

GLOBAL DEMOCRATIZATION AND THE DEMAND FOR A DEMOCKRATIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE: THE CASE OF SOCIOLOGY

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1 INTRODUCTION

Since the first sociological analyses by the founding fathers of the discipline, there has been a substantial debate as to what sociology as a discipline is supposed to provide. This very same debate still continuing. But the question as to what sociology as a discipline is supposed to offer, has to be addressed within the context of one of the so-called megatrends of the contemporary world - namely the movement towards fundamental democracy on every level. This specific movement not only relates to a political process, but can also be seen in every aspect of modern life. Modern people demand the right to be actively involved in processes that might affect their life-world.

One of the areas in which there is a significant increase in the frequency as well as the urgency of the call for democracy, is the terrain of knowledge. In the sections that follow, some of the arguments as to why sociologists in particular, and social scientists in general, should depart from the need to work towards a better society, are being dealt with.

In departing from the need for a better society, the basic focus of this article is that the ideal of a better society will only be realized if the people living in that society would contribute to creating, interpreting and utilizing the knowledge essential for a better society. The question as to how this can be achieved (methodological implications) will also be addressed.

2 THE UNDERLYING FACTORS DEMANDING A DEMOCRATIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE

In attempting to justify the need for a democratization of knowledge, I shall deal with aspects of the way in which sociology (one of the core disciplines in the social sciences) should be practised in order to work towards a more human society. The sociologist can only obtain reliable and valid information if she/he manages to decipher the creative, interpretative processes whereby people give meaning to their life-world. The following aspects of the nature of the sociological enterprise are being focussed on:

2.1 The right to live in a meaningful life-world

Sociology, perhaps even more than social sciences, has to reflect an awareness of the right of all people to live in a life-world which is meaningful to them. This is in accordance with one of the most basic articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of UNESCO which proclaims that everyone has the rights to live. It not only rejects outright all destructive or violent actions which may influence a person's life, but it also focusses attention on the possible damage that social structures and organizations can inflict upon the integrity of a human being.

With the awareness of the right of people to live in a life-world that is meaningful to them, comes the fact that people contribute actively to the constitution of such a life-world. To live in a world containing meaning does not imply a static conception of social reality: it presupposes an active dialogue between people and their overall reality. This dialogue is directly related to the amount of knowledge of the social life-world, as well as to the degree in which this knowledge is accessible to as many people as possible.

2.2 Sociology as an act grounded in consciousness

People have the ability to create a world of meanings and in order to understand the social reality within which people live, sociology needs to come to grips with the way in which the participants themselves experience social situations. Sociology must therefore be grounded in the principle of consciousness. To state that sociology has to be grounded in the principle of consciousness, implies the existence of an awareness of the basic dialectical relationship between people and their society.

In contrast to the assumption that sociology can only be practised as an objective and factually orientated science. I depart from the viewpoint that sociology will have to rely on the creative, interpretative processes characteristic of the giving of meaning by the individual, in order to obtain knowledge and understanding.

2.3 Sociology as the understanding of the living together of people

Sociologists should thus strive towards an understanding of human experience: people's experiences of other people, of their physical surroundings, and of other uncontrollable aspects of reality. The concept "society" implies that people live together with other people within a given context. (Cf. the Dutch word "samenleven" and the German word "Gemeinschaft.") The living together of people refers to their experience of other people (cf. Hoefnagels 1976:14-27). The sociologist will have to understand what contributes to the fact that people are able as well as compelled to live together with other people. In this regard the sociologist has to indicate what elements in society constitute obstacles to living together or even make it impossible (cf. Berger and Kellner

1981). This kind of understanding can only be reached in active dialogue with the people who experience society.

2.4 Sociology as the acknowledgement of the multiplicity of relevance or meaning structures

Because of the diversity of experiences by people, the sociologist has to acknowledge a multiplicity of relevance or meaning structures. She/he has to be able to listen to divergent accounts, based on divergent reality frameworks and has to be able to retell them as reliably as possible (Berger and Kellner 1981: 65-77).

