

50 YEARS OF LIVING WITH PSYCHOLOGY (1948-1998)

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Abstract: A more or less autobiographical study on post war development of psychology in Slovakia, formerly Czecho-Slovakia. It consists of three parts: the first (animato ed appassionato) contains information about the beginnings of the studies in psychology in Slovakia (1949 -), about the first steps of basic psychological research following the abolition of psychology in the 50's in Czechoslovakia and about activities at the psychological workcenter at the Slovak Academy of Sciences (1953 -). In the second part (fructuoso) I am describing and briefly illustrating the main principles of the Bratislava school of experimental psychology from my point of view, as the one who drafted them. In this part I try to substantiate the idea that psychology is a science of man (not a social science nor behavioral one), that its research subject is the regulation of behavior through psychological reflection, that psychological phenomena exist in interfunctional relationships with biological determination and with the effects of variously active environment and, finally, that personality is a unit of endogenous and exogenous factors formed by one's own "self" as long as an individual has the will and ability to do so (meaning of life). In the last part (quasi finale) I am presenting my own experiences with research, pedagogical, organizational, editorial and application activities in psychology.

Key words: psychology studies, sciences of man, psychological regulation, method integration, personality, laterality, quality of life

Since we must face the fact that life expectancy in men in Slovakia has dropped down to 67 years, seen in optimistic terms, there remain but few years in store for me to complete all the important plans and projects that I have set for myself. However, one task always comes up as being topical: to focus my view on my life career spent with psychology. But decidedly not so that I would succumb to senile bragging. Nor do I feel competent to write memoirs. I just haven't the time for this, since my employment is a considerable obstacle to my own work. Yet, I am more and more conscious of the generalization of the most important results, of the obligation to make transparent all sorts of things from the peripeteia I have personally experienced with psychology, of things that so far have not been spoken about in my country, of things people loath to speak of. I take this risk in hope

that such an approach to the history of a subregion of psychology might have a broader impact, also for the sake of our own knowledge of psychology in our common European house.

ANIMATO ED APPASSIONATO

I do not know who of all the psychologists born in the third decade of this century anywhere in Europe or elsewhere, for that matter, has planned his professional career so that he/she would be a psychologist at all costs. I am not one of those. Although in high school I took a course in psychological propaedeutics (as a part of philosophy). As some sort of pregraduate in psychology, I enrolled at a university which had not been available to my father in his times: a technical university. This was in accordance with the results of psychological professional counselling

through which we went with great interest in 1948 as the first cohort of Slovak high school students. Yet, Dr. Koščo at the Psychotechnological Institute persuaded me to go in for psychology, painting in optimistic colors the great future of the psychological profession; that was, I may say, my second pregraduate course in psychology. However, I became an undergraduate of psychology already in the second semester of my studies, when prof. A. Jurovský, at the School of Philosophy at the Comenius University in Bratislava, campaigned for applicants for a specialized study of psychology. My decision was also affected by an accidental, tragic event - an explosion in a chemical laboratory - which shocked me. With the lapse of time, there is nothing left for me to do but to approve this decision, although as a chemist I would probably have been spared many peripeteia.

At the start, our group numbered 28 adepts and 13 of us finished as the first cohort of professional psychologists in Slovakia. I successfully completed my last year, thanks only to prof. J. Čečetka, since, because of the then ongoing "democratization" at the universities, I was "earmarked" for expulsion; naturally not because of poor grades. I recall that this was in the early 50's, hence, at a time practically fateful to the entire psychology in Czechoslovakia. I later described this pseudorevolutionary process, following the takeover of the communist party of Czechoslovakia, in my study titled "Critical Years for Psychology in Slovakia" (Kováč, 1972).

Perhaps precisely because of my university peripeteia, the problem of motivation (i.e., to become a psychologist) became one of the very first topics which I began to follow empirically when still an undergraduate. In those days, when profession-

alism in psychology in my and the neighboring countries was just beginning, several divergent motivations were in the forefront of attention. First, individuals went in for psychology who were evidently marked by a broadly understood inferiority complex; certainly they needed psychology as a hopeful therapy for themselves. Secondly, on the other end of the scales, there are those adepts at psychology who were marked by an enhanced prosocial sentiment attitudes; they expected of psychology that it would become an effective means in their orientation in aid of children, the suffering, the sick, etc. And, thirdly some joined the "psychology" circles because their personality carried quite a bit of the pathological traits of self-assertion, even exhibitionism. They hoped that through a study of psychology they would acquire various sensations to astound and abash their environment with mysteries hidden in the human soul. And, finally, we should leave open the category of "varia", where imitation, circumstance, coincidence, or pure chance played their role. That was approximately the state prevailing in my country in the 1950's and it would, perhaps, be useful to know how much of this still prevails today.

