

Within a short period of one year, this is already a second book by the sociologist Tomáš Katrňák. While his first book *Sentenced to manual labour* (2004) concentrates at educational reproduction and is of theoretical-empirical nature, the book we will review is theoretical and only looks at reproduction in the final chapters where the author compares theories of class reproduction with theories of social mobility.

The theoretical character of the book as presented by the author, however, is not an overview of topics as we encounter in study texts for students of sociology. The professional level of the book suggests that the potential reader is expected to be familiar with basic vocabulary used in the area of social stratification. As the title suggests, the book does not offer a complete overview of theories of social stratification. Within social stratification, the focus is on class analyses and social mobility. And indeed the book deals with these topics in great detail.

Consistent with his understanding of class analysis, the author concentrates only on those class theories which have been processed down to the level of use in empirical research, or the other way round, on those class schemes that are theoretically justified. He understands class analysis as „a research programme with the aim to empirically describe class structure and establishment of social classes. Unlike official schemes or employer classifications which are used by national statistical offices, it is anchored in sociological theory.“ (p. 35) Such theoretically justified class analyses can according to the author presently be found in class analyses of Erik Olin Wright and John Goldthorpe – class analyses with different theoretical foundations. In light of the book's focus author chooses these analyses not only due to the fact that they are most frequently used in national as well as supra-national comparative surveys of class structure, but also because they are utilised in social mobility research, too.

Because they work with references to classical class theorists, first chapter of the book is dedicated to Marx and Weber and their theory of classes and understanding of social inequalities. However, Katrňák does not merely describe their theories – he also compares Marx's and Weber's class analysis. He maintains a similar approach when describing Wright's and Goldthorpe's class scheme – here he too draws comparisons between them. While doing so, he not only notes their similarities and differences, but also contemplates the question which of these two tools of class analysis is more appropriate for outlining class differences in today's capitalist societies. As the author points out, putting forward such a question is not very frequent in the area of class analysis. Based on analysing the few attempts to present an answer to this question, author expresses his

opinion that with regard to its explanatory power, Goldthorpe's class scheme „seems to be a more suitable tool for describing class differences in today's capitalist societies“. (p. 60) However, this is no universally valid statement. According to Goldthorpe, the nature of a class scheme changes depending on the analytical purposes it aims to serve, as well as with regard to the variety of empirical reality which indicates the formation of social classes specific for each period and country. Thus, Katrňák claims we need to test the applicability of used class analyses separately for each national society.

Chapter „*Class structure and problems associated with its identification*“ concentrates on some problems and shortcomings of the two presented class analyses which had been criticised. From among them, author selects the discussion surrounding the issue of women, ethnic group and „underclass“ in relation to these analyses. At the same time, he demonstrates how Wright and Goldthorpe reacted to this criticism.

In a separate chapter, author looks at a topic which we rarely see in the works of class sociologists from post-Communist countries. The question he proposes is that from the chapter's title – Are social classes definitely dead at the dawn of the 21st century? The discussion which arose from this topic, as described by Katrňák, demonstrates that ignorance or unawareness of this issue depletes the evolution of social stratification theory. This discussion really is not about questioning class analyses following fall of Communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe, where classes had been part of official state ideologies. Only Pakulský and Waters associate this transformation with casting doubts on class analyses. As our author proves, first thoughts on declining significance of classes in analysing social happening appear in the 1950s. However, Katrňák focuses mainly on contemporary discourse that began in the 1990s. Its point is not whether socio-economical inequalities exist at the start of a new millennium – rather, it is the question whether these inequalities are a reflection of class positions or merely a consequence of individual inclinations and preferences regardless of the class status of the individual. In this chapter, Katrňák provides readers with a clearly presented history of this discussion and its outcome. He identifies three discussions and labels them British, American-Australian and Australian-German. His categorisation is based on the fact that each of these discussions was published in a different journal and had arisen from different topics being argued about. The first discourse was started off by Pahl in 1989 when he claimed that class analyses emanate from the assumption of a one-way connection from class structure, through conscience to human behaviour. Second discussion was provoked by Clark and Lipset in 1991 when they argued that in post-industrial societies, forms of class solidarity that were part of class identities are gradually decaying. The last discussion so far, called Australian-American by Katrňák,

