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MODEL OF SPECIAL SOCIOLOGY

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I. Present Situation

The development of special sociologies and the rise of new branches of sociological knowledge often cause conflicts with the "old", i. e. constituted, social sciences. These conflicts of competence refer mainly to the demarcation of limits of the respective branches.

A series of open or beginning problems ask for solution, as for instance the problem of relations of political science and sociology of politics, science of economics and sociology of economics, science of religion and sociology of religion, science of the technique and sociology of the technique, science of science and sociology of science, science of the language and sociology of the language, or demography and demographic sociology, social geography and geographic sociology, social medicine and medical sociology (or more precisely: sociology of medicine), etc. At present from all the mentioned problems that of the relation between political science and sociology of politics seems to be of first-rate importance. We can observe that often identical themes are once treated under the heading of political science, another time, of sociology of politics.¹ An analogous situation can be encountered with in the problem of the relation between the science of culture and sociology of culture. In this case a further complication is caused by different conceptions of culture.²

As to the problems of the objects of special sociologies of social groups more vagueness can be encountered with than the case is with sociologies of various spheres of social life. Above all, it refers to the objects of the sociology of the social class, of the nation, of youth, of the city etc. As a rule there are no "pairs" of sciences, i. e. an independent science of a group and a special sociology about the same group. There is, for instance, no independent science of the youth, of the social class, etc. As far as the existence of a "pair" of scientific branches is acknowledged (e. g. of science of the nation and sociology of the nation, of science of the family and sociology of the family), the distinction

¹ J. Klofáč, V. Tlustý: "Poznámky ke vztahu politické vědy a sociologie politiky", *Sociologický časopis*, V. 1967.

² J. S z c e p a ň s k í: *Základní sociologické pojmy*. Praha 1966, pp. 32 ff.

usually is not very clear. It can be expected that in future the problems of the "pairs" of sciences will arise with respect to social activities (to work above all) and social processes (e. g. conflict).

At present the above problems are solved in various ways. In some cases the solution is the result of the application of power; in other cases, of a tacit agreement; and often nothing is being solved at all.

The first solution takes place in sociology as well as in independent social sciences. Between sciences, i. e. between scientific workers, we do not always find relationships of cooperation and mutual assistance, but of rivalry brought forth mostly by expansive tendencies. Such expansive tendencies are connected with the fact that specialists are inclined to overestimate their respective sciences. On various grounds sociology has fallen in disgrace with a part of lawyers, economists and also some historians, etc. Not so long ago some theoreticians of the so-called scientific communism attempted to substitute sociology by it. On the other hand, sociology suffers from identical expansive tendencies too. As a proof let us quote writings from the sociology of politics, the nation, the family, etc.

2. Fundamentals of a Solution

Which starting-point must we choose to solve the above problems? The pre-condition of a fundamental solution is the definition of a reference-system for various kinds of social sciences.³ A reference-system is "a certain system of the aspects of reality, phenomena or processes, a certain system of 'elements' in relation to which the given society is investigated".⁴ The reference system of any special sociology is the whole social reality. Accordingly, sociology is to study specific social phenomena in the system and structure of all social phenomena. In other words, the task of various sociological branches is the investigation of social phenomena "as component parts or facets of the social structure".⁵

3. Scheme of Special Sociology

The construction of a model of special sociology requires as its prerequisite a classification of social phenomena. The main kinds of social phenomena are: (a) spheres of social life; (b) social groups; (c) social activities and processes.

(a) Spheres of social life.

As to the question of the spheres of social life current conceptions differ in regard to the enumeration as well as to classification. To remain in our own sociology: When analysing "social institutions", I. A. Bláha proceeds from his classification of the needs of society. He distinguishes: (a) material needs (to provide for material livelihood and reproduction), (b) spiritual needs (to provide for spiritual livelihood and reproduction) and (c) the need to protect the material and spiritual life "against the disturbing elements affecting social life from within

³ Z. S t r m i s k a: "K základním otázkám pojetí marxistické sociologie", *Přehled*, Vol. 1965.

⁴ *op. cit.*, p. 107.

