation with various academic and governmental departments. This was possible because Machonin and his team commanded an important position among the officially approved sociologists.

Czechoslovak Society (Ceskoslovenska Spolecnost) can be regarded as the summary of the work carried out by a whole school of Czechoslovak sociologists, as well as by many non-sociologists. The team set themselves the task of synthesizing their empirical observations with a theoretical interpretation of the changes that had taken place in contemporary Czechoslovakia. To make use of empirical data concerning political aspects of life for the purposes of theoretical analysis was an unusual exercise in an East European country. Indeed, it is the nature of this theoretical analysis and the political implications for the changes taking place which are the focus of this appraisal. The book represented the first attempt to give an overview of a 'socialist' society and for this reason needs to be regarded as unique in an East European context.

Machonin's approach is stated explicitly in the introduction to the book:

> The authors ... started from a Marxist general theoretical and philosophical premise .... (They) feel that their primary responsibility is to contribute to a more thorough, and as far as possible, objective understanding of the new social reality; this so far has not been sufficiently studied .... Sociologists who have chosen as the theme of their research vertical social differentiation and the mobility of the Czechoslovak population have done so in order to describe the specific and characteristic dimensions of the new social formation which is socialist Czechoslovakia .... (my emphasis) ... as such, it probably differs from a number of other societies.[2]

Thus they stated from the beginning that what they were

describing was 'socialist'. It remains an open question whether by thus putting aside any doubts as to the 'socialist' nature of Czechoslovakia the authors were able to proceed with their work more freely than they would otherwise have been able to do. At any rate, they do not address themselves to the problem of a discrepancy existing between their notion of 'socialism' and the findings revealed by their study.

The group working with Machonin deliberately set out to challenge the official ideology from their own 'Marxist' position. This meant that they had to carefully define where they stood in relation to the official position. They write in the introduction: 'We dissociate ourselves from a vulgar interpretation of Marx's approach, particularly economic reductionism and the absolutization of history as class conflict'[3], and later say that 'Stalin's class conception of society is the opposite of vertical social differentiation as it actually exists.'[4] The authors reject class analysis outright as inadequate. They specify that they see Czechoslovakia as a society which is 'no longer capitalist, is comprised of non-antagonistic social relationships, but which lacks a classical dictatorship of the proletariat.'[5] As 'class struggle is no longer a moving force in society'[6], Machonin goes on, it is necessary to analyse anew the 'socialist' division of labour which produces the characteristic dynamics of a 'socialist' society. Machonin proposes that the basic internal dynamic in Czechoslovakia arose from three conflicting factors: the emergence of communist relations; the characteristic social relations of socialism; and the remnants of capitalist

relations and influences.[7] By outlining his position in these terms, Machonin sets out a situation whereby he can argue that observing the existing conflicts and tensions in Czechoslovak society is appropriate because it is a 'transitional' society, basically moving in the direction of communism.

A clarification of some of Machonin's terminology can be found in his preceding publication, Social Structure of Socialist Society[8], a preparatory study for his later work. While the team of authors involved attempted to 'go back to Marx's original categories' and conceptions, at the same time they based their work to a large extent on western sociology. This blend is the heritage of the development of Czechoslovak sociology throughout the 1960s. The authors acknowledge that they accept the idea of society as a 'structural unity'. They describe social structure as a framework from which individual aspects of life can be understood. After making a statement which they believe to be derived from Marx, that the nature of the social structure is determined by the changing productive process, they then go on to analyse the mutual relationship between culture and the social system. They describe what they term social 'superstructure', applying various sociological categories of status and value system, however, with no further reference to the economic structure. This rather orthodox separation of 'base' and 'superstructure', so reminiscent of the 'Stalinist' model itself, is particularly apparent in the team's description of political relationships as though they were unrelated to the economy. The

authors also avoid any discussion on the nature of property relations by arguing that these are irrelevant in a 'classless' society, and they place the social division of labour as the main determinant of social structure. They attribute the conflicts in Czechoslovak society to this 'social division of labour', maintaining that it is comparable to conflicts existing in any industrially advanced society.[9] For the most part they put themselves in a position akin to functionalism, seeing conflict as a 'deviation from socially acceptable forms of behaviour'.[10] As such, conflict can be analytically separated from other 'patterns' of behaviour, and treated as a temporary 'anomaly'. An approach of this kind might appear surprising, as a number of the authors in the book specifically criticise 'non-Marxist' and 'bourgeois' theories of social structure.[11] Their own 'Marxism' is at best very confused, and at worst, non-existent. On the whole, however, this earlier work is a collection of disparate sections and essays which do not amount to a coherent overview. It could be seen as a logical precursor for the larger empirically oriented work, Czechoslovak Society.