Acknowledging the multiplicity of relevance or meaning structures as well as acknowledging the potential that the living together of people can be different or “better”, the sociologist is called upon to reflect constantly on the tension between what is and what ought to be. The sociologist has to realize that the social reality he/she perceives from outside, is not necessarily what it seems to him/her. Understanding the social reality is dependent on interpretation, and interpretation is often very difficult, because human meaning in reality often appears to be hardly accessible to others.

As a result of the difficulty in accessibility, the sociologist has to realize that the interpretation of meaning brings about an immense responsibility. People have the right to live in a meaningful world and a misinterpretation of what meaning is perceived to be for a particular group, can lead to a situation in which meaningful life is hardly possible. The only way to interpret social reality in a responsible way, is to do the interpretation with the people.

2.5 Sociology as vision of transformation and hope

To say that the sociologist’s contribution must lead to the identification of obstacles for the real living together of people, is to underline the fact that the sociologist’s contribution should not be separated from understanding and hope.

Understanding and hope will have to go hand in hand. In trying to understand and to identify what the obstacles are in the living together of people, the sociologist will have to keep hoping that mechanisms can be established by means of which one can improve one’s circumstances. In this sense the sociologist will have to cling to visions of transformation and even salvation (Berger 1976: 33). The sociologist’s analyses and efforts to explain and to understand will have to be tuned in to the aspirations of people. Her/his understanding and identification of obstacles will have to be synchronized with what is defined as being desirable by those within the situation.

2.6 Sociology as based on hope, esteem and freedom

Esteem will therefore have to be regarded as an important component of the sociological enterprise. Esteem implies that all people’s value will be respected and that

every person will have to be treated as a worthy individual. Esteem goes hand in hand with freedom, which in this sense implies the opportunities to realize one's human potential. Esteem and freedom must be accompanied by the striving for fulfilment of the basic human needs experienced by every human being. The focal point of people's expectations will have to be reflected in the sociologist's work.

2.7 The plea for a democratization of knowledge accepts a degree of structuredness of the social reality

Apart from the human potential for active participation and collective constitution of a total life-world one of course has to acknowledge that an overall reality (social structure) also exists. The social structure or overall reality brings about that some aspects of our knowledge cannot be subjected to democratic assessment. The existence of some factual aspects cannot be argued away (e.g. the rate of unemployment or the number of casualties in road accidents are constant facts). The concept of social structure therefore refers to the particular part of the social life-world consisting of organized and regular patterns and structures. Meaningful coexistence (a society) is only possible when this form of structuredness is present to a significant extent.

The existing structuredness of the social reality is indeed recognized when considering the way in which we obtain knowledge about our social reality. But the main thrust of the argument is that an individual is not powerless against the social structure. Social reality is constituted by individuals, it is maintained by individuals and it is continuously adapted by individuals. There is no such thing as a social structure as an entirely independent variable - as if the social structure exists as an entity in itself, a power to which individuals are completely handed over.

Broad social change is of course often initiated on the macrolevel (the level of the total life-world or social structure). This is noticeable especially if a society is subject to far-reaching changes on the political and economic level. For change to be desirable, the individuals involved in the changes must be able to associate themselves with the grounding, practical realization and proposed result of the process of change. Only when change links up with the convictions of those involved; only when it takes place in terms of their definitions of needs; only when changes occur within the boundaries of acceptability can it be regarded as desirable change. The quest for a more human society is inextricably linked to the principle that change should be accepted and be regarded as desirable by the majority of the people (the majority of individuals).

3. MOVING TOWARDS A DEMOCRATIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE - METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

All these aspects referred to in section 2 above imply that very special care will have to be taken of the way in which knowledge of the social reality is obtained. This is where the real need for a democratization of knowledge lies: there is a desperate need for more

reliable, viable and useful information. Understanding of human experience, the acknowledgement of a multiplicity of relevance or meaning structures and the interpretation of these meaning structures require the sociologist to rely on and be actively involved in the experience of the situation. This implies his/her own experience, together with the experience of the people finding themselves in the situation.

3.1 Sociology as a focus on the accessibility of meaning

The rationale for an interpretative understanding of society and the possibility of understanding the meaning that other people attribute to their life-world is found in the principle that each form of human meaning is potentially accessible to others - that there is something like a shared humanity (Berger and Kellner 1981: 24).

