

THE CHRISTIAN INTERPRETATION OF THE CONCEPTS OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL PROGRESS IN THE WORKS OF OTTOKÁR PROHÁSZKA

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The paper analyses the views of Ottokár Prohászka, the greatest Hungarian Catholic philosopher of the 20th century on the relationship between labour and social progress, as well as between labour and individual development. The work of Prohászka is seen as a synthesis of modern scientific findings and the Christian world view, which, at the same time, offered a thorough analysis and criticism of the social philosophy of Karl Marx. The author discusses Prohászka's ideas concerning the links between the objective tendencies of social development and the evangelical spirit, and his attempts to elaborate an early version of the theology of labour. Comparing citations, Prohászka's work is valued also for anticipating the ideas in the social encyclicals of the popes written several decades later.

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Attempting to create a synthesis of modern scientific findings and the Christian world view, Ottokár Prohászka (1858–1927), the greatest Hungarian Catholic philosopher of the 20th century, could by no means ignore the ideas of his time, which were concerned with contemporary social issues. He offered a thorough analysis and criticism of the social philosophy of Karl Marx, which appeared as a politically influential force in the ideology of social democracy. Prohászka discovered a good number of progressive considerations in the Marxian system of ideas, but felt compelled to reject its overall atheistic character. His aim was to create a synthesis based on two concepts: labour and social progress, which stood as the focal points of its overall strategy.

The Role and Significance of Labour

The works of Prohászka written in the vast field of social theory are interspersed with extended discussions of the function of labour. His ideas can be regarded as together constituting an early appearance of the concept of the “theology of work” in Hungary, later fully developed in the documents of the Second Council of Vatican, especially the encyclical letter of John Paul II, which begins with “*Laborem exercens*,” and other clerical documents. There may be a wide range of explanations for the fact that Prohászka made a comprehensive survey of the problem of labour one of the central issues of his social theoretical synthesis. Its timeliness is crucial in the sense that the issues concerning labour and labourers as a social class appeared to be the so called hot issues of the age, whose significance was discussed in both philosophical and ideological works, and they were placed in the focus of social movements. Nevertheless, it is not to be forgotten that these issues had always formed an important part of the social teaching of Catholicism; the encyclical letter of John Paul II beginning with “*Laborem exercens*” can be quoted as evidence: “It is a firm conviction of the Church that labour is a fundamental component of the earthly life of humans.”¹

In the study titled *The Triumphant World View*, which is regarded as a key-work of Prohászka in the domain of social theory, the chapter about labour is subtitled “The Gospel and Labour.” Prohászka’s point of departure is the same as the message of the following paragraph of Genesis in the Old Testament, which is cited in almost all significant Christian documents (“*Rerum novarum*,” “*Quadragesimo anno*,” “*Gaudium et spes*,” “*Laborem exercens*”): “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” (Genesis: 1:28).² There is a passage in “*Laborem exercens*” that well justifies Prohászka’s initial point: “When man, created in the image of God, ... hears the words: ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it;’ these are – although they do not refer to labour directly or explicitly – without doubt about the activity to be pursued in the world; furthermore, they display man’s hidden essence as well.”³ It is of utmost significance that when citing from the Old Testament and interpreting the passage, the “cultural task,” derived from God’s idea, involves the main purpose of all social programs addressing social justice for Prohászka, as “the goods should be enjoyed by not just the few, but they should be distributed among the many.”⁴ The fact that already at the beginning he connects the necessity of labour with the demand to distribute the goods produced as equitably as possible, underscores Prohászka’s profound social sensitivity.

It may not be accidental that a similar elaboration on people’s equal rights to the goods as a corollary to the cited paragraph of Genesis can be found in the en-

cyclical of Paul VI beginning with “Populorum progressio,” which calls attention to the uneven features of the different nations’ respective development:

If the Earth were created to provide all with the things indispensable for living, then all should have the right to find here what they need for themselves. The Second Council of Vatican refers to the same issue as follows: ‘God intended the Earth and all that belongs to it for the use of all people and all nations, in a way that they should be at the disposal of all in fair distribution; the achievement of which is governed by legality as well as love.’⁵

As suggested above, Prohászka discusses the concept of labour together with that of culture, using the two almost synonymously when making the claim that man’s dominion over nature, fulfilling God’s order, can be equated with the notion of “cultural progress.” “Culture reflects human effectiveness and it is the field of expanding human rule”⁶ – according to his definition which significantly contributes to the existing system of relevant concepts and correlations.