Czechoslovak Society can be regarded as the most important sociological study produced in Czechslovakia. It is much more precise in its terminology, and more advanced in its methodology than the earlier work. The book was the result of the long effort of a team of 18 co-authors. The observations were based on data obtained from a representative sample of the Czechoslovak population. The survey took in a total of ½% of Czechoslovak households. For the

purposes of the research they described a household as a family, where the head of the family was an economically active man. The main source of data was a questionnaire containing 199 questions. The field studies were completed by the end of 1967. Despite the changed political climate at the end of 1968, the authors succeeded in having the book published by 1969. Machonin himself was unable to participate in the final preparation of the book as he had been removed from his position at the Sociological Institute.[12]

The main aim of the work was to describe the mechanism of the formation of social stratification, social differentiation, and social mobility in contemporary Czechoslovakia. The authors used the 'vertical dimension' of social stratification as, for them, it indicated the main distinguishing features of different social structures.[13] Their observation that social differentiation, particularly in people's life-style, existed in modern Czechoslovakia despite a great degree of economic egalitarianism and levelling of incomes, they took to be the most significant finding of the research.

Social status was used as a measurement of social differentiation, and the authors worked on the assumption that an analysis of 'macro-structural' vertical differentiation could be obtained from an analysis of individual social status. They considered the following features of individual social differentiation to be the most important: the complexity of work; the style of life, particularly during leisure time; qualifications; the standard of living

and income; and participation in decision-making.[14] Machonin and his team used these criteria to establish what they called a 'composite' social status, which could then give an adequate profile of Czechoslovak vertical stratification. There is an 'internal structure' to this composite social status, they argued, which is made up by two separate types of vertical social stratification. The first type was called socio-cultural, and the second, political-organizational.[15] Machonin arrived at this conclusion by factor analysis, and by using a taxonomic description to obtain what was seen as 'typical' status patterns.

Taking the 'socio-cultural' differentiation first, Machonin found that there was a pear-shaped distribution curve of social status, with 2.3% of the population occupying the highest position, 18.1% occupying the lowest, while 56.6%, the bulk of the population, occupied an intermediate position. From this data Machonin maintained that an individual's position on the socio-cultural stratification axis was dependent upon education, complexity of work and life-style. These results disproved the authors' original hypothesis which stated that

> The dominant determinant of social stratification would be political-organizational differentiation .... Contrary to the hypothesis of the levelling role of education and the similarity of living standards ... socio-cultural differentiation proved to be the main determinant.[16]

Machonin then suggests what one could consider as one of the most important insights into the political realities of an East European country, that 'Socio-cultural status determ-

ines participation in decision-making and not vice-versa.'[17] In other words, there has been a recent shift in Czechoslovakia away from the traditional power elite.

These findings prompted Machonin and his co-authors to ask a fundamental question: Why is it that in Czechoslovak society, where there has been an equalization in incomes and living standards, people's cultural pattern of leisure activity is similar to that in other industrial societies, where people's individual behaviour on the whole corresponds to their class/economic differences?[18] The authors arrived at a very different picture of society compared with the traditional 'Stalinist' class analysis, which until then was used to describe 'socialism'. They produced an assessment of the 'new' situation which showed a distinct professional vertical differentiation characterized by a sharp division of labour between manual and non-manual occupations. This acknowledgement placed the authors in an ideological quandary. 'Class analysis' would give the intelligentsia a low status because they were a 'service class', while in reality, they held a position with high socio-cultural status. The authors also found certain 'historic anachronisms' in Czechoslovak society, such as groups characterized by high income, low participation in decision-making, and in 'simple manual' occupations.[19]

On the whole, though, their conclusion was clear. Income differentiation alone does not form an independent dimension of vertical stratification. When non-vertical stratification was studied, for example the relationship

between industry and agriculture, or town and country, it was found that it was not a separate phenomenon from vertical stratification, but always associated with it. Professional status was seen as an important index of position on the vertical stratification axis. In that respect, Czechoslovakia compared favourably, the authors said, with the chances of social mobility in other advanced industrial countries, such as the USA and Australia.