This principle forms one of the most important points of departure for a sociological analysis based on the principle of democratization of knowledge. The sociologist's active search for understanding will have to be an empirical search - related to empirical observation and empirical analysis of other people's experiences.

3.2 Sociology as an act of interpretation

The central factor lies in the act of interpretation. The confrontation of the sociologist with any research problem calls for interpretation. She/he must observe, calculate reliability, assimilate and accommodate viewpoints. He/she should thus interpret the meanings of others through a complex interaction and interpenetration of the meaning structures (Berger and Luckmann 1976:42).

This act has a methodological consequence, namely that sociological concepts can never become models or representations of reality to which meaning can be attributed from the outside. The constitution of meaning must take place by means of the typifications already inherent in the situation, with due allowance for the fact that all situations carry meaning. The aim of the sociological interpretation is to enlighten as clearly and plainly as possible such meanings already present in the situation. To realize this aim one first of all has to identify the meanings and thereafter relate them to other meanings and meaning structures. This relationship will lead to the creation of a meaning framework (Berger and Kellner 1981:52) - something that is not possible without the active participation of the people finding themselves in the various situations.

3.3 Interpretation and the method of hermeneutics

As method, hermeneutics concerns itself with the interpretation of experiences. The principal task of hermeneutics is to know what is known.

The concept of hermeneutics literally means translation, or the unwrapping or recovering of meaning. As a scientific principle it was originally concerned with the interpretation of texts, the meaning of which was confused, incomplete or unclear (Anderson 1986:63). This very same principle applies insofar as the methodological basis for interpretative sociology attempts to provide guidelines to discover (uncover) the underlying meanings of

- all human actions
- various spheres of knowledge
- frames of reference
- interpretations
- ideological conceptions, etc.

Hermeneutics attempts to penetrate to the meanings and to get an understanding of the original intention by systematically deciphering this meaning. It demands that we should place ourselves in the position of the person/people who created the original meaning or way of doing things. The placing of ourselves in the position of others implies a constant movement from the parts that we can understand, to the whole that is the world which people in a specific situation have created.

The assumption is that our knowledge of this world can be gained through a hermeneutical interpretative procedure, based upon the possibility of imaginatively recreating the experiences of others. We have already seen that we know the nature of other people's constructions by analogy with our own constructions of social reality. In order to understand why and how people are acting as they do and what their aspirations and frustrations are, we have to be able to reconstruct in an imaginative way, their constructions of reality (Anderson 1986: 68-70).

Due to the sensitive (and often pretentious) nature of this act, our reconstructions have to be checked and rechecked. And the only way to do it is to maintain an open dialogue with the people experiencing the situation that we want to understand better. Our hermeneutic understanding constantly has to bridge the gap between our familiar and taken-for-granted world and the unknown world of the other party. It implies a constant movement between the interpreter (sociologist) and the text (the world of the people to be understood).

The hermeneutic understanding referred to above, takes place by means of language. We experience our everyday lives by means of our conceptions. There can be no understanding outside of our language (cf. Berger and Berger 1972:58). The notion of a text and the effort to reconstruct the text's meaning serve to illustrate the way in which our understanding takes place. The reconstruction of meaning can only be established by means of dialogue, and on this aspect (i.e. the aspect of dialogue) we need to attach greater emphasis.

A hermeneutic approach takes as its point of departure human creations and creative ability, for it strives to bring the words and actions of people into the centre of discussion. And with the words and actions the intentions, hopes, fears and sufferings are

highlighted (cf. Bleicher 1982:69-79). This takes place in the dialogical relationship between the people from the outside (the sociologists trying to uncover meaning) and the people within the situation.

It becomes a dialogue or dialectic between question and answer; a dialectic of interpreter and situation (the so-called text). Understanding by means of dialogue has to be seen as a continued process of interpretation. The discourse can never be merely an analysis - it is a sympathetic construction, a creative projection, of what meaning might possibly be (Thompson 1983: 133).

3.4 Participation as breaking the monopoly of knowledge

To state that consciousness, the constitution of meaning, dialogue, intersubjectivity and hermeneutic understanding should be seen as a basis for the sociological enterprise, brings one to the concept of participation. Real participation takes place when people are consciously involved, are involved in the constitution of meaning and are part of an intersubjective enterprise.

