



Тази книга е интелектуална равностметка. И в същото време тя открива нови хоризонти за иновативни и ефективни социологически изследвания. Това е целта на актуализирания синтез на идеи, пръснати в стотици публикации в разни страни и на разни езици. Публикациите са подготвяни по разнообразни поводи и в различни условия. Много детайли в техните цели и

аргументи не са сравними. Но във всяка от тях може да се проследи една обща стратегия на изследователски интерес и реализации. Нейното развитие започва с защитената в Лайпциг през 1975 г. докторска дисертация и стига до монографията за глобалната индивидуализация, която *Palgrave Macmillan* публикува през 2018 г. Стратегията предвижда да се обоснове, изгради и активно да се използва нова дисциплинарна парадигма, която ефективно да ориентира и регулира социологическите изследвания. В центъра на предлаганата парадигма е широко схващаното понятие за социално взаимодействие. То е дефинирано чрез обмена на вещество, енергия и информация между индивидуални и колективни социални субекти, техните отношения и процеси на микро-, мезо- и макросоциално равнище. Определени са аналитични параметри на социалните взаимодействия, както и основните детерминационни вериги в тях.

НИКОЛАЙ
ГЕНОВ

ЗА СОЦИОЛОГИЯТА



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ГЕНОВ



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FOR SOCIOLOGY



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ПРЕДГОВОР

ТАЗИ КНИГА Е ИНТЕЛЕКТУАЛНА РАВНОСМЕТКА. И в същото време тя открива нови хоризонти за иновативни и ефективни социологически изследвания. Това е целта на актуализирания синтез на идеи, пръснати в стотици публикации в разни страни и на разни езици. Публикациите са подготвяни по разнообразни поводи и в различни условия. Много детайли в техните цели и аргументи не са сравними. Но във всяка от тях може да се проследи една обща стратегия на изследователски интерес и реализации. Нейното развитие започва с защитената в Лайпциг през 1975 година докторска дисертация и стига до монографията за глобалната индивидуализация, която Palgrave Macmillan публикува през 2018 година. Стратегията предвижда да се обоснове, изгради и активно да се използва нова дисциплинарна парадигма, която ефективно да ориентира и регулира социологическите изследвания. В центъра на предлаганата парадигма е широко схващаното *понятие за социално взаимодействие*. То е дефинирано чрез обmena на вещество, енергия и информация между индивидуални и колективни социални *субекти*, техните *отношения* и *процеси* на микро-, мезо- и макросоциално равнище. Определени са аналитични параметри на социалните взаимодействия, както и основните детерминационни вериги в тях.

Стратегическият преход от социологически парадигми, развити около понятия за социална система, структура или функция и фокусирани предимно върху социалната интеграция, към парадигма с фокус върху социалните процеси и промени се налага от ускорената динамика на съвременните общества. Бързо се променят материалните и идейните условия, както и целите и средствата на социалните дейности. Опитите да се намери общ знаменател на тези промени се сблъскват с тяхното изключително многообразие. Но то не е сериозен аргумент за отказ от синтез в основанията на социологическото познание. Предлаганият

Прави сте, такава информация е била събрана. Просто е ня-мало кой да я доработи до предложение за вземане на решение за действие. Точно в този пункт е регистрираната обща слабост на Европейския съюз при реагирането му спрямо трите кризи, за които стана дума. Причината за организационната неефективност на Съюза е в тромавата подготовка на решения за действие и особено в подготовката и осъществяването на действия за справяне с кризисни ситуации.

► **Германия няма ли да промени своята политика по отношение на миграцията и мигрантите?**

Тази промяна вече е факт. Преди няколко дни Бундестагът прие нов закон за приемането на семействата на бежанци, на които е разрешено пребиваване в страната. Не бива да се забравя, че понятието за семейство в арабския свят е много по-широко, отколкото в Европа, където нормалната ситуация е нуклеарното семейство.