In his opening chapter, Machonin argues that Czechoslovakia is a variant of an industrial achievement society. It is a highly differentiated and stratified society, reflecting the differences in people's interests and opinions.[20] He describes this state of affairs as an emerging, realistic version of 'socialism' (my emphasis). It is a socially just system, he says, that respects individual differences.[21] Here Machonin is referring to (what he was later accused of propagating) the idea of a 'pluralistic democratic' society. He quite deliberately argues against the pre-1918 version of mechanistic egalitarianism. He views the bureaucracy and egalitarianism of the recent past as part of a 'dictatorial superstructure erected on a substructure of a mass of equals'.[22] Machonin goes on to argue that the only stimulant to cultural and individual progress in the 1960s was 'technocratic professionalism'.[23] The results of his work, he believed, demonstrated the existence of a tension between the old bureaucratic / egalitarian relationships and the nascent 'socialist' relationships. Within that framework he thought that the 'technocratic' type of relationship represented a 'middle ground' between the two types.

It is near to 'socialism' because of its stress on qualifications and achievements, but there are still some remnants of bureaucratism due to the 'slow introduction of democracy'.[24] According to Machonin, the economic and cultural crisis of the early 1960s was to do with the bureaucratic-egalitarian system. There was an influential group of bureaucrats who supported the whole system, Machonin argues, and they wanted to extend the existing bureaucratic conditions. In opposition, there was a group of 'cultured' technocrats and scientific-technological intellectuals who wanted to modify the system along 'technocratic' lines. Well paid, low qualified workers, 'obviously' supported the egalitarian system, Machonin contends, while the qualified workers supported the new trend because they could see that it offered a better chance of achieving prosperity and higher standards of living. Machonin then makes the generalization that most of the population therefore 'objectively' wanted to bring about the new 'socialist' changes. They could see that these changes would mean a 'democratization of social life.' That is, a democratization would allow room for the development of individual interest, as his research revealed.[25]

These pressures for 'democratization' began to affect policy-making. It could be said that Machonin rallied significant support for the protagonists of the reforms, particularly with his finding that the main supporters of reform were the qualified groups.[26] In another publication Machonin went so far as to urge an active discrimination against the 'unqualified worker' in favour of the 'qualif-

ied'. He thought that support should be given to the qualified worker, who is more valuable (my emphasis) to society. Machonin argued that a reduction in the number of unqualified workers would mean an increase in the living standard of the qualified.[27]

In his lengthy analysis of socio-cultural stratification, Czechoslovak Society, Machonin makes repeated reference to the 'power elite'. However, only one chapter, 'Power and social differentiation' by L. Brokl[28], is directly devoted to an analysis of 'political-organizational' vertical stratification. Machonin's own view on the significance of power relations existing in society can be found in his conclusion. Although hierarchical power relations are a basis for other inequalities, he maintains that the main features of society are not formed by membership of the Party, as would be expected, but by the 'complexity of work'.[29] There is a contradiction between this conclusion and Machonin's own admission that it was impossible to study the power elite as such, because the researchers were not given access to data on stratification at the top of the power elite. Consequently, admits Machonin, it was not possible to draw any conclusions relating the power mechanism to social stratification in general.[30] In this respect, Brokl's conclusions are slightly different from Machonin's. After a theoretical exposition of the nature of social organization, Brokl asserts that power, particularly political power, plays a dominant role in social stratification. His theoretical definition of power, however, is based on the interpretation given by western sociologists, especially Max Weber.

Brokl sees power as the ability to control others, and he argues that the main components of a power relationship are authority and influence. Power relationships are a universal characteristic of any social system. He lists the specific features of Czechoslovak society as follows: the Party directs the state; political and economic power is integrated into state power, with a consequent reduction of the citizens' own legitimate power; and a multi-component power system has been reduced to a one-component power system, producing an expansion of the central power into all spheres of life.[31]