⁵ *op. cit.*, p. 108.

or from without".⁶ These needs have determined the origin and development of (a) economic and family institutions, (b) of cultural institutions (speech, law, morality, science, art, religion), (c) power institutions (political and military). A similar classification according to social functions is that of J. L. Fischer.⁷ Another standpoint — in relation to the degree of objectification and subjectification (i. e. of objective and subjective elements) — is brought forth by E. Chalupný.⁸ He arranges social "products" in a circle so that each of them adjoins such as are most akin to it. In this circle go side by side: the technique, organization, education, speech, art, theory, religion and morality.

Neither can any unity of classifications of social spheres of social life be found in marxist sociology. The Soviet theorist V. P. Rožin⁹ distinguishes four spheres: material life, social, political and spiritual. Problematic is, first all, his conception of social life. He seems to have included in social life such phenomena which did not fit in other spheres. A more detailed classification of social spheres was elaborated by D. Slejška.¹⁰ From the standpoint of the theory of social being and social consciousness he arranged the spheres of social (or natural-social) relations as follows: Social-geographic sphere, demographic sphere, the sphere of productive forces, of economics, politics, law, military life and institutions, morality, education, art, religion, theory (science and philosophy) and of language. The sphere of politics, law and military institutions form, according to Slejška, a transition from the social being to the social consciousness. His classification is, to my mind, more appropriate and precise than Rožin's classification. But the problem remains whether a "horizontal" structuration comports satisfactorily with the relations between the spheres. Politics, law and education, for instance, penetrate into a number a spheres. However, in spite of this objection Slejška's classification of social spheres can be applied to the construction of the model of special sociology.

(b) Group Structure

Differences of conceptions of the group are manifest in the problem of group structure. So far we want definitions of the following concepts: group, community, communion, organization, institution. A very broad conception of the group is applicable to the construction of a model. Such a broad conception is the basis of the following group classification: territorial, residential, biosocial (racial, ethnical, sex, age, generation and family groups), economical (professional, income groups), political (according to the degree of share in political power or activity), cultural (according to the level of education), economic-social (classes) etc.¹¹

(c) Social activities and processes

The conception of activity and process seems to be still more complicated. I agree with such a conception which differentiates between them. Activities are,

⁶ I. A. Bláha: *Jak se dívat sociologicky na život*. Brno 1947, p. 9. Cf. also his *Sociologie*, Praha 1968, pp. 30 ff.

⁷ J. L. Fischer: *Krise demokracie*, Vol. II, Brno 1933.

⁸ E. Chalupný: *Sociologie pro každého*, Praha 1948, pp. 119 ff.

⁹ V. P. Rožin: *Úvod do marxistické sociologie*, Bratislava 1963.

¹⁰ D. Slejška: "Klasifikace speciálních společenských věd", *Filosofický časopis*, Vol. 1964.

¹¹ Z. Strmiska, M. Petrušek: "Společenské skupiny" in the Volume *Sociální struktura socialistické společnosti*, Praha 1966.

according to Szczepański, "intentional, rational systems of actions",¹² while processes are a "series of changes" in relations, institutions, groups and other types of social systems.¹³

The main activities are work, recreation (synthetic activities according to Chalupný,¹⁴), competition, fight, war, revolution (contradictory activities). Evidently, activities of a more general character are concerned here, i. e. we do not count among them activities which belong specifically to one or another sphere of social life.

Among processes we rank especially processes of assimilation — dissimilation, socialization — individualization, cooperation — conflict (cf. Bláha¹⁵), then integration — disintegration, reorganization — diorganization, and also horizontal — vertical mobility, and others. Some processes — as can be seen — are closely connected with activities.

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Our classification of social phenomena allows an attempt at a scheme of special sociology. The subject of special sociology is to seek connections, firstly, between the investigated phenomena and various spheres; secondly, of a certain phenomenon with special groups; and thirdly, of this phenomenon with social activities and processes.

After the investigation of these relationships has been accomplished, we ought to seek for a synthesis and generalization of a smaller scope, first of all, i. e. for an exposition of the place, functions, role and meaning of the phenomenon in various social orders (types of society, global societies, social super-systems) and, finally, in the whole society (in social development). Conclusions of special sociology arrived at in the above way are taken over by general sociology.