Importantly, this early stage of establishing the conceptual foundations already includes the claim that due attention should be paid to the human being, which idea is crucial to all subsequent Christian approaches. “Laborem exercens” contains the following: “the human being as an individual is the subject of labour; he is working as an individual and accomplishes the different activities involved in the process of work, which, apart from their objective value, serve the evolution of his humanity and the fulfillment of his vocation, as it is his due as an individual belonging to the human race.”⁷ Prohászka acknowledges the importance of the human individual also in terms of his talent and permanent development through the process of labour. This idea pervades the chapter titled “The Fine Character” in Prohászka’s *The Triumphant World View*, and scholars researching his oeuvre assume that it anticipates the later emerging trend of Christian personalism. In his system of values the inner world of man and its construction in the context of labour and through the process of cultural development are considered to be more important than the conquest of external nature; culture “operates in two worlds: the external and the internal, and authentic culture encompasses both worlds while its focus lies, naturally, not in the external but in the internal realm.”⁸ By way of comparison it is worth quoting the words of “Gaudium et spes”, the Constitution of the Second Council of Vatican: “Man is both the initiator and the object of the human activity. In the course of work he transforms not only the physical and the social world, but improves himself as well; he learns a great deal, develops his faculties, resigns from himself, even transcends himself. This enrichment can be found to have a far greater value than the possessions accumulated by him in the meantime.”⁹

Prohászka discusses the above dual aspect of labour as part of the process of development: “Man gains power by developing his faculties and through the shaping of his full individuality; and he will have power over the external world by means of technological progress and labour first of all.”¹⁰ Subsequently, Prohászka even provides a definition of the relationship between labour and progress, saying that “labour is the fly-wheel of progress.”¹¹ Proceeding from the citation of the Old Testament to the definition which deploys the image of “the fly-wheel of progress,” Prohászka postulates a constellation of key-words and correlations in ten sentences, the whole characterized by density and substance. The concepts and correlations inherent in the Biblical words carrying God’s order, the role of the gospel, the process of human labour and the evolution of culture, which achieve the humanisation of nature and the improvement of the human personality, as well as the concepts and correlations of social development toward a more equitable distribution of the goods and rights are laid down in this work very precisely, stressing their interdependence in a kind of archaic whole. Later Prohászka will analyse them in greater detail, clarifying their implications for the reader.

After surveying the uninterrupted, world-conquering route of labour Prohászka acknowledges the social consequences of the process and regards the inevitable changes ensuing in the life of the society as justified, especially in comparison to the merciless Hegelian dialectics of the “master-servant” relation.

Labour starts to feel that it is itself that supplies all the riches, pomp and comfort; it feels that all is produced by the mind and the heart; therefore it demands that in the world created by labour privilege, idleness or the business of indolent money-making should not succeed. Thus, it is the star of labour that rises in the sky of social development and assumes the leading role, and society becomes transformed according to the influence and weight of labour.¹²

Prohászka inserts two respective meditative sections surveying aspects of history in the short chapter, which discuss the nature of the power relations evolving during the development of social forms, emphasizing the priority of labour in terms of the Marxian theory of social forms and the patterns of progress postulated by it. His conclusion, in regard to the future of his own country, runs as follows: “In our country the society that will evolve, if anything will evolve at all, can be but such a one where the working class has the chief role, governed by democracy.” We may not be mistaken to suppose that the above sentence reads like a dense summary of the social teaching elaborated in “*Rerum novarum*” by Leo XIII, and also like a version of the subsequently emerging ideas of Christian Socialism as adapted in Hungary. Here Prohászka’s conception appears on a quite general level, yet later, in his other writings, which analyse broader aspects of the

social issue, he elaborates on the same in more concrete terms and in a more detailed way, with characteristic political implications.