► **Мислите ли, че Германия стана заложник на интересите на Турция и Гърция, както се говори?**

Германия преследва своите интереси по отношение на двете страни. Действителният проблем е в това, че стана твърде трудно да се съчетават разумно и ефективно интересите на всяка от тези страни с интересите на други страни. Това е трудно и за Германия – страна с мощна икономика и високо развита политика и култура. Но заложник на интересите на Турция и Гърция – това е твърде силна, нереалистична характеристика на външната политика на Германия спрямо тези две страни.

Foto: Matej Leskovšek

SUMMARY

THE PRESENT BOOK CONTAINS A recapitulation of decades of intensive intellectual activities. In the same time it opens new horizons for creative and efficient sociological studies. This is the aim of the entirely updated synthesis of ideas dispersed in hundreds of author's publications in various languages and countries. The publications used to be prepared on specific occasions. Consequently, many details in their contents differ. However, all publications have one common feature. Explicitly or implicitly, they are all guided by one and the same strategic continuity of analysis and argumentation. It started with the doctoral dissertation defended in Leipzig in 1975 and reached maturity in the monograph *Challenges of Individualization* published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2018.

The strategy is focused on laying the foundation of sociological theorizing and research by developing and applying a new disciplinary paradigm. It is intended to orient and regulate sociological studies in a well differentiated and systematic way. The core of the suggested new disciplinary paradigm is the broadly conceived concept of *social interaction*. It is defined by the analytical concepts of social *actors* involved in exchange of matter, energy and information in networks of social *relations* and in the course of social *processes*. The assumption is that such interactions are identifiable at the micro-, mezzo- and macro-structural level of social life. The next step in the development of the paradigm is the outline of potentials for operationalization of the three analytical concepts. The identification of major determining factors and determination lines in social interactions follows.

The inspiration of this conceptual innovation mostly comes from the multidimensional and accelerated social change dominating the contemporary global situation. It makes the strategic shift from sociological paradigms organized around concepts of social systems, structures and functions towards a paradigm focused on social processes urgently needed. The attempts to identify a common

denominator of these processes clashes with their broad variety. Though, the difficult conceptual reduction of the social over-complexity cannot be a convincing argument for radically giving up the search for a new synthesis in the foundations of sociological theorizing and research. The suggested paradigmatic synthesis is based on general principles for building and testing scientific theories, on ideas developed in the sociological tradition as well as on five decades of personal experience in theoretical and empirical sociological studies. The experience confirms the productivity of the new paradigm in descriptive, explanatory and prognostic procedures focused on the study of spontaneous social change and organized social innovations. The results of the studies provide the cognitive resources needed for putting a diagnosis of our contemporary times and for visions about the prospects of countries, global regions and the human civilization.

The strategic relevance of these meta-theoretical discussions became particularly clear against the background of the wave of radical changes in Eastern Europe after 1989. They caught social scientists by surprise. The conceptual frameworks they had at their disposal did not match the profound nature, the complexity and the speed of the changes. The expectation that the conceptual vacuum could be properly filled out by using the concept of *transition* turned out to be theoretical and ideological illusion. The concept allows the establishment of a framework for description but hardly for systematic explanation and prognostication of the fast and all-embracing changes of post-socialist societies. In this respect the concept of *societal transformation* offers a broader conceptual space for experimentation and productive explanatory and prognostic studies. This particularly applies to the societal transformation concept *synchronized with the paradigm of social interaction*. The fusion allows de-composing the processes of post-socialist societal transformations in specific action areas defined in synchronic and diachronic manner. This opens convincing ways for distinguishing processes of *privatization of industrial and agricultural properties, democratization of the distribution and use of political power, pluralization of culture, digitalization of production and services and ecologization of thinking and behavior* as major characteristics of the profound changes *in and of* post-socialist societal systems. The analysis strengthens the point that the same

processes occur at various structural levels of the present day global society. Thus the application of the societal transformation concept adjusted to the research paradigm of social interaction appears as theoretically and methodologically much more relevant in broader contexts than the concept of Eastern European transition to democracy and market economy.