Brokl constructs two pyramids to demonstrate the comparative distribution of authority and influence. Contrary to expectations, the pyramid of influence is sharper than that of authority. His figures show that 51.7% of the total sample did not participate in the power structure in the dimension of authority. If the figure were to be corrected to account for those who did not answer, and for those who were not economically active in the researcher's definition, the result would be 74.9%. 69% of the sample did not participate in the power structure in the dimension of influence, and 61% of the sample had no say at all in the decision-making process.[32] One interpretation of these statistics, according to Brokl, could be that there is a lessening of democracy in the Czechoslovak social system which, he says, would be unjustifiable if other factors outside the scope of the investigation were not taken into account. His own interpretation is that there is an unbalanced division of power between

different levels of social organization. However, once Brokl attempts to put these figures into the context of social stratification patterns he finds that formal power has a greater effect than does influence. Formal power, according to him, reduces influence to a peripheral significance. Brokl finds some interesting correlations. For example, those with a lower status were found to have a high position on the influence dimension, while those with a higher status were high on the formal authority dimension. He also found a correlation between income and power, which Machonin did not observe.[33] Nevertheless, Brokl's observations fall short of any firm conclusion. Asking why it is that the cultural elite has managed to accumulate positions of power, he suggests three possible explanations: first, it is a traditional pattern that those who are both cultured and intelligent tend to accumulate social functions; second, the nature of totalitarian power is such that it tends to absorb the cultural sphere within its organization and its ideology; and three, there is is a tendency for the bureaucracy to become more cultured and cultivated, thereby transforming itself into a technocratic intelligentsia.[34] According to Brokl, this last explanation is the most adequate one.

Although Brokl goes further than Machonin in naming the bureaucracy as a power elite, he too was unable to penetrate the highest echelons of the power organizations and he admits that his conclusions are based on data from the middle and lower apparat. Brokl shies away from a discussion on the concentration of power by arguing that

there is not an absolute intensification of power in Czechoslovakia, and that the power apparat is subject to mobility. What he was observing, he explains, is an expression of the different types of activities, organizational frameworks, and division of roles, which do not necessarily coincide with an intensification of power, and he adds that this may have more to do with the legitimation of authority.[35] Though not a satisfactory conclusion in itself, Brokl nevertheless goes on to say that the existing organizational patter was found to be at variance with the 'official' ideology, which maintained that the working class did play a leading role in society. On the contrary, Brokl found that power was concentrated in the non-manual strata, in administrators and state employees. The least favoured section of society were the peasants and some categories of industrial manual workers.

There is some confusion in Brokl's conception of bureaucracy and the 'power elite'. He argues that the traditional criteria of power, such as the ownership of property, is not applicable. Instead, he bases his categories of power on administrative functions, for example, bureaucratic functions, and he defines his own conception of the power elite as a 'functional group' within the social organization which holds, or thinks that it holds, power.[36] He identifies power with the possession of a strategic role in an organization, due to the ability to coordinate and organize. Brokl also found a close correlation between power and high status, and other socio-cultural characteristics. He observes a stronger correl-

ation between education and authority, than between education and influence or power, and concludes that power is a collector of other attributes. Party membership is only one of them. When he emphasizes that the power elite is a collector of other structural characteristics, for example socio-cultural status, he gives the following statistics: the holders of authority at the level of directors of enterprises comprised 15.4% of the research sample. Of these, 56% are Party members. Of the subordinates with no power, who comprise 63% of the sample, only 24.3% are Party members, and the whole remaining 74.7% are not.[37] (my emphasis). Although one could argue that more power is still associated with Party membership and Party functions, Brokl suggests that hierarchical relations are no longer based on pure political authority, but that now they rest on 'legal authority'. The 'new technocratic' strata are clearly assuming an important position as far as the organizational authority is concerned. Brokl, therefore, although exposing the present power elite, does not go beyond the 'technocratic' framework set by Machonin himself. Machonin also criticises 'Stalinist' bureaucracy, but as something apart from the Party, as if they were separate phenomena. He indicates that bureaucracy is a generalized phenomenon, having its roots as much in the present 'socialist division of labour' as in the old centralized system, and thinks that bureaucratization has happened 'behind the back of the revolution'.[38] By this, he is referring to the 1945-48 period in Czechoslovakia. Moreover, according to Machonin, bureaucratiz-

ation took place independently of the Party, 'without its knowing', and he cites as evidence of this the 'fact' that today's power elite refers to the 1950s as 'the fruit of deformations on the road of transition to socialism'.[39]

Brokl goes on to voice one of his most significant and perhaps daring comments, that the Party is stratified in the same way as the whole of society, and that society is not stratified according to membership or non-membership of the Party.[40] Although not being able to expand on the implication of this conclusion for the actual formation of the power elite, Brokl states that 'the results of the findings invalidate the class criteria of our political mythology'.[41] The situation, according to Brokl, is characterized by a shift away from the present Party political elite because its arbitrary exercise of power is giving way to a legalistic expression, more in line with Western Europe. Consequently, the apparat is assuming more of an executive role. Here, Brokl conforms to the view shared by those active in the reform movement in 1968.