It was in the work entitled *Modern Catholicism*, published in 1907 and banned in 1911, that Prohászka reconsidered his conception of labour, while writing about it at several points of the book. He seems to reflect on what he said about the subject earlier, making the analysis deeper and more precise, and his criticism of historical materialism is also sharper and more powerful. The title of the relevant chapter, "Labour and Religion," suggests that the issue has retained its importance and central place in Prohászka's whole social theoretical conception. Here he points to the significant change that took place in the Catholic way of thinking about labour, becoming aware, perhaps, of the change in his own views: "in modern culture our view of labour undergoes a change, and we notice those of its characteristics that we failed to pay attention to earlier. So far we have seen only the penal aspect of labour – justifiably, because it is there ..." The new aspect, which can be regarded almost as a paradigmatical change in the theology of labour, is worded here as follows: "it is in labour that a feature of resemblance to God, namely agency manifests itself." This idea is new compared with the conception discussed in *The Triumphant World View*, though not wholly divergent from it. "Gaudium et spes" elaborates on the same crucial issue: it holds true of the most ordinary aspects of life that those who work "can be convinced that they contribute to carrying the work of the Creator further, act to the benefit of their fellow humans and have a personal role in realising the plan of divine Providence in history."¹⁶

At this point it is apt to quote from "Laborem exercens":

The fundamental truth that man, created in the image of God, has a share in the work of the Creator through his labour is deeply inscribed into the word of divine revelation, and, in accordance with his own potential, in a way he continues, develops and fulfills the work of creation. While doing so, he makes a continual progress in exploring the treasures and values which were created by God.

Prohászka does not expound the same idea with such clarity, but his assumption that there is a relationship between the active God of creation and man becoming similar to him through labour shows a parallel to the respective passage in "Laborem exercens." He assumes that man's similarity to God, his conception in God's image are largely demonstrated through labour and agency, which he continues to discuss in terms of having an influence on man himself:

God is eternal agency and all kinds of power, be they mental or muscular, should exhaust themselves in activity; if this fails to happen the potential withers away; thus labour is a necessary element of life, leading to health and happiness; labour has its role in developing and

ennobling life. We cannot live without labour, not only because we have no bread, no housing or clothing if we do not work, but also because without it we would have neither ideas nor a noble heart.¹⁸

Prohászka closes this train of thought claiming that the two aspects of labour operate together: “labour is punishment when it exhausts us, when under its burden we become pariahs, helots, slaves and hapless wage-earners, but it can also be a blessing which helps our bodies and souls flourish.”¹⁹ Significantly, this attempt at balancing as well as synthesising the two aspects of labour reflects that Prohászka did not ignore the social ideas of the age. At the same time, it marks a transition from the emphasis that “*Rerum novarum*” places on the Biblical notion that “cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life;”²⁰ to the idea laid down in “*Laborem exercens*” about “fulfilling the work of creation.” In *Modern Catholicism* Prohászka distances himself from conceptualising labour as absolute and all-determining more explicitly than in *The Triumphant World View*:

... in both cases (that is, in regard to its external and internal effects – P. S. Sz.) labour constitutes but the instrument and not the objective. We do not live to work, but work is the instrument that enables us to refine and ennoble our lives, as well as make it worthy [...] the goal of life and the value of culture do not derive from labour but man himself.²¹

The following in “*Laborem exercens*” seems to echo Prohászka’s estimation: “the primary basis of the value of labour is man himself ... labour serves man and it is not man who serves labour ... in summary, the purpose of labour ... is always man.”²²

Prohászka describes the one-sided concept of Marxism in a satirical and caricaturing way:

... it expects all from work, supposing that work reshapes society, but this is illusory, since it puts all the values of the world, man and his ideology, the world of ideas, sentiments, the human disposition and its manifestations into the bag of work, so no wonder that by shaking this magic bag all the mentioned values may be dropped out of it. ... It is a desperate and also superficial idea to equate man with mechanism.²³

Finally, Prohászka attempts to reconcile the different sides in a way that is characteristic of his argument and is frequently employed in *The Triumphant World View*: “Religion and labour are both essential, but the gospel lays emphasis on the inner, spiritual world; not because labour is not necessary, but because the world of religion and morals should be given more emphasis.” This is the scale of values that Prohászka continues to represent also in other fields, ethical, theologi-

cal, anthropological. Concerning the interdependence of “external” and “internal” aspects, the established order of values gains political overtone, as if Prohászka would have liked to illustrate some of the contemporary ideological debates about the points of opposition between social democracy and Christian socialism: “The direction of the gospel is from the internal to the external; social democracy leads from the external to the internal.” These ideas can be understood as the summary of Prohászka’s conception underlying his interpretation of labour, that is the “theology of labour” in his system.