Participation of the "people within the situation" will lead to the liberation of the people from scientific manipulation where outsiders presume "to know better" and "to provide the answers" to the mishaps of the community. Participation, thus conceived, refers to the

"...breaking up of the traditional relationship of submission and dependence, where the subject/object assymetry is transformed into a truly open one of subject to subject in all aspect of life..." (Fals Borda 1985: 2).

The search for a more human society and for more accurate and consistent explanations of the social, economic or political realities, implies the involvement of those people who have up to now often been the "object" of analysis.

Participation means a breaking of the monopoly of knowledge. The essence of participation is the fact that it can be considered to be a process of freeing the creative forces of those who are often not heard, enabling them to come to grips with their own problem (Hall et al. 1982: 14-24).

The effective participation of people does not imply that they make the decisions and draw up the agenda for research and analysis. Decisions by the masses are rare and have still to be subjected to the scrutiny of dialogue, dialogical intervention and methodological intersubjectivity. Ideas and initiatives are almost always the product of an individual which then find acceptability by a larger group and eventually by a society (cf. Chileshe 1985). It is not the creative initiative of the masses that provides the ultimate answers. Greater participation by as large a group as possible can, however, lead to the following:

-The immediate and direct obstacles in living together can be identified so much more easily when the people are involved in articulating the problem.

- Communication across the boundaries between the various layers in any society can be overcome when as comprehensive a coverage of the whole spectrum can be involved (villagers, unemployed people, educators, opinion leaders, etc.).
- An awareness of and commitment to the problems, as experienced by the community, will start from within.
- A movement towards the liberation of the human creative potential and the mobilization of human resources will be more direct.

(Cf. Hall et al. 1982: 21-25.)

In short, the concept of participation relies on the principle that an "improvement" of the existential life-worlds of people can only be pursued by delving into the essence as defined by the people within the social context in which they operate. Participation in terms of a definition by the people within the social context, implies some form of cooperation. And experience has taught us that through joining forces people have always been able to reach specific objectives more easily (cf. Kruijer 1987: 35-36).

4 THE IMPLICATIONS OF A DEMOCRATIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE

Democratization of knowledge implies a conscious effort to equalize the power balance between researcher and researcher subject. The "researched" has to become a member of the research team. An authentic involvement, equality and dialogical encounter have to follow. Democratization of knowledge therefore means an emancipation of the people finding themselves in the situations that are analysed and researched. This democratization inevitably leads to a form of emancipation by the people. They are sensitized about the needs and problems of their social life-world and about their own responsibility in this regard.

Emancipation implies accountability and responsibility. It also implies empowerment (cf. Mouton 1989:402). The sociologist has to become involved in the community to such an extent that her/his active presence will make a difference in the everyday lives of the people in that community.

But the important thesis, proposed by this article, is that the involvement of the sociologist should never be separated from the active involvement of the people finding themselves in the situations that are researched. The people experiencing these situations should participate in conceptualizing their problems. The research specialist (the sociologist in this case) will of course give direction to this phase of the research activity, but the people will be given the opportunity to contribute to the problem-formulation process.

In the same way the research specialist has to direct the other phases of the research design. After the selection of the research area and the formulation of the research problem, the research specialist will also consult with the people in the situation about the other stages of the research programme to be dealt with. The people become

partners in the research design as well as in the analysis of the data. This means that they are involved in all the stages up to the finalization of the research report.

As a result of their involvement in all the stages of the research, the people are stake-holders in the final report. They have the right to be involved in the decision-making and policy-formulation processes that usually follow successful research.

Although the effective mobilization and involvement of people can be regarded as a problematic issue in its own right, this article poses the ideal typical situation. Knowing that true democratic participation very seldom materializes, this article intends sensitizing social scientists about the need for real powersharing as far as the research act is concerned.