Discussion

While the research for Czechoslovak Society was being done, the liberalization process was well under way, and this allowed the research team to be reasonably well informed. Their conclusions bear the mark of the team's prominent social position. The aim of their work was to present an 'objective', empirically based account of the nature of Czechoslovak society. One of the many problems of that position is the team's methodologically interchanging

'empiricism' with 'Marxism', which was indicative of the then prevalent theoretical as well as political 'conservatism'. Machonin's co-authors always claimed to be 'dialectical materialists', but the following statement taken from a definition of the mainstream of positivism could equally be applied to them:

> The description of facts and phenomena is the highest stage of scientific knowledge .... science should be based on exact, non-speculative observations. The essence of the methodology should be based on that of the natural sciences.[42]

Machonin announced in the chapter on methodology that the analysis of the research was based on sophisticated mathematical and statistical models, and the team was proud of having achieved this. According to him, the data were accompanied by a de-coding of correlations, classification and the testing of hypotheses.[43] The choice of these methods is not in itself a subject for criticism; however what is, is the way in which the team uses the data, which is symptomatic of their confusion between scientific technique and scientific method. The data which Machonin's team collected gave them an 'adequate picture' of Czechoslovak society. Nowhere do they attempt to point to the sources for their data and explain those. They imply that if a scientific technique is applied, then the conclusion will necessarily be 'objective'. In other words, the data, if properly collected, are supposed to 'speak for themselves'. In this respect, Machonin's work is a link which the 'new' sociology made with the 'value-free' sociology of the past.

There are a number of tautological arguments in the book. Machonin sets out by constructing a hypothesis that by its nature Czechoslovak society is a 'socialist', industrially advanced society with corresponding forms of social stratification. His data is then used to identify these particular forms of 'socialist social stratification' (my emphasis). There is, however, no attempt to measure if Czechoslovakia is indeed a socialist country, or to define what the characteristics of a 'socialist' society are. Machonin concludes by arguing that the hypothesis was proven correct and that Czechoslovakia was in his interpretation even more 'socialist' than expected at the beginning. This logic only works if one accepts that there is a 'socialist' stratification because Czechoslovakia is a priori a 'socialist' society. In this sense, empirical data serve as mere illustrations. It is hard to accept the team's conclusions as those of 'detached' social scientists when they present us with a series of points, for example: 1) The social stratification of Czechoslovakia in 1967 is definitely non-capitalist; 2) Czechoslovak society in 1967 is no longer a society of the dictatorship of the proletariat; 3) Czechoslovak society is shown to be egalitarian in the economic sphere of distribution, while there are great inequalities in the division of power; 4) There is a growing trend towards a technocratic type of society. These conclusions, however accurate they may be individually, are presented together as an affirmation of the emerging 'socially just' system, the 'realistic socialism'.[44]

Machonin's elaboration of an 'ideal type' of 'socialism'

has been compared by Ernest Gellner to Marx's working with an 'ideal type' of nineteenth-century capitalism.[45] In my view, however, Machonin's theoretical exercise is more akin to Weberian sociology. In a critique of Weber, J. Lewis argues that

> By analysing the existing system to show its internal structure, its motives, its consciousness, its own logic, he (Weber) creates the model of a rational order within the framework of its goals and methods .... As he (Weber) explains, he is by no means describing reality, he is imposing a rational pattern of it.[46]

Perhaps this could equally well be applied to Machonin. Contrary to Weber, however, one could say that Machonin does not stand back from his theoretical constructs, but is part of them, advocating the 'new technocratic order' as if it were a reality.