The Conception of Social Development

Adapting some of the contemporary social ideas, Prohászka developed a synthesis of social theory in which the concept of work formed an important part, but the problem of “social development” – as he called it – had a far broader relevance. In a way it continued the former train of thought, since the assertion that “labour is the fly-wheel of progress” already refers to progress, whose existence is implied by the statement itself.

Prohászka underlines the fact that the concept of progress had not been unequivocally accepted before that time:

Man is ready to embrace the conviction that social relations and changes remain the same as they are in the present, and is prone to describe progress by the labels of revolution, deprivation of rights, or violence ... the ruling and leading classes have a good time enjoying their goods and rights, and consider the rising classes to be intruders ... we Catholics suffer from the age-old error that we do not draw a line between historical progress and existing conditions, and invest the latter with the authenticity of divine order and will.

Prohászka seems to have felt that the conservative, organic conception of society, which regarded the given social order as unchangeable, becomes questionable in the context of the spreading influence of the new social ideas, in spite of the fact that it survived so long under the aegis of Christianity.

Prohászka’s approach to the conception of social development is comprehensive, encompassing both nature and society on the basis of the theory of evolution. What he states about nature and the development of the whole world is applicable to the society as well:

Does anything give a more spirited picture of the unified, all-embracing, supportive act of the creative power on earth and in heaven than the thesis of evolution which, beginning with the primeval haze, throws light on the world and all its creatures and forms through their successive stages of development and interconnected changes? A

sole idea of God contained the potential of the whole world, and what was comprised in the divine folded and curled up in a tiny space like the tree, leaves and blossom in the seed, is now unfolding in actions.²⁷

The same ideas and arguments can be detected in Prohászka's conception of society: "God wants man to be lord of the earth ...";²⁸ "... man, the individual is free, that is how God envisions him";²⁹ the development of society can be considered as "the evolution of God's ideas in the world."³⁰

The argument that society has the fundamental duty "to reveal God's ideas" seems to have lasting relevance in the social teaching of Catholicism, as it is justified by the following words of "Laborem exercens": "When turning to man, the object of the Church is to reveal the eternal plan and intention transcending nature that the living God, the Creator and Redeemer assigned to him."³¹ The above is the point of departure in Prohászka's social theoretical conception concerning "social development," the first and highest level of a complex mental construction, which at the same time has a social theoretical relevance. It refers to the process, which is also the goal and motive of all kinds of development and evolution, and is equal with the creative power of God: his plan, purpose and ideas being present as potential in the inferior, lower levels.

In the world the evolution of God's ideas becomes manifest in natural processes. Characteristically, Prohászka perceives the development in society as a natural, nature-based process, which is influenced by the conservative organic conception of society; the development of mankind "is given in our nature"... "If we judge the social movements from this standpoint, we see the development of living organisms in them. And development is an undeniable feature of all the living"³²... "labour is the natural function of man."³³ He who denies development "has no sense of life, and does not regard the society as a living organism";³⁴ "Christian society develops in the way like any other organic being."³⁵ Furthermore, Prohászka's description of development conceptualised along these lines uses the imagery of the stages of childhood, boyhood and manhood.³⁶ Discussing the natural, organic conception of society, probably influenced by "Rerum novarum," he even adopts the idea of the equation of society and the human body, comparably to the way Menenius Agrippa did it in ancient time: "The social idea that we all constitute one body and work in common happiness will become powerful and irresistible."³⁷

It is after the discussion of these philological and theological ideas that Prohászka turns to the *real social sphere*, the lower level accommodating social problems, where the development devised by God and similar to nature takes place. Again, by interpreting this process Prohászka attempts to offer a synthesis of the Christian world view and contemporary social issues. Its basis and essence is that "the social movement of today is in ideal kinship with the gospel" – which ex-

plains why Christian democracy sympathizes with the social efforts “it expropriates from faithless social democracy and then reserves for the gospel!”³⁸ Accordingly, Prohászka’s method of analyzing aspects of social development and exploring the laws of movement relies on the concepts and modes of approach borrowed from the Marxian social philosophy to achieve his own synthesis. He adopts the terminology and parts of the concrete social analysis first of all, but draws his conclusions prioritizing the Christian world view, which he often formulates by using terms borrowed from the ideology under criticism. Prohászka deploys the concepts of division of labour, mode of production, and social formation, which he rephrases as “social evolution” – understandably, since he was the first in Hungary who both studied and translated Marx, including the Marxian concepts of classes and class struggle. Prohászka accepts most of Marx’s conclusions referring to the process of social development and the related rules and laws as analyzed by his terminology, and acknowledges the role of evolution in society, at times even the role of revolution. He concludes, “History displays continual changes that manifest themselves in the rise of the lower strata of people and the improvement of the human living conditions.”³⁹