Although I do not mean to personify the latter problem of motivation for the study of psychology, yet, in view of my experience as a managing researcher, neither can I make light of it, minimize it. And indeed: is pure interest or an incidental decision sufficient for anyone to become a psychologist, when there is the question of a professional intervening into various private spheres of personality of other people? Should not national psychological communities investigate with greater care and, especially, in a more qualified manner the personal prerequisites and abilities entitling someone to the right or the privi-

lege of acting in public in the name of psychology? In the case of psychologists active in practice, should not there be a distinction made between "a diplomed psychologist" and a "registered psychologists" as it is done in, e.g., Canada? Is it enough to just establish a professional chamber, as it was done in Slovakia (flooded with all kinds of pseudo- and parapsychology) in 1994? And as far as a research psychologist is concerned, should not the psychological community do more to prevent him/her from turning into a super specialist in his discipline, instead of becoming an indispensable expert, a useful member of an interdisciplinary research team? How long will the idea prevail that acceptance or grant support will be given only to "pure" psychological projects, while pressing problems of today are complex, multi-level and multi-dimensional?

I have gone through my study of psychology in an intensely concentrated manner. I had but one outstanding teacher of psychology for all its various disciplines - A. Jurovský - and several, I dare say, foremost authorities were my lecturers on subjects related to psychology - physiology, psychiatry, pedagogy, sociology and history. I know that this state of things dictated by necessity and such a model would not be possible today. Be it as it may, I feel convinced that the ongoing steadily expanding study of psychology in my country as well as the neighboring countries has long since exceeded the limits of its justification. We can no longer stand with arms folded and watch our future colleagues leaving universities who, as I have witnessed, sniffed at many things in the system, but know nothing thoroughly. We had, unlike the present day students of psychology in Slovakia, from the very beginning of our studies

significant research ambitions. In the third semester, for example, I conducted a relatively extensive research of memory in junior high school students ($N < 200$). Later, every year we cooperated with prof. Jurovský in his research projects. One of them was exceptionally large and, to a certain degree, fateful to me. It involved a sociological-psychological in-depth research of the effects of industrialization on the life of people living in rural areas. The location involved three villages near a smaller industrial town in central Slovakia. The project was conducted in such a way that every day two students - one was a psychologist - would visit one family and in the form of a controlled interview, i.e. using almost dozens of questionnaires, gathered data. This project became fateful - in terms of subject matter and to me personally. In terms of subject matter, because all the empiric material was destroyed in the beginning of the 1950's. However, personally I profited from this project my whole life long: my research partner became my partner for life.

So much for this study, which some complete with a "blue" diploma which means "a pass" and others with a "red" diploma which means with "flying colors" of "honors", yet others have to go on toiling and moiling towards the yearned for PhD. title? As far as I am concerned, this problem was resolved by others. As might be surmised from the outlined characteristic of the abolition of psychology in Czechoslovakia in the early 1950's, after completing my studies of psychology, unemployment seemed to be in store for me. Precisely in view of such a prospect, I had accepted an offer of a teaching post at an intermediary school preparing nursing personnel. This proved both useful and also joyful. Besides psychology, I also taught various theoretical subjects of

medicine, and to fill my teaching load, also music and even physical education - naturally for girls. But this proved to be an experience, when I realized for the first time the difference between "theory" and "practice" in my qualifications.

This did not last long and a "call", or as the Germans have it "ein Ruf" came from the newly established Slovak Academy of Science, namely from M. Bažány - the leading person in this time. But it took all the longer to fight with local administration - red tape - to obtain my release from an allegedly successful performance of the teacher's avocation; ultimately I won the battle but with the revenge of an adverse (unfavorable) personal file (dossier) initiated by my "alma mater". That is why I was admitted to the then Psychological group of the Philosophical Institute of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, more or less "on the side"; a paradox is that they in fact never gave me my employment. And here began my further peripeteia with psychology.

Originally I had intended to remain true to ontogenetic psychology, however, I was invited to build up an experimental-psychological center/institute. I believe that this reorientation did not then appear to me as peripeteia; I exploited to the full the advantage that I had graduated from the gymnasium in mathematics and in my study of psychology I had profited from biological disciplines. And thus, together with a few enthusiasts, we were at first literally manual workmen in building the first Slovak Laboratory of Psychology, then auxiliary assistants in servicing it, and finally researchers. Despite a central orientation of the Psychological Laboratory S.A.Sc. (1955) to "conditioned reflexes", I myself experimented with psychomotorics; the political authorities, however, demanded of us "effective psy-

chological methods" for inducing Slovak farmers to join farming cooperatives. It was thus a period full of wide-ranging conflicts, both social and local; the latter included some interpersonal conflicts within the Psychological Laboratory itself, ending in the departure of the head and further members of the team from the Academy.