Machonin himself was part of the intellectual movement that was gaining position and prestige during the liberalization process. It is to this movement that we must look when Machonin points to the 'coalition of social forces' that were bringing about the 'new socialism'.[47] Although Machonin said 'We don't want to invent our socialism, we prefer to deduce it from the real trend of development'[48], this 'real trend' was the exceptional period of Czechoslovak development leading to 1968. The kind of 'realistic' aspirations which the sociologists displayed during this period is well summarized by A. Liehm, a Czech author of the 1960s:

> The cultural intelligentsia began to play a

> significant role only after their dark prophesies came true and the economic consequences of Stalinism gradually manifested themselves to all. Thus the Czechoslovak experience showed once again that, while the intellectual may orient himself quickly in complicated social situations and while he may be the first to sense danger and to see possible solutions, his insights are wasted unless they are accompanied by political power. As long as the intellectual is out of touch with political leadership, his role is limited to that of a Cassandra; his time comes only after the masses have become convinced of the accuracy of his prophecies. In short, when it is too late.[49]

There was a short-lived symbiosis of the Party liberalizers and the scientific-technological intelligentsia in 1968, but that, it seems, was possible only so long as the scientific-technical strata provided their expertise without claiming too much political power. Machonin observes that the 'instrumentation of power is not yet professional and no longer purely ideological'.[50] At the same time, it became Machonin's and Richta's motto that 'technocratization' is desirable and appropriate to an advanced industrial society. It follows, then, that the small amount of criticism of political dogmatism and the Party centralism present in Machonin's book was phrased in such a way that it would not give grounds for dispute. Nevertheless the tension remains. It is implicit in Machonin's writing on the so-called 'egalitarian bureaucracy' that it is not only highly inefficient, but is seen as retarding the inevitable historical development towards a 'democratic' society. Thus, it is a historic task that needs to be fulfilled.

The Party could hardly deny that it too was seeking 'democratic socialism'. As long as both groups - the Party and the technical strata - were then convinced of the rightness and mutual profitability of the proposed reforms, their objectives were also similar. This compatibility of objectives, however, masked their incompatible aims: these were the retention of central political power and control over decision-making by the Party elite, and the 'effective running of society' by the scientific-technological intelligentsia. When Brokl argued that 'It is probable that in the 1950s, Party membership had a direct bearing ... (on) presence in the top power elite'[51], but that today there is a comparatively open elite structure, composed of professionals, bureaucrats and technocrats, he is in fact endorsing the technocrats' rise to power. It is my opinion that the book Czechoslovak Society helped to cast the 'old bureaucracy' as historically obsolete vis-a-vis the technocracy, and the sociological 'facts' used 'set the scene' of a new ideological climate for the reform movement in 1968.

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Chapter 5

Conclusion

The argument in the Introduction is linked to the conclusion on Machonin's and Richta's works, namely that the reforms put forward in Eastern Europe in the post-Stalin period show little original departure from the status quo.

Looking specifically at Czechoslovakia in the 1960s, what becomes clear is that the so-called reform movement never posed a real opposition to the Party centralized system as such. What critique of the system there was, was directed at the old, relatively weak and intellectually subservient bureaucratic elite. A 'scene was set' by the social scientists in accepting a society without the traditional 'dictatorship of the proletariat' as a new norm. It was vital that if the reform movement of 1968 was to take off, a new ideological reality of 'democratic socialism' had to become attractive to the Czech people at large.

A strong evocation of the 'democratic' past was a helpful first step. A vision was advanced of a society with 'non-antagonistic' social groups, with fresh horizons of achievement for the long oppressed and inactive individuals, where the Party's political dogmatism would not override all common sense, a society run on a 'rational scientific' basis. This picture was one of a new social reality, one full of new promises. Indeed, one could argue that the scientific technological intelligentsia of the 1960s were gaining ideological legitimacy long before they actually specified their intentions.

Moreover, social scientists like Richta and Machonin and economists like Sik were formulating specific reform proposals jointly with members of the existing Party machinery. They were familiar with the requirements and complexities involved in organizing a complex society in a changing situation within the East European bloc. The Action Programme of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, published in April 1968, goes further than any other document in summarizing the aims of the broad spectrum of the liberalizers. The core of their proposals holds a fine balance between the essential economic changes which would be welcome throughout Eastern Europe, including the USSR, and a political move rendering the power of the old elite obsolete.