Labour and the development of production are the moving forces of the above process in Prohászka’s system, in the course of which

... every new step raises more and more people to the level of enjoying the rights and goods ... It is impossible to proceed in the opposite direction. Mankind itself is the objective of all these attempts, procedures and transformations. It has always been that, but by now [and here Prohászka refers to the significant role of the new findings in social science, which are built into his own social theoretical synthesis – P. S. Sz.] we have become aware of the process that curtails privileges to benefit the community and involves institutional efforts to make the enjoyment of goods available for an ever increasing number of people.⁴⁰

Elaborating on the implications of social development, Prohászka refers to the lower strata, the masses who should have their share of goods and rights. As mentioned above, he regards the role of the working class as very important, presumably under the influence of the Marxian ideas. In spite of the fact that this influence seems to be too direct and quite mechanically absorbed, its social implications anticipate tendencies that will underpin the principles of Catholic social teaching, perhaps also because of their evangelical roots. “Laborem exercens” asserts that “[w]e must become more confirmed in the belief that human labour is superior to what has been called ‘capital’ in the course of times” – using a principle “which has always been part of the teaching of the Church.”⁴¹

Regarding his faith in the equality of people, the teaching of the gospel must have had a definitive influence on Prohászka’s views when he writes: “[t]he gos-

pel has declared the moral equality of people.” Parallel with the demands for social quality as expressed by other ideological movements, his own attitude is reflected in the following: “in the eyes of God there is no difference between Greek and Barbarian, master and servant, but is human dignity duly appreciated in social life?”⁴² The statement and the inherent claim are still very relevant, as it is evidenced by the theological elaboration and wording of the subject area in “Gaudium et spes”: “Since all people have a soul and they are created in the image of God, all share the essential human nature and origin; all are redeemed by Christ and God intends them to fulfill the same mission. Therefore, it is necessary to acknowledge the essential equality of all people.”⁴³

The fact that Prohászka had believed in the righteousness of the social claims made in the above citation from the Second Council of Vatican half a century later, is convincingly justified by his episcopal missive from 1919, which remained unpublished because of censorship. Written during the days of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, whose events he witnessed and was personally and rather unpleasantly affected by, Prohászka explained and commented on what happened to his subordinate priests in terms of social development and its consequences, contending that “divine ideas reveal themselves to us” through the events. Transcending his own personal wounds, he says:

Considering the development of the world and the divine thought manifesting itself in it, we should not be antagonistic to socialisation, as long as it is in harmony with the social conditions and the demands of social education. We cannot afford to turn against the upward mobility of the lower strata, and we would be no pastors and interpreters of God’s words if we did not recognise the right of the world for that new and better system.⁴⁴

These two sentences offer a telling summary of Prohászka’s perspective on contemporary social development and progress.

In addition, Prohászka’s writings discuss several other aspects of social development. He approves of the Marxian thesis concerning the *basic question* of a social period:

... the central social question of a period is always constituted by the potential new arrangement of the social strata. This question becomes acute every time there arises the need for a new arrangement in the interest of development. Rearrangement does have to take place, it must not be arrested.⁴⁵

In the following, Prohászka presents a description, an *anatomy* of social development:

In the succession of events we can attribute only a temporary value to each stage; rights, laws or, most of all, privileges can be in force only

as long as they are purposeful and serve progress; when they are outdated they are thrown away like old pieces of iron or the yellowing pages of codices.⁴⁶

He calls this aspect of social development “rational,” which evokes the Hegelian pairing of the categories of “real” and “rational” as well as its interpretation by Marx. In his seminal work of social theory, titled *The Triumphant World View*, Prohászka illustrates the recognition of social transformation and the irresistibility of evolutionary or revolutionary changes by inserting short historical surveys in the individual chapters. In addition to describing the global anatomy of the developmental process, he refers to its *pace* and *rhythm*, and discusses them in relation to the peculiarities of his own age: “This movement is slowing down at times, then it speeds up at other times”... “at present development is extremely fast and we are justified in saying that ours is a social age.”⁴⁷