began in 1996 when Pakulský and Waters published an article in which they claimed that classes are no longer relevant if we want to explain the inequities in Western society at the end of the 20th century, as group patterns given by one's position on the labour market are disappearing. As the author puts it, the outcome of these discussions divided sociologists into two camps. On one hand, theoretical arguments of class analyses' supporters were deepened, refined, extended and placed in deeper theoretical context. They also initiated a new conceptualisation of social classes. On the other hand, class analysis contestants moved from class to status sociology.

Second part of the book is dedicated to social mobility. Such a combination of class analyses and social mobility in one book is natural, though not very frequent. If we want to observe mobility movements as part of social mobility research, we must always use some kind of a class scheme. It is often forgotten that Goldthorpe originally devised his class (or as some authors say rather employee) analysis for the purpose of measuring social mobility. Similarly, socio-economic status used in social stratification research to differentiate social layers within a society was initially constructed by Duncan for the needs of social mobility researchers. The way this book is written enables author to stress this fact. However, he does not use this opportunity and the chapter begins with the original Sorokin's definition of social mobility.

Katrňák divides the topic of social mobility into three chapters. In the first section, he observes social mobility as an indicator of unequal distribution of opportunities. He does this in a chronological way using the concept of generations of social mobility research. The differentiating features of these generations, according to the author, are the individual issues at the centre of social mobility research in the individual generations. He identifies four generations and their evolution. At the beginning was the Lipset-Zetterberg hypothesis about equally high absolute mobility in the industrialised countries. The second and third generations were dominated by the role played by education in achieving an employee status and testing the FJH (Featherman, Jones, and Hauser) hypothesis about constant social fluidity in all industrial countries. Finally, the fourth generation involved attempts at explaining the differences in the openness of stratification systems. The fourth generation is represented by social mobility surveys carried out in Russia and Germany which discovered that the transformation from a Socialist to a Capitalist country are accompanied by a closing of the class structure and strengthening of the relationship between social origin and employee position. A small demerit of this chapter is the fact that author does not spend more time on defining used terms. If his readers are not really familiar with mobility terminology, then such phrases as social fluidity or

pure, absolute and relative mobility may cause problems when trying to understand the text.

Definitions of some of the mobility vocabulary can be found in the next chapter, which looks at measuring social mobility. This section focuses on methodological-statistical issues related to measuring social mobility. It crosses over from the theoretical dimension within which great parts of the book lie, to the level of application. It can be used as a graphical instruction on how to use mobility tables, identification of drain, structural and pure mobility, measuring employee status achievement, path analysis, measuring absolute and relative mobility.

In the final two chapters on social mobility theory and class reproduction, author not only compares these two concepts but also introduces readers to the theory of industrialisation and two reproduction theories. The theory of industrialisation is a term denoting a social mobility theory, which explains social mobility in relation to the industrialisation process. According to Katrňák, it is sometimes presented as structural-functionalist theory of social mobility and states that social mobility increases as a consequence of technological and economic development. From among theories explaining the reproduction of social inequalities, the author discusses Goldthorpe's theory of rational behaviour and Bourdieu's theory of culture status and habitus.

With regard to social mobility, readers may feel the need to ask how the discussion on the death of classes affected research and theory of social mobility. However, author does not offer us his opinion on this matter – this could be an impulse for further research.

The book is professionally on a high level, clearly written and easy to understand. It demonstrates its author's ability to find his way around a very large number of works dedicated to class analysis and social mobility. Unlike Czech and Slovak sociologists, who have so far been ignoring some topics, Katrňák deals with them. But even some well-known issues are more precisely presented in his interpretation, and placed within a wider theoretical framework. The book may serve as a good inspiration for those wishing to move on in social stratification research.

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