Basically, the economic changes proposed amounted to an introduction of market criteria which, according to the Action Programme, 'would put an end to the previous simplified schematic approach to ... production and trade.'[1] The Programme stated that 'The structure of enterprises must be varied, just as the demands of our market.'[2] All East European economies were looking for 'revitalization' of the economy, satisfying demand and leading to rising production and living standards. What, however, is not realizable is a combination of market mechanism with the old centralist style of management. As they are two different value systems there can be no conceivable reconciliation between 'free flow of information and free hiring and firing of labour' by competing enterprises and a command system with one centre of control. The reason

why many of the economic reforms in Eastern Europe fail has to do with precisely this contradiction: that the old elite cannot introduce changes which would go against its own ethos of power. Perceptively, the Action Programme stated: 'The Communist Party, as a party of the working class, won the struggle with capitalism and the struggle to carry out revolutionary class changes.'[3] In other words, the present Party elite rose to power and is able to remain there as long as it can claim its leading class position. A society where working class interests no longer need defending directly from the top is a society where clearly the traditional Party elite has no role to play. The Action Programme continues: '... with the victory of socialism, it (the Party) becomes the vanguard of the entire socialist society'.[4] The crucial term in this quotation refers to what is being defined as a 'socialist' society. Machonin and Richta unambiguously stated that the new 'socialist' society is an open, achievement-oriented society. Therefore, as the Programme makes clear,

> The Party cannot enforce its authority but this must be won again and again by Party activity. It cannot force its line through directives but by the work of its members ....[5]

The new members were now being educated. They were the scientific-technological intelligentsia in alliance with sections of the working class. In Machonin's and Richta's terminology, here was the 'qualified worker', keen on eradicating 'crude egalitarianism' and keen on introducing new technocratic incentives. The battle between the 'hard-

liners' and the 'liberalizers' was clearly a battle over winning the hearts and the muscle of the working class, with the old Party elite relying on the 'old' working class, the new elite relying on the 'new' working class.

The message of the proposed scientific-technological revolution was to retain the social structure with the 'leading role' of the Party at the top, to retain the hierarchical differences and, in particular, to 'update' the system of privilege so that it would include the non-traditional Party members as well as some non-Party members themselves. The Action Programme states that:

> If the leading posts are not to be filled by capable, educated socialist expert cadres, socialism will be unable to hold its own in competition with capitalism.[6]

Even the phrasiology of the new elite is reminiscent of the 'vanguardism' of the era of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'.

When in 1969 results were published of the composition of members of the reform inspired workers councils, Machonin and Richta could still satisfy themselves that the 'qualified' workers were firmly behind the 'cultured' technocracy. It was shown that the majority of the elected representatives to the councils were technicians and engineers. Of the total of 92 councils elected in 1969, 70% of their representatives were technicians and engineers, 24% were workers and 6% were administrative personnel.[7] Thirty per cent of workers council members received university education and 28%, full college education.[8] These figures

were interpreted at the time as evidence for the 'rational' activity of the workers, and as proof of their ability to appreciate the importance of the 'scientific-technological revolution'. There is also evidence, though, that by September 1968 a strong non-professional alliance of workers, students and some intellectuals had been formed.[9] The important feature of this alliance was the rejection of the scientific-technical intelligentsia's position, together with that of the reformist wing of the Party. Galia Golan's work, Reform Rule in Czechoslovakia, confirms the view that after the invasion in August 1968 it was 'the workers ... (who) became by far the strongest pressure group'.[10] Since neither the economists nor the sociologists were seriously analysing power dynamics in the changing climate of Czechoslovak society, they could not anticipate the actual behaviour of the people. It seemed that the post-invasion initiative, particularly in creating a different version of workers' councils to that suggested by economists like Sik, did not point in the direction of 'technocratic socialism'. Although after the invasion there was nation-wide support for Dubcek and the idea of 'Socialism with a human face', scepticism about 'what is there for the workers' remained. It was not difficult to see that in the eyes of the technocratic reformers the 'procedures to be followed when setting up the workers councils' were to conform to what the new management called 'a well thought out and organized manner'.[11] The grounds for scepticism could be found through careful reading of the 'democratization' proposals contained in the Action

Programme itself. It was admitted that:

> The drafting of the national economic plan and the national economic policy must be subject to the democratic control of the National Assembly and the specialized control of scientific institutions. ... This presupposes an institutional set-up of central management which would ... harmonize ... the operation of individual economic instruments and measures of the State.[12] (my emphasis)

The 'failure' of the modernizers could arguably be seen in their desire to introduce changes from above by injecting the old structure with the vigour of new sentiments. Once the technocratic intelligentsia declared itself as the new incumbent of power, the invasion was inevitable. The threat to the East European bloc was not in the boldness of the economic reform, nor in the 'democratization' of life (which would surpass what many a Stalinist stood in sterile fear of) - both of which were desirable in the eyes of the present Party elite. Rather, the threat was in removing the present power elite as the agents of control and agents of future changes, as this would open the whole idea of communist development inside Eastern Europe to new interpretation. The Action Programme confirmed this view by stating:

> The main thing is to reform the whole political system so that it will permit the dynamic development of socialist social relations, combine broad democracy with a scientific highly qualified management, strengthen the social order ....[13]

That the scientific-technocratic intelligentsia might bring about a successful 'market socialism' became a very

real and worrying possibility to those in power. In the post-invasion days, the group of 'hardliners' who returned to power launched a 'normalization' programme in 1969-70 which was managed back-stage by the Soviet Union.