On April 1, 1960, I was called upon to take charge of the Psychological Laboratory of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. I say "was called upon", first of all, my colleagues persuaded me to take up the function and afterwards also the President of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, officially entrusted me with its time-limited direction. I was 30 then, without any political membership or allegiance and I had no acquaintance far and wide among influential people "no connections". But like my younger colleagues, I had a strong motivation to bring psychology in our country into an irreversible pace of development. These endeavors were a natural continuation of our joy and adventure from experimental work which we had tasted towards the end of the 50's. We had become convinced that this work imparted validity to psychology, increased its exactness through mathematization, opened the interdisciplinary door to psychology and perhaps will be compatible with research abroad. From employees, we became enthusiasts, and even fanatics in our field and in our work. A slogan hanging in my office read: "Not a single day without experimenting" and, indeed, so it was, most of the time. Ex post, I think that the subsequent monothematic orientation of our Institute as a whole, to the topic of cognitive processes from the 70's, can be ascribed precisely to this fact.

But of course, this orientation as well as the character of our work entailed wider

consequences. On the one hand, we became as if estranged from our home, predominantly educationally or clinically oriented, though always questionnaire-dependent psychologists, on the other hand, however, we came closer to the main trends of the then basic, subject-oriented research in the world. As is generally accepted, those were the years of the cognitive psychology's birth. Entrance into this novel, e.g., international context was facilitated for us by three organizational gains: restructuring of the "Laboratory" into the Institute of Experimental Psychology (1963 -), the launching of a multi-lingual and later international journal - *Studia Psychologica* - (1965 -) and the undertaking we had initiated - Meetings of Psychologists of the Danubian Countries (the 1st one took place in 1967, the last in 1993). Understandably, nothing of it came to us directly out of the blue. We had anxiously to struggle for everything, think out various tactics, but also to suffer rebuffs and swallow many a pill, occasionally take even a blow below the belt. Nonetheless, the above and further advances in establishing our discipline have brought us not only considerable gains, but also opportunities to verify our abilities to contribute to psychological knowledge. And it is somewhere here that we can find an explanation why, despite our orientation toward cognitive processes, we have not become, except one or two persons, cognitive psychologists. But then the roots of this reach to the peripeteia of an earlier date.

In 1963, to the surprise of some and to the irritation of others, I came out for the first time publicly with the rebellious idea that psychology is not a social science, which was and is the unconditional official tenet in my country, but a core science of man. Naturally, I also justified why it

does not belong either to natural or to the so-called behavioral sciences. Well, the fact was in the fire - or as we say, the fire was on the roof and many immediately began to put it out, though not always with adequate or fair means. But I did not leave the battlefield immediately. Later, I asked at other places the establishment of an intermediate committee for sciences of man and then I submitted a proposal for a concentrated research of man. Well, I had no luck: allegedly "priority in research goes to society", allegedly "after all, we won't have personality monopolized by psychologists", these and similar arguments were used against me by the then authorities from social sciences. Unfortunately, experts from the domain of natural, to be more exact, from biológico-medical sciences kept mum; as if it were all the same to them. And finally, it should be observed that several friends advised me privately it would be better for me to give up these endeavors. Apparently, the times were not ripe for that. And unfortunately, they were right, for a time at least. Critical political upheavals swept through the country after the military occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and after all that it was truly reasonable to give up trying to enforce demands for establishing sciences of man, including psychology's appurtenance to them. These circumstances, however, did not disarm me for good, they only diverted me to another scene of battle.

From a broadcast of the Czechoslovak radio for foreign countries I learned that two prominent participants of the 2nd Meeting of Psychologists of the Danubian Countries in 1970 in Smolenice, interviewed by a reporter, proclaimed the existence of a Slovak school of experimental psychology. That was not only a great surprise to me, but also a challenge to find

out in what measure this statement was a compliment and how far it corresponded to reality. Successively, at various international events I began to propagate some of the guiding theoretico-methodological principles of our scientific-research work. In 1975, I wrote a thin booklet about it "Towards Integration in Psychology", which created quite a stir. Later (1985), I published a theoretico-experimental monograph "The Theory of General Psychology". However, this is a topic for the next chapter.

