

the *Sociologický časopis* (Sociological Review).

The pleasant, professional and diligent manner in which the congress ran fuels our hope that the *Masaryk Czech Sociological Association* is far from lacking prospects. In

resigning, the current President wishes all members pleasure in their work, enough time, good will within the Association and much inspiration for the new leadership.

Miloslav Petrusek

The Session of the Section on Social Transformation at the MČSS Congress

The proceedings of the session on social transformation was dynamic and of great interest. In his preliminary address, Pavel Machonin reviewed the relative success of the attempt to create a map of contemporary society according to macrostructural quantitative research on social structure as well as peoples' attitudes and similar research in the areas of both economic sociology and the sociology of regions and localities. However, despite the significance of electoral behavior analyses completed, he did draw attention to the findings' insufficient empirical grounding in the area of political sociology. Although the first steps of more complex, interdisciplinary projects, including *Europe 2000*, were considered positive, Machonin also warned against reducing the investigation of the transformation into the macrostructural empiric-analytical approaches. He advocated the most comprehensive cooperation with microstructural, biographical and genealogical research, and with the assets of branch sociologies, insufficient as they are at present. It is his wish that sociological theory should participate more fully and more systematically in the transformation study as a specific example of social change. Similarly, he saw no tension between the prevailing, so-called alternative approaches to society, but rather a complementary and cooperative relationship. The problem of social transformation has become a significant common theme in the research and discussion activities within Czech sociology. It may bring us some international success if we are able to maintain an objective approach in the best sense of the term, meaning an academic approach both in research and debating style and that we combine the traditional Czech

imagination and skill with continuing study, diligence and achievement.

In the first part of the discussion, Michal Illner presented both the qualities and difficulties of interdisciplinary cooperation and prognosis, illustrating this with reference to the realization of project *Evropa 2000*. J. Alan identified the typical transformation phenomena, including, above all, the role of marginal groups, thus contributing to the theme of the differences and possible directions of mutual influences between the traditional and alternative concepts and methods. J. Kabele criticized the inherent weaknesses of macrostructural quantitative research, which have prevented us from recognizing the emergence of the new social climate as was made possible by qualitative, narrative methods. J. Krejčí from England and I. Gad'ourek from the Netherlands also participated in this discussion. The chairman and some other participants again encouraged the idea of cooperation among the various approaches to the reality of the transformation, as for example, with regard to marginal groups.

Later in the discussion, the participants illustrated the usefulness of the meeting of the different research areas and levels: with presentations of the research on university students' attitudes to the transformation process (Šafránková), the sociology of privatized enterprises (I. Hradecká and J. Vlášil), and the regional sociology of the frontier (F. Zich). M. Čermáková presented information on the results of empirical research confirming the hypothesis as to the rather negative influence of the initial phases of the transformational process on the status of women, for the time being well accepted by the female population. Vacek suggested that the inhabitants' value orientation has not yet undergone drastic change and that the existing

social conciliation is based on the assumption that there will be no further deterioration in the worker's status. In response to this, the chairman suggested new ways of investigating value orientations, which might enable us to recognize some of the most significant changes in people's attitudes (this, while still acknowledging the existence and importance of transitional illusions and adaptive mechanisms). During the course of the discussion, Vacková acquainted the plenum

with J. E. Purkyně's philosophical legacy which she considers to be of continuing relevance.

The lively character of the discussion and the considerable interest value of the topics presented, invited reflexions as to the possibility of dealing more methodically with the problems of social transformation as with the common problem of the various sections in the Czech Sociological Association.

Pavel Machonin