

Recenzie

MACHÁČEK, Ladislav (ed.): Vedecké spoločnosti na Slovensku v roku 2013 (Scientific Societies in Slovakia in 2013)

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The intellectual and professional public circles have long lasting polemics about the role and nature of science. Nowadays is increasingly impeached the original thesis that the science is a priori neutral search for truth without the superstructure value.

Essentially these doubts arose after the end of the First World War, when people, on their own, bitterly experienced the "outcomes" of science. The significant breakthrough in science understanding was brought by Samuel Thomas Khun in 1962 in the book "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions", who started to explore science as a social activity.

Slovak society has been long struggling with the issue of the science status together with its official anchoring in the state apparatus, and in particular with its financing. It is therefore pleasing that this year, when the Slovak Academy of Sciences celebrates 60th anniversary of its establishment, was published the item "Scientific Societies in Slovakia in 2013", with editor – professor Ladislav Macháček, Vice-President of the Council of Scientific Societies in the Slovak Academy of Sciences, who is the official of several scientific societies.

The book is well structured and chapters are sequenced logically. The editor's preface is followed by Dr. Dalibor Krupa's descriptions of Slovak scientific societies. The Council of Scientific Societies brings together 54 scientific societies, which are grouped into three basic areas of science (Physical sciences, Life sciences and Humanities). The publication mainly provides basic information and characteristics of the individual scientific societies, further there can be found the names of management members, the names of the committee members, audit committee members, number of members, registered seats and contact details of the societies, as well as information on international activities and achievements in the field of science. The reader may learn the sphere and areas in which is the Slovak science involved and what results it achieves.

The aim of this review is not to give a detailed view on the text and each represented society, therefore we briefly notice the few ones in Section III. bound with the social sciences and culture. In this area are remarkable results achieved by the Slovak Pedagogic Society, headed from its restoration in 2002

by professor Ladislav Macháček. Since 2008 is the society a full member of the European Educational Society (EERA) and every other year it organizes nationwide scientific conferences and other representative events. It publishes its own e-magazine PEDAGOGIKA.SK. (www.casopispedagogika.sk). The electronic scientific journal format ensures on the one hand the political and financial independence of the state bodies, including the Ministry of Education, on the other hand it allows contributors from the wider professional public to disclose their contributions with colourful attachments, etc.

Worth to mention is the Slovak Sociological Society at SAS, headed by professor Jozef Matulník. The main objective of the society is promotion of sociology in Slovakia, which is in practice implemented in organizing and co-organizing the lectures, seminars and scientific conferences with sociological focus. SSS is a collective member of the International Sociological Association (ISA). The information about the society activities was worked out by professor Ladislav Macháček where he highlights the successful cooperation of Slovak and Czech sociologists at different levels.

Political environment is in the publication represented by the Slovak Society for Regional Policy at SAS, established in 2001 based on the initiative of the staff of universities and the Slovak Academy of Sciences. After a long stagnation of the society it was restored in 2008 based on the initiative of professor Ladislav Macháček, and in 2009 its chairman became Mgr. Radoslav Štefančík, PhD. The society members represent a variety of academic disciplines supported by its interdisciplinary character what is evident from the events topics they organize: youth policy, migration policy, voting behaviour of the first-time voters, extremism, sociology in politics, EU policy etc. Since 2010 the society organizes public presentations of the members' publications. In the activities are applied the fundamental principles of the Council of Scientific Societies appointed by professor Ladislav Macháček:

"1. preference of universalist values on which each one is evaluated in the terms of scientific results, teaching skills, professional ethics and not in terms of gender, ethnicity, age or nationality, 2. rejection of bigotry and dogmatism, 3. admitting the opinions confrontation, even different and conflicting, and 4. preferring the acceptance of basic human rights" (p. 5-6). It gives us hope that science in our country will not become just a maid of "higher" interests and lobbyists, whether economic or political ones, but it will be mainly in the service of humanity.

Also for this reason should be the presented publication evaluated very positively and it can be put it the attention of the public, not only the scientific public but also to wider audience, because serious science is one of the preconditions for development of civil and that means fairly-minded society. This publication does not try to discuss or argue, but more likely to inform on

the status of science in Slovakia with highlighting the activities of the scientific societies.

(Translated by L. Varecková, FSV UCM in Trnava)

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