FRUCTUOSO

Following the abolition of what psychology gained in the former CSR at the beginning of the 1950's, the discontinuous development of psychology in Slovakia proceeded in several forms. One form was represented by the restructuring of "bourgeois psychology" according to Marxism-Leninism teachings. Another possibility of psychology application - albeit limited - was the area of education which was considered to be important in the "formation of the new man". In both cases Soviet psychology was the model. In the 50's the Soviet Union was dominated by dogmatic Pavlovianism which, of course, marked the first research activities of the researchers at the Psychological Laboratory S.A.Sc. However, after several years of Pavlovian psychophysiology (research of conditioned reflexes), we started on our own path of developing basic psychological research: we did not want the concept of Soviet psychology of those times and were not allowed to accept the concept of western schools. This brought some fruit. We searched for ways of new methodological principles which, in the course of some years, developed into a psychological concept, later called

the Bratislava school of experimental psychology (Hoskovec, 1992). The following theses became characteristic for this school:

I. OUR OWN RESEARCH CONCEPT

1. Unlike in the 50's and 60's when psychology in the former Czechoslovakia was strictly made part of social sciences, i.e., ideologically oriented sciences, at the end of the 60's I was able to stress the thesis that psychology is a core science of a modern era of scientific knowledge - the sciences of man. Hoministic understanding of psychology was later (1968) elaborated upon by B.G. Ananyev. But, independent of our country, European psychology accepted this more or less officially first at the XXIst international congress of psychology (Fraisie, 1978). Such concept was and, to a certain degree, still is in discordance with the north American construct of "behavioral" sciences. We should add, that such framework of psychology which paralyzes biological as well as social reductionism, has become more prevalent in our country and abroad. But is this apparent in text books of psychology?!

2. Psychology is not a science about experience and behavior (European version) nor a science about behavior and experience (north American version of conceptual opportunism). Psychology's mission is to study psychological reality as psychological reflection and as psychological regulation. Since it is accessible to scientific understanding only in terms of observations, it is plausible to define it as follows: psychology is a science of psychological regulation of behavior. Based on this and taking into account text book formulas of the development of psychology, I expressed the reflexive-regulatory

concept of psychology by the following formula:

$$s_t = f[Y(O_{n-x}, S^{n-x})]$$

Psychologists are competent to study mainly this behavior (s) which at a certain time (t) is a function (f) of psychological reflection and psychological regulation (Y) of organism (endogenous) determinants (O_{n-x}) and environmental (exogenous) influences (S^{n-x}).

This concept has raised the interest of mainly western psychologists. In the 70's and 80's I presented more than 20 requested contributions of my work, mainly at universities in German speaking countries. As the most recent concept in those days, it was included in several university text books as well as other publications. It remains to be assessed in broader terms why many authors barely touch upon the concept of regulation.

3. In the history of psychology as a modern science, when it comes to using a suitable method the long lasting dispute between subjectivism and objectivism could be settled by a thorough integration approach. Unlike data, scientific psychological facts can be obtained only by relevant integration of data gathered from responses and self-reports (of human subjects). This is true, not only for psychological experimenting but also for psychodiagnostics. Other methodological approaches in psychology (observance, projection, analysis) can strengthen the validity of response/self-report integration. Expressed by the terminology of general methodology of science, we think that we were successful in creating a psychological method which, by incorporating statistical procedures, contributed significantly to the increase in accuracy of other psychological research, at least in

Slovakia in the 1970's and 1980's. Thus we reached an international standard, even surpassing it in some ways.

4. Since psychological reality is formed at a multilevel reality of the world, getting to know how it functions requires a complex, in other words, systemic approach. Having this as a point of reference and based on results of numerous experimental projects I formulated and defined the interfunctional principle in psychology. Its implementation in research requires three procedures: revealing intrapsychological bonds of the phenomenon under study, revealing the effects of endogenous (organism-individual) determinants and finding the exogenous (stimulative-situational) effects on behavior. In the framework of the above, psychology's role is to study how in this confusion of interactions psychological reflection of the "self" and the surrounding world comes into being and how it regulates human behavior - not only here and now but in the entire biodromal development of human beings.

The interfunctional principle in psychology has become the most known of all the things the Bratislava school of experimental psychology represents. It was well known not only in psychological circles of the formerly socialist countries but it was not left unnoticed by western, mainly cognitive psychologists. As early as in the 1970's, we presented our work on cognitive processes of personality (the emphasis is on personality) at several international conferences by which, I think, we evidently preceded the later development (80's) of a more broadly understood and developed cognitive psychology in the world.

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The above sketched paradigmatic definitions of the theses of