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SOME REMARKS ON NATIONALISM AS IDEOLOGY

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Nationalism represents a new socially integrating idea formed in the history of modern times during the time of Enlightenment and Romanticism and developed in revolutionary social movements since the French Revolution. It is arguably true, that, the nation, usually based on language, was the only answer which could have been given to the problem of finding a unit for the exercise of popular sovereignty after 1789.¹

Europe of the 19th century was an especially great epoch of nationalism when the formation of great national state units took place and national identities of small nations were simultaneously constituted. It is a historic paradox that nationalism arose at nearly the same time as liberalism and democracy and gradually came into opposition with them and their programmes. Even in the 20th century, nationalism has been a socially integrating movement (however, often accompanied by intolerance) that always asserts itself anew in times of crisis and reorganization of the social structure.²

Slovak intelligentsia strove after an explicit, programmatic formulation of national concept, typical of a national emancipation movement, especially with small nations which constitute national identities of their own. This type of nationalism identified itself in the programmes of ideas and national political conceptions, their point of departure being the awareness the necessity of national self-preservation. In its counterposition against the nationalism of its ruling nations, Slovak national concept nearly always took the shape of defensive nationalism.³ This type of nationalism was an expression of the unfavourable objective situation of the nation, but also of the will and decision to persist in the struggle for the preservation of its own national culture and language, as the basis for independent national existence. Its accompanying phenomenon, however, is a

¹ SETON-WATSON, Hugh: *Nations and States. An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism*. Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press 1977, p. 13.

² The phenomenon of "nationalism" is an extraordinarily complex problem. The definition of this notion and its comprehension in its historical forms and various contexts is the subject of many works (its various classifications, e.g. the vertical typology of C.J.H. Hayes and horizontal interpretation of Hans Kohn were discussed in the summary work of Louis L. SNYDER, *Varieties of Nationalism: A Comparative Study*. Hinsdale, Illinois, The Dryden Press 1976, p. 27 ff.).

³ Three differentiations of the meaning of the notion "nationalism" we consider as useful and acceptable: as a doctrine (as the case - of ideology), as an organized political movement (see SETON-WATSON, 1977, pp. 3, 445, 449), and as a sentiment (see Ernest GELLNER, *Nation and Nationalism*, Oxford, 1988, p. 1; Louis L. SNYDER, 1976, p. 25).

tendency towards viewing the problems through the eyes of the nation's own needs and interests.

Building relations with other nations and humanitarian values have been extraordinarily important for the shape of national ideas. The necessity for a humanistic and democratic formulation of national concept was of importance in our country between world wars too, even if it was not further developed. T.G. Masaryk's humanistic and democratic ideal was associated not only with Czechoslovak statehood but also with the "state-forming" concept of Czecho-Slovak national unity, which refused full recognition of a distinct Slovak nationality with its political consequences. Consequently, the pre-Munich republic's official ideology refused all components of the ideology of the Slovak national group. At the end of the thirties, after Munich and the rise of the Slovak State, Masaryk's ideas of humanity and democracy were both repressed along with the part of the intellectuals that were followers and disseminators of these ideals.

With the rise of the Slovak State a necessity to formulate the Slovak national concept into the shape of a state-forming ideology appeared.⁴ Political autonomism and the refusal of Czechoslovakism should have been surmounted by a positive national programme. The Slovak State definition of itself as a nation-state needed not only an idea warranting its existence and political identity but also a state doctrine. The latter had to be constructed on foundations other than the ideology of the pre-Munich republic since democracy had been refused at that time and Masaryk's formulation of a humanistic ideal which should be the basis of the Czechoslovak state, too.

The function of a state-forming ideology had to be fulfilled by a nationalism that was associated with the ideals of Christianity. The ideologist of the Slovak State Š. Polakovič (often paraphrasing statements of "the Leader of the Nation", Jozef Tiso) pretended that nationalism was not in contradiction with Christianity, but on the contrary they were complementary to each other, and nationalism was an organic component of Christian world view. He saw a model of Christian nationalism as the most natural mission and "sense of the Slovak State" that could be offered.⁵

The basis of this concept was the unlimited idea of entirety stemmed from this ideology wanting to avoid the one-sidedness of individualism and etatism. It said that the totality of the nation (not of the state!) and concentration on the principle of unity should be the leading motif of social life organization and political practice. The Party should be the exclusive representative of the Slovak nation and bearer of Slovak nationalism, or as J. Tiso wrote in the thirties - "one nation, one party, one leader for

⁴ As an ideological phenomenon nationalism shares all "vices" brought along by ideological phenomena (in historical practise and its reflection, too); we understand ideology in this context not only as a set of ideas but as an expression of certain interests and aims (political, social, ideal), their simultaneous veiling and mystification.

