

especially in regard to social problems (environmental crisis, unemployment) and the evolution of corporate culture.

PhDr. Liliana Nerudová, CSc. (1947)

- defended a thesis *Neúplné rodiny v Brně* (Incomplete Families in Brno) and in 1984, she received a posgraduate title for her dissertation *Připravenost velmi mladých snoubeneckých dvojic na manželství* (Readiness of Very Young Engaged Couples for Marriage). She published a monograph *Sociální rizika velmi mladých manželství* (Social Risks in Very Young Marriages). In the last two years, she has focused also on methodology of social work.

PhDr. Aleš Burjanek (1953)

- had focused on social problems of physical culture and, on problems of deprived agricultural regions. At present, he is interested in problems of inner cities and in questions of residential living.

Recent Publications

Members of the Department have recently published the following books, major articles and textbooks:

Keller, Jan: *Až na dno blahobytu* (All the Way to the Bottom of Affluence). Brno: DUHA 1992.

Keller, Jan: *Úvod do sociologie* (Introduction into Sociology). Praha: SLON 1992 (2nd Edition).

Keller, Jan: *Nedomyšlená společnost* (A Society Not Thought Through). Brno: Doplněk 1992.

Keller, Jan: *Současná francouzská sociologie* (Contemporary French Sociology). Praha: SPN 1989.

Keller, Jan: *Sociologie organizace a byrokracie* (Sociology of Organization and Bureaucracy). Praha: SPN 1989.

Librová, Hana: *Láska ke krajině?* (Love toward the Countryside?). Brno: Blok 1988.

Librová, Hana: *Sociální potřeba a hodnota krajiny* (Social Need and Value of the Countryside). Brno: Spisy univerzity 1987.

Mareš, P., P. Baran: *Vliv zařazení sociálních rizikových faktorů do screeningu rizikového těhotenství na jeho kvalitu* (Social Risk Factors in Screening of Risk Pregnancy - A System for Predicting Spontaneous Abortion). Praha: Ministerstvo zdravotnictví ČR 1990.

Možný, I., P. Mareš (eds.): *Nezaměstnanost - nizozemská zkušenost a československá realita* (Unemployment - Dutch Experience and Czechoslovak Reality). Brno: Masarykova univerzita, Hogeschool de Horst Driebergen 1991.

Možný, Ivo: *Proč tak snadno: rodinné důvody sametové revoluce* (Why so Easily: Family Reasons for the Velvet Revolution). Praha: SLON 1992.

Možný, Ivo: *Moderní rodina* (Modern Family). Brno: Blok 1990.

Střítecký, Jaroslav: "Form und Sinn: Zur Vorgeschichte des Prager Formalismus und Strukturalismus. (Form and Meaning: Toward the Prehistory of the Prague Formalism and Structuralism.)" *Bohemia*, Band 33 (1992), Heft 1: 88-100.

Střítecký, Jaroslav: "Spor o postmodernismus a otázka sociální racionality. (Dispute over Postmodernism and the Question of Social Rationality.)" *Spisy Filosofické fakulty Masarykovy univerzity*, řada G13 (1990): 335-341.

Ivo Možný

**Report On The International Workshop
"Ourselves' Selves: Telling Life Story - Making History"**

(collective autobiographies: an alternative sociological analysis of Central European past & present)

Prague (Czechoslovakia), December 7-11, 1992

"Ourselves' Selves" is an adventurous research and teaching project following the life-story approach in sociology. The project started a year and a half ago: a group of eight Czech sociologists began - step by step and within an interactive order - to write, discuss, analyze and interpret their own autobiographical narratives. Besides two stages of

theme-free, introductory autobiographical narratives (the second stage inspired by reading others' first accounts) the following topics have been already carried out: *My Life and Communist Party; Ourselves' Selves: How did it come about?; My Life from 7 to 9 a.m.; Family Possessions; and The Last Three Years*. In addition, an unusual university course in biographical sociology for undergraduate students, based on similar principles as *Ourselves' Selves*, has been established.

Having collected seven stages of participant's life-story narratives and written first drafts of papers based on such material, *Ourselves' Selves* invited several colleagues from the field to a modest international workshop on the project and its methodological and theoretical foundations. In addition to the *Ourselves' Selves* team, about a dozen guests from Czechoslovakia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, U.K. and U.S., mostly social scientists, took part in the meeting.

In the field of theory and methodology two main issues are interconnected in the *Ourselves' Selves* project: a) the life-story approach in sociology; b) the sociologist's own personal (or biographical) experience and its role in her/his analyses. Generally, the life-story research offers a unique opportunity for a sociologist to incorporate explicitly and directly her/his personal experience into analyzed empirical data. Within the *Ourselves' Selves* project, this was made possible in the form of sociologist's autobiographical narratives, produced in the same way as the other subjects involved in the sample. Moreover, the interactive practice of *Ourselves' Selves* strengthens the credibility of obtained interpretations and generalizations.

It was not an ingenious detailed plan of the organizers but rather a favorable coincidence that particular contributions prepared by invited guests touched in many different ways both main methodological aspects of the project. The contributions offered a really colorful variety of views: an ethnomethodological perspective of life-story telling on everyday, "conversational" level (I. Arminen); some notes towards using sociologist's autobiography in his work (B. Jordan); one's autobiography as a tool

for political struggle observed from the literary theory point of view (G. Ricciardi); social anthropology of life-story telling and "unspeakable past" in post-communist societies - with emphasis on language and the concepts of social change, social memory and social amnesia (M. Andrews); a report on life-story research of Slovak intelligentsia descendants (Z. Kusá); and a postmodern discourse about intellectuals' autobiographical writing in the world where the social sciences' interest in the self, human beings and social laws seems as if it is being replaced by the interest in language, texts and aesthetics (J. Staude).

Ourselves' Selves first offered a methodological/theoretical presentation about risks and chances in the project and its place within contemporary sociology, especially with relation to some methodological taboos of the discipline (Z. Konopásek: *Grandmama Sociology*). Secondly, first drafts of papers concerning some aspects of contemporary social change in Czechoslovakia (J. Kabele: *Biography and Societal Transformation - Our Lives After 1989*; O. Šmídová: *Housing Under State Socialism - Family Strategies*) or the communist past of the society (J. Alan: *The Membership of the Communist Party and Family Stories*) were presented. In his summing-up speech Bill Jordan emphasized the uniqueness of the project within the context of contemporary social research. The project's ability to export historical experience in a format comprehensible for another culture was particularly pointed out (M. Dismann). Generally, the project showed promise for contributing considerably to the sociological analysis of contemporary societies.

All texts prepared for the workshop were distributed to the participants in advance so that there was time enough for discussions. At the end of the meeting, the participants were asked for additional reflections on the workshop and its main topics. These brief accounts as well as other texts prepared for the workshop or tape-recordings from the sessions will be of use when preparing a workshop volume. We are currently seeking a publisher.

Zdeněk Konopásek