Prohászka continues the discussion of his social theoretical conception, with social development as its central category, by elaborating on the crucial issues of *purpose* and *criterion*. Significantly, here he considers *freedom as that of the individual* first of all, and the degree of development in a society he thinks to be measurable by how much space and potential for the unfolding of abilities are offered to man who “has dominion” over both nature and himself. “The independent-minded, emancipated individual, the protagonist of the modern social movement follows his own right to improve his personality freely, in all directions.”⁴⁸ In the following section of Prohászka’s work one can detect the synthesis of the new, Marxist-based concept of modern social movements and social development, and the social-theological aspects of the Christian world view:

Man, the individual is free, according to God’s view; consequently, nobody can deny that freedom, responsibility and self-determination belong to the ideal character of man; what is more, we must acknowledge that arriving at the stage of freedom has been the greatest step mankind made during the centuries of its long development.⁴⁹

While discussing the evolution of freedom Prohászka proceeds to the description of his own era, and sees the essence of social development in the concrete, daily task of accomplishing progress through freedom, pondering “how social freedom can be attained from the basis of individual freedom.” He implies the question “how, besides preserving a high degree of freedom, society is able to form a vivid community ... and find, on the basis of freedom, the new social formation in which man remains free but belongs to a vivid community in conjunction with his fellow-men,” and regards this as the problem the new era is confronting.⁵⁰ The “new social formation” remains undefined: it has not come into being yet, people themselves should devise and establish it by utilizing all their potential creativity. The program of creating new communities, organizations and associa-

tions to change the conditions of the so called “atomised” man is an important argument in “*Rerum novarum*” as well.

Prohászka’s concluding thoughts return to the summary-like interpretation of the essence of social development; there is no “final, ideal state,” this “was not created by the Lord Jesus,” but “he did not obstruct the improvement of the country on Earth; through his teaching and establishing the brotherhood of God’s children he even showed the way to the creation of the best possible as well as fairest social conditions.”⁵¹ This implies that although no ideal state was established, the teaching of the gospel still has its validity. The ruling classes

... do not understand this kind of application of the gospel easily [social changes] are the result of class struggle, but once the change has taken place, and the troubling effects of people’s attempts to safeguard their different interests are over, we cannot but realize that development is steady; although its route is not direct but follows a zigzag line, we are getting closer to the evolution of God’s great ideas not only in eternity but also in terms of earthly time.⁵²

The ideas concerned with the particularities of social development are elaborated in Prohászka’s journal as well:

A new, better world comes into being through a reasonable, therefore more God-like arrangement of its elements; it is not ready-made for us, it is the result of a long development. We have no idea how to create a better world and what it is like; there is no final state of affairs. The purpose of social reforms is to achieve continual improvement. The gospel and the Holy Spirit can hardly alter anything, but enable us to perceive the needs and duties which emerge in the course of time. What the Holy Spirit suggests is not that we should defend the old ways and deem progress and changes evil or godless. We must maintain and cultivate self-restraint, altruism, clarity of purpose and dignity to be able to implement world reform, which we can develop in ourselves nowhere else but here.⁵³

In sum, Prohászka’s concept of the essence of social development is a rather unique one. Accepting the Marxian theory, he thinks that the visible driving forces behind it are labour and class struggle. Yet these are controlled by a deeper principle, reminiscent of the Hegelian “trick of reason.” In Prohászka’s social theoretical synthesis, however, the subject of the trick of reason, who reaches his goal in a “zigzag way,” is not a mysterious Hegelian concept but a Christian theological one. For him “reasonable” means “God-like”, and the deeper controlling principle is constituted by “God’s thought” on the one hand, and, concomitantly, the moral direction of the gospel, “the example of the gospel,” “the brotherhood of God’s children,” and the Holy Spirit which “endows us with senses” on the other hand. Therefore, social progress as a complex human effort made in the interest “of so-

cial development” is multidimensional. All Prohászka’s statements concerning work emphasize its necessity, while it is important to search for the “social formation” which best suits the preservation of freedom as a human essence, since it is not created. This kind of social order, however, is prefigured in God’s thoughts and the moral and spiritual model for it is provided by the gospel, while the Holy Spirit works as transcendental inspiration to carry out the divine plan of evolution in time – therefore it is necessary to pray for it as well. The human task involved is undertaken by Prohászka when in the concluding sentence of his social theoretical work titled *The Triumphant World View* he uses the words of the Lord’s Prayer: “Thy kingdom come on earth!”⁵⁴