The main thrust of this normalization programme was an attack on 'counter revolutionary' forces, and the direct result was a shift towards re-establishing the links with the working class by introducing a 'consumerist' version of 'socialism'. Even though this policy is now failing badly it served temporarily as a popular measure on the part of the traditional Party elite protecting the 'traditional' working class interests. At the same time, sociology was returned to its status as a marginal discipline, supplying specialized research on demand.[14] The Sociological Institute of the CSAV was abolished in 1970, and a new Institute of Philosophy and Sociology established in its place.[15] The academic teaching of sociology as an independent discipline has ceased and most theoretical work has been stopped. Only small-scale empirical research, for instance work on gipsies or on factory foremen, remains.[16] What teaching and research there is, needs to be yet again interpreted in the light of Marxism-Leninism.

The new editor of the Sociological Journal chose a vigorous defence of his version of scientific objectivity as the leading article in his first issue. If sociology was to be an objective science, he argued, then the decisive safeguard of its objectivity would lie in its philosophical affiliation. Clearly, sociology must not go 'beyond Party spiritedness'.[17] In his insistence on 'Marxist' categories, one can see that yet again the most

acceptable way of analysing socialism, as well as capitalism, is in terms of class analysis. As an article in Nova Mysl spells out, 'Class contradictions and divisions still exist'.[18] Machonin's advocacy of pluralism was a major blunder on his part, it is said.[19] Masaryk, and any associations with him, are also condemned as anti-communist, and the idea of 'ethical socialism' no longer has anything to do with the existing 'socialist' society.[20]

This 'fresh' reinterpretation of what 'socialist reality' is, highlights the importance which an elite in power gives to 'data'. There is nothing absurd these days in admitting to 'class contradictions' as long as this 'fact' can safeguard the 'reality' of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'. In the same way, the social scientists in the 1960s believed that as long as they maintained a 'scientific' approach based on empirical data, their social standing would not be threatened. In that respect both the elites, the old Party and the scientific-technological intelligentsia, were using identical means of gaining ground. Both subscribed to 'scientific neutrality' which is 'above ideology' while 'wheeling in' their own value system with vested political interests. Arguably, the scientific-technological intelligentsia took a small step in depriving the Party of their monopoly of interpretation over Marxism-Leninism in the 1960s, as well as in depriving it of its monopoly of political control.

Moreover, the limits of de-Stalinization in Eastern Europe can be seen in a similar way, or as an ever circular process of reinterpretation in order to maintain 'socialist' stability. The most visibly crude misrepresentation of

Marxism, for which East European reformers are well known, is to use various intellectual sources to back up their 'scientific' approach: from crude reference to Lenin's empiricism, which has become a leading source of 'natural-scientific materialism', to the adaptation of positivism and functionalism by Czechoslovak sociologists in the 1960s. This kind of 'Marxism', however, is more akin to 'pragmatism at any cost' than to genuine theory. Though the 'reversal to bourgeois influences' which allegedly took place in the 1960s is presently criticised, the 'laws of nature' are still preferred to a Marxist analysis of social contradictions which could reveal the depth of current social and political inequalities.

In conclusion, the rapidity with which Czechoslovak social scientists came into prominence in the 1960s was facilitated by the availability of a sociological tradition and sociological method based on work of the 1920s and 1930s which subscribed to 'value-freedom' and which could be 'safely' incorporated. Richta summarized the ambitions of many in the 1960s when he said that the separate sphere of 'politics could disappear as long as we make sure that things are done .... The Party is helpless without production'.[21]

The 'doers' of the '60s, however, tackled a much larger problem than they could have anticipated. The idea of an 'open' society undoubtedly sounded fresh and revolutionary in Czechoslovakia in 1968 but the people behind the idea were by no means revolutionaries themselves. Technical innovation, it seems, is one of the few uncertain but tried avenues of regeneration available to modernizing elites.

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