4. A comparison of the Scheme with the Bibliographical Classification

Our scheme of special sociology is substantially in agreement with the bibliographical scheme of advanced special sociologies in which the examined phenomena have been investigated very broadly and from all aspects. As examples may serve the bibliography of sociology of the technique, of religion¹⁶ and others. For the needs of bibliography in sociology of religion the following topics are suggested: (1) religion and demographic, racial phenomena; religion and politics, economy, cultures; (2) religion and social environment (the country, town etc.); (3) religion and social life (e. g. family life); (4) religion in the world (the scope of its diffusion; relations between various types of religion), and others.

5. Application of the Scheme

It stands to reason, that the scheme should not be applied in a mechanic, blind way. When a phenomenon is being investigated, some relations are negligible

¹² J. Szczepański: *op. cit.*, p. 67.

¹³ J. Szczepański: *op. cit.* p. 148.

¹⁴ E. Chalupný: *op. cit.*, chap. 15 and 16.

¹⁵ I. A. Bláha: *Sociologie*, chap. I.

¹⁶ *Current Sociology*, Vol. 1952.

and it would have no meaning to examine them thoroughly. Anyway it can be helpful to set a variety of "working hypotheses". An *a priori* refusal of some connections is simplistic. Marxist sociology, for instance, when explaining the influence of the technique, has limited its exposition to the influence of technics to economics. An analogical neglect exists as to the investigation of the influence of the geographic environment, of demographic phenomena etc. A certain conception of social development should not become a hindrance in the study of all relations.

The application of the projected scheme cannot be undertaken by a sole scientist. It is a programme for teams of scientific workers. Neither is it an immediate task. The demands of practice determine the degree of urgency of various tasks.

6. Application of the Model

I propose to demonstrate the possibilities of my model by applying it to sociology of war. I have chosen this example on several grounds one of them being that it is a discipline neglected in both marxist and non-marxist sociology.

An elaborated sociology of war should contain the following themes:

1. Analyses of relations (mutual influences) between the war and various spheres of social life, groups activities and social processes:
 - (a) war and various spheres, i. e. geographic environment (direct and indirect influences), demographic phenomena, technique, economics, politics, military institutions, law, morality, education, art, religion, philosophy and science, language; the war and pathological phenomena;
 - (b) war and social groups, i. e. classes, political groups (especially power elites), professional groups (especially officers), territorial groups, residential groups (especially the village and the town), biosocial groups (sex groups, age groups, family, marriage), ethnical groups (nationalities, nations);
 - (c) war and social activities, i. e. work, recreation, competition, fight, revolution;
war and social processes of assimilation — dissimilation, socialization — individualization, cooperation — conflict, integration — disintegration, re-organization — disorganization, social mobility.
2. Analyses of the place, functions, role and meaning of war in various formations:
 - (a) war and the "Asiatic" society, war and the ancient society, war and feudal society, war and the capitalistic society;
 - (b) war and the socialistic society.
3. Analyses of the place, functions, role and meaning in the development of society.

In an analogical way the problems of sociology of politics would be framed. At the same time, the difference between sociology of politics and political science would become obvious.

7. Conclusions

Conclusions that can be deduced from the model of special sociology are as follows: Social phenomena should be investigated by independent scientific

branches (social sciences) and by special sociologies. As far as social spheres are concerned, such pairs of sciences mostly do exist. I contend that they should be created with respect to social groups and the most important social activities.

It is evident that cooperation should exist between special sociologies and social sciences. Special sciences can help to develop "branch" sciences, because their complex total analyses of social phenomena enable them to penetrate gradually into the substance of social reality.

MODEL SPECIÁLNÍ SOCIOLOGIE

Autor v úvodu upozorňuje na dosavadní značné nejasnosti při vymezování předmětu speciálních sociologií. Navrhuje, aby se důsledně respektovalo hledisko referenčního systému. U sociologických disciplín tímto referenčním systémem je celá společenská realita. Autor podává náčrt obecného schématu speciální sociologie. Za tímto účelem se pokouší a roztřídění společenských jevů, a to a) na oblasti společenského života, b) na společenské skupiny, c) na společenské činnosti a procesy. Na příkladě sociologie války ukazuje, jak lze toto schéma aplikovat. V závěru zdůrazňuje nutnost spolupráce mezi speciálními sociologiemi a "oborovými" vědami.