Notes

- 1 John Paul II, “Laborem exercens.” In: *Az egyház társadalmi tanítása. Dokumentumok* [The Social Teaching of the Church. Documents], Budapest: SZIT, 1994, 373. Here and elsewhere, unless another translator's name is given, the translation is by me, Péter S. Szabó.
- 2 Ottokár Prohászka, *A diadalmas világnézet*. In: *Összegyűjtött munkái*. 5. kötet [The Triumphant World View. In: Collected Works. Volume 5], Budapest: SZIT, 1928, 241.
- 3 John Paul II: *op. cit.*, 374. Biblical citation: *The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version*. Published by W. M. Collins Sons & Co. Ltd. for The Bible Societies, 1971.
- 4 Ottokár Prohászka, *op. cit.*, 241.
- 5 Paul VI, “Populorum progressio.” In: *Az egyház társadalmi tanítása*, 287.
- 6 Ottokár Prohászka, *op. cit.*, 241.
- 7 Paul VI, “Populorum progressio.” In: *Az egyház társadalmi tanítása*, 377.
- 8 Ottokár Prohászka, *op. cit.*, 241.
- 9 “Gaudium et spes.” In: *A II. vatikáni zsinat tanítása* [The Teaching of the Second Council of Vatican], Budapest: SZIT, 1986, 222.
- 10 Ottokár Prohászka, *op. cit.*, 242.
- 11 *Ibid.*
- 12 *Ibid.*
- 13 *Op. cit.*, 243.
- 14 Ottokár Prohászka, *Modern katolicizmus* [Modern Catholicism]. Budapest: Az Apostoli Szentszék Kiadója, 1990, 146.
- 15 *Ibid.*
- 16 “Gaudium et spes.” In: *A II. vatikáni zsinat tanítása*, 221.
- 17 John Paul II, *op. cit.*, 407.
- 18 Ottokár Prohászka, *Modern katolicizmus*, 146.
- 19 *Ibid.*
- 20 Leo XIII, “Rerum novarum.” In: *Az egyház társadalmi tanítása. Dokumentumok*, 35.
- 21 Ottokár Prohászka, *Modern katolicizmus*, 146, 378.
- 22 John Paul II, *op. cit.*, 378.
- 23 Ottokár Prohászka, *Modern katolicizmus*, 147.
- 24 *Ibid.*
- 25 *Ibid.*
- 26 Ottokár Prohászka, *A diadalmas világnézet*, 239, 243, 247.

- 27 Ottokár Prohászka: *Föld és ég*. II. kötet. In: *Összegyűjtött munkái* 4. kötet. [Earth and Heaven. Volume 2. In: Collected Works. Volume 4], Budapest: SZIT, 1928, 182.
- 28 Ottokár Prohászka, *A diadalmas világnézet*, 241.
- 29 *Op. cit.*, 254.
- 30 *Op. cit.*, 241.
- 31 John Paul II, *op. cit.*, 374.
- 32 Ottokár Prohászka, *A diadalmas világnézet*, 243.
- 33 *Ibid.*
- 34 *Op. cit.*, 239.
- 35 *Op. cit.*, 249.
- 36 *Cf. ibid.*
- 37 *Op. cit.*, 253.
- 38 *Op. cit.*, 250.
- 39 *Op. cit.*, 239.
- 40 *Op. cit.*, 240.
- 41 John Paul II, *op. cit.*, 387.
- 42 Ottokár Prohászka, *A diadalmas világnézet*, 251.
- 43 "Gaudium et spes," 217–218.
- 44 Ottokár Prohászka, "Az Úr házáért" ["For the Lord's House"]. In: *Összegyűjtött munkái*. 20. kötet. (Collected Works Vol. 20): Budapest: SZIT, 1928, 231.
- 45 Ottokár Prohászka, *A diadalmas világnézet*, 243.
- 46 *Ibid.*
- 47 *Op. cit.*, 240.
- 48 *Op. cit.*, 254.
- 49 *Ibid.*
- 50 *Op. cit.*, 4; 255.
- 51 *Op. cit.*, 4; 256.
- 52 *Ibid.*
- 53 Ottokár Prohászka, *Naplójegyzetek*. 2. kötet. [Journals. Volume 2]. Szeged–Székesfehérvár: Agapé–Távlatok Kiadó, 1997, 149.
- 54 Ottokár Prohászka, *A diadalmas világnézet*, 256.