However, in the course of the studies on societal transformations it became increasingly clear that the concept has its own explanatory and prognostic limitations. Now it is well understood that the societal level of social integration and social change is not broad enough for allowing a proper diagnosis of the contemporary social situations. New conceptual schemes are needed for explanations which refer to fundamental global processes. The switching of the sociological research interest from the exclusive focus of the studies on social structures and functions of societal systems towards global social structures and processes offers a promising perspective for resolving the issue. This shift from methodological societalism towards methodological globalism is a qualitative breakthrough in the development of sociological theory and methodology. As suggested in the present monograph, the shift can be achieved by turning the research interest towards *global trends*. The background assumption is that they are the outcome of various types of social interaction. As seen from the opposite point of view, the global trends shape the present day social reality and will fundamentally affect the future social interactions.

The intensive research invested in these and in related issues has identified four global trends shaping the situation of localities, national societies, macro-regions and the global society. The trends are also responsible for the current situation and the prospects of social change and development at these structural levels. The trends have been defined as *upgrading the rationality of organizations, individualization, spreading of instrumental activism and universalization of value-normative systems*. The studies on the controversial interactions *in each of these global trends as well as between them* facilitate the differentiated diagnosis of contemporary social situations at various social structural levels substantially.

The long shadow of the intellectual heritage of Max Weber and Talcott Parsons falls on every effort to discuss and resolve the above

fundamental problems of sociological theorizing and research. At present it is a common professional habit of sociologists to refer to the works of both classics in order to verify or falsify the orientation or results of their own studies. On numerous places in the present book one may notice this link which determines the contours of the disciplinary identity of sociology and the professional identity of sociologists. The strengthening and development of this identity requires permanent renewals of the sociological conceptual frameworks in correspondence with the development of social reality and the knowledge about it.

The efforts to achieve this result are directed towards the development and use of the conceptual framework of social interaction in coordination with the development and use of concepts of global trends and their interactions. The productive potential of this conceptual innovation has been verified in the analysis of the causes and effects of the recent global financial and economic crisis and the Eastern European societal transformations. The tests consistently show that the suggested conceptual synthesis makes surprising systematic and informative outcomes possible. The probability that the new conceptual models will establish themselves as a breakthrough in sociological theory and methodology, in theoretically guided empirical studies and in the upgrading of their practical relevance is pretty high. This development would bring about new quality in putting diagnoses on social situations at different structural levels as well as a more efficient practical management of the situations.

The scientific and practical effects of the suggested conceptual innovation might be best understood by analyzing situations in which advances in sociological knowledge are being prepared and achieved. The guiding assumption of such analyses is that the advances are the outcome of the efforts of individual sociologists to carefully study achievements, failures, sufferings and sacrifices of human beings under the impact of environmental, technological, economic, political and cultural structures. They exert their impacts on sociologists and sociological institutions via formal and informal organizations. For the purpose of doing sociology sociologists rely on the knowledge, values, norms and practical skills acquired in their socialization. Still another group of factors determining the

advancement of sociological knowledge consists of the socially modified inborn intelligence, emotions and will of sociologists. The close attention to all these factors and their interactions is the key to the precise understanding of the links between social and intellectual processes shaping the *vocation of sociologists*. This result cannot be properly understood by focusing on the often debated but not particularly meaningful platform of „sociology as a vocation“. The question immediately arises: Which sociology? Is this the sociology of the thousands professionals living *from* the discipline? Or the sociology of the few who really live *for* sociology? These are divisive questions debated in the national and international communities of sociologists. Everybody of their members has the right of having his or her opinion on these sensitive issues. The answers suggested in the book are based on the analysis of an individual case of „doing sociology“ by living *for* sociology.