⁵ POLAKOVIČ, : *K základom slovenského štátu*. Filozofické eseje, Martin 1939, p. 136 f.

⁶ POLAKOVIČ, : *Z Tisovho boja*. Bratislava 1941, p. 146.

the unified progress of all forces in the service of one nation".⁶ This declared linkage of nationalism and Christianity was projected in the effort to give this nationalism a transcendental dimension. It was the case of service to the entirety (nation) with an aim projected into the transcendent. Such "a Christian totalitarianism" could no more put the nation or state at the centre, but instead an "everlasting person" and by its intermediary, God. This perspective was to eliminate negative totalitarian elements.⁷ It had to be based on the Christian tradition of the Slovak nationality and correspond to the authoritative socio-political system of the Slovak State.

The Slovak intelligentsia, which had grown-up in the atmosphere of the liberal-democratic regime, was confronted with various forms of nationalism and ideology during the pre-Munich republic and in the Slovak state they sought a modus vivendi with the new regime. As a consequence of the unsolved Slovak question, a noticeable number of them opposed the policy of the Prague centralism and ideology of Czechoslovakism in the thirties, however, they accepted the ideas of democracy and humanism.⁸ Therefore they did not enter "into the service of the leadership of the new Slovakia" at that time.⁹

The part of the intelligentsia, which acknowledged the regime of the Slovak State was confronted with the task of formulating the problems of nation concept and nationalism on a theoretical level. In addition to studies and papers from several authors (Š. Polakovič, M. Chladný-Hanoš, A. Jurovský et al.)¹⁰ which concentrated on these questions, special attention was paid to all of these problems by representatives of the Slovak philosophical community at a workshop held in Nitra on 5 June 1943 by Matica Slovenská's Philosophical Department.¹¹

Several interpretations of the notion of "nationalism" were encountered in this discussion. A. Jurovský, a psychologist, defined nationalism as ideology, i.e. the practical, personal, lived philosophy of an individual which determines his views and acti-

⁷ POLAKOVIČ, .. *K základom slovenského štátu*, p. 121.

⁸ Slovak intellectuals demonstrated their criticism and aspirations at the first Congress of Slovak writers held in Trenčianske Teplice in 1936. From both the Left and the Right of the political spectrum they manifested loyalty to the ideals of liberty, democracy and humanism as well as to the creation of Slovak national culture and mutual relations with Czech culture based on the principle of equality. See Slovenské smery umelecké a kritické III/8-9, 10 (1935-1936), p. 281 ff., 443 ff. Compare MARKO, I.J.: *Zápas mladých*. Prešov-Bratislava 1941, p. 235 ff.

⁹ CLEMENTIS, V.: *Usmerňované Slovensko*. London 1942, p. 47-48.

¹⁰ Let us mention: CHLADNÝ-HANOŠ, M.: *Láska k národu*. Martin 1941; JUROVSKÝ, A.: *Slovenská národná povaha*. In: *Slovenská vlastiveda*, Vol. II, Bratislava 1943.

¹¹ The initiative to organize the discussion and its theme: "Nationalism as ideology" came from the president of the Philosophical Section of Matica Slovenská, A. Jurovský, who also prepared the introduction. Contributions from individual participants are published in *Filozofický sborník Matice slovenskej* IV, 1943.

vities, his relation to the nation, his thinking, feeling and wanting in relation to the "given facts of nation" in various spheres of social life.¹² The neo-Thomist A.J. Šurjanský stressed the ethical aspect when understanding nationalism as a multiform activity rising from the love of nation.¹³ The sociologist A. Hirner defined it as one principle of sociability, as a sociable form occurring at two psychological levels: from a subconscious experience, of inclinative feelings and the passive reception of practical consequences to a conscious regulation, programming and aiming of views, feelings and activities in favour of the nation. According to philosopher J. Dieška, nationalism is a summary of tendencies a nation as a value evokes in us. (In accordance with this appraisal of a nation, he distinguished between a natural nationalism and a totalitarian one, or anationalism.) The nation he considered a sociological, actual and empirical given fact, and nationalism a reality that we experience psychologically above all else.

The questions of the relationship between nationalism and Christianity, national concept and humanism were the leitmotif of the discussion. The representatives of more or less official Christian philosophy were obliged to formulate their relations to nationalism as ideology as well as to humanism as an all-human idea. As for contradictions, they tried to bridge and harmonize them with a love of nation linked with Christianity, which in substance was universal and consequently supranational, but not a refusal of national values. These too are the work of the Creator and a form of implementing the Christian love of neighbour. The religious philosopher A.J. Šurjanský considered this to be the main objective of nationalism ("národovectvo") as active love of nation.¹⁴

The question "faith or nation?" was then replied to in various ways. Some considered religion a higher value than nation or nationality (and some were willing to "sacrifice" these ideas for religion). A. Hirner insisted that this was a case of "adjoined values"; A.J. Šurjanský said religion was a higher value than nation and wrote: "Christian world-view includes natural national values too. It does not destroy them, but on the contrary, puts them on a higher base, and gives them a supranatural objective within the entirety of human life."¹⁵

The discussion participants stressed and declared the non-contradiction of nationalism "as ideology" and Christianity as a world outlook (nationalism - "národovectvo" as love of the nation was its complement). However, such a demarcation or "supplement", no matter how understandable and justified (indeed, nationalism cannot be

¹² According to Jurovský, nation as a natural human community has four attributes: collective origin, living space, language, and a homogenous mind (he took this from the German psychologist, W. Heilpach). See: *Nationalism as Ideology*, FS MS IV, 1943, No. 3.

¹³ The psychological analysis of love of nation (as a psychological phenomenon taken from experience which is a certain emotional structure, part of human personality) was given by A. JUROVSKÝ in: *Láska k národu ako duševný zážitok*. FS MS III, 1942, No. 1.

¹⁴ M. CHLADNÝ-HANOS tried to comment on nationalism as love of the nation in his work *Láska k národu* in concordance with Christian, Catholic learning; parts of it in *Ethos v nacionálizme*. FS MS I, 1940, Nos 1, 2.

¹⁵ ŠURJANSKÝ, A.J.: *Národovectvo ako súčasťka svetového náhl'adu*. FS MS IV, 1943, p. 192.

expected to provide replies to the most general questions), did not examine the actual problem of the relationship between nationalism and humanism.

Even if this problem became a topic at the theoretical level, it became more pressing at the practical level as a question pertaining to the relationship between nationalism as state ideology and democracy. The topic of their contradiction constantly showed up in the political and social practice of the authoritative regime of the Slovak State. There were tendencies towards national chauvinism (e.g. the justified criticism of Czechoslovakism became the extreme refusal of all that was Czech), a monopolism of ideas and intolerance (refusal of Masaryk's realism, positivism, relativism, scepticism of modern thinking and science, nonreligious tendencies of thought were pushed to the margins),¹⁶ and, last but not least, a tendency towards strengthening the authoritative counter-democratic way of government (not only liberalism and individualism were refused but also the principle of an authoritative leader was put up against the pluralism of power).¹⁷ The contrast of nationalism was seen in "anational" ideologies such as liberalism, socialism, and communism, which menaced the Christian world-view (thus the promotion of nationalism as a state ideology was seen to support it too).¹⁸ The above moments contributed to the intensification of trends towards totalitarianism, which relied on the superiority of the values of nation and state.

J. Dieška came up against the absolutizing understanding of the nation as the highest value by examining it from the point of view of ontological value theory. The nation as a given fact has a value like every other value (the value is determined by its relation to absolute value as the highest norm of estimation) and is ranked by value hierarchy (from individual to nation, further to mankind up to the Absolute). The nation is not the highest value, nationalism should be overcome because humanity is a broader basis of human life with one another. He wrote: "We therefore consider the struggle against humanity equally as antichristian as the struggle against a natural nationalism."¹⁹ If Jurovský classified human awareness, the idea of pure humanity as an "abstractum" and consequently nationalism, as a presumption of humanity, Šurjanský showed that the idea of human appurtenance was a higher value than the idea of nationality, and mankind would reach it "through the historical reality of national differentiation".²⁰ Other authors

¹⁶ The first Slovak philosophical periodical - *Filozofický sborník* should not be a "free tribune" of opinions but first of all a tribune of Christian philosophy (as stressed by its first editor Š. Polakovič; see FS MS I, 1940, No. 1, p. 6). Later it was the periodical of the newly-founded Philosophical Section of Matica Slovenská (editor A. Hirner), which opened it more for the followers of scientifically-orientated philosophy as well.

¹⁷ These elements of totalitarian ideology were primarily maintained by Š. POLAKOVIČ (in: *Základy slovenského štátu*, p. 26 ff., Slovenský národný socializmus, p. 30 ff.).

¹⁸ As for the mentioned ideologies, according to A. Hirner the question is not of antagonistic but coordinated sociability principles. J. Dieška refused their indication as "anational", too because instead of a nation they emphasize individuality, social class as the highest value.

¹⁹ DIEŠKA, J.: *Filozofické základy nájonalizmu*. FS MS IV, 1943, p. 200.

²⁰ ŠURJANSKÝ, A.J.: I.c., p. 187.

objected to the exaggeration of national concept against the human one, also their thinking being borne by their national feeling and a conviction that moderate nationalism could be a natural component of Christian world-view and thus was ethically possible, necessary, and useful.²¹

However, in practical life and when implementing nationalism they always were confronted anew with the question of moral admissibility and obligation at a time when, under the aegis of this national ideology, principles of humanitarian and Christian humanism were being impaired in political practice. The question arose whether was it possible to overcome the contradictions of humanistic maxims included in Christianity and egotistic particularism connected with nationalism in thought and deed, and if so, how.

It was pointed out by A. Hirner that nationalism was, to a certain degree, a sort of egoism. A socializing factor which makes an individual part of the larger whole; however, is limited by its own interests often opposing the interests of other national groups. Nationalism is based on the specificity and individuality of a nationality and thus inevitably arrives "at the experience of foreignness from all that is not nationally homogenous". That is why a "regulator" is necessary from the point of humanitarian interests for national individuals to be brought into line ("it is only natural that this cannot be the hegemony of one nation, even if strong").²²

National egoism is an accompanying phenomenon of totalitarian nationalism and is not far away from chauvinism and racial hatred, stated J. Dieška. All participants in the discussion refused this kind of nationalism as the only and exclusive norm of human social practice, which examined the relations between the individual and society only "sub specie nationalitatis", exclusively pursuing the welfare of only its own nationality, and attributed a special historical mission and a privileged status among nations to it. Thus, nationalism constantly came into variance with the ethical principles of true humanity. Their refusal of a totalitarian grasp of nationalism was based on the conviction of fundamental incompatibility of extreme nationalism with Christian world-view.

The open articulation of critical reservations at a time when the international and domestic political situation was designed in a totalitarian way, had special significance. Even though official ideology was in practice, to be a certain sort of "synthesis" of nationalism and totalitarianism in a shape of "Christian totalitarianism" and even

²¹ The ethical dimension of national consciousness was shown by A. JUROVSKÝ in: *Národné povedomie a charakter*. FS MS I, 1940, No. 1.

²² HIRNER, A.: *Niekol'ko poznámok k nacionalizmu ako ideológii z hľadiska sociologického*. FS MS IV, 1943, p. 194.

though a formulation of “Slovak national socialism” was tried,²³ it should not mean to underestimate the efforts on the part of the intelligentsia (however they might conform with the state regime) trying to harmonize the idea of nationality with the idea of humanity. Not only manifestations of a “colourful totality” can be seen in this fact, but the first of further rifts in the “leaky totalitarianism” of the ruling regime.

²³ Attempts were made to formulate specific ideology of “Slovak national socialism” (POLAKOVIČ, Š.: *Slovenský národný socializmus*, Bratislava 1941; ZACHAR, Ľ.: *Katolicizmus a slovenský národný socializmus*, Bratislava 1940). Let us at least mention a statement written by J. Dieška to this question requiring special analysis: “The idea of totalitarian nationalism is at principle variance with Christian world-view and any attempt to attain a compromise is vain here (here I see difficulties in working up a conception of Slovak national socialism)”, *Filozofický sborník Matice slovenskej* IV, 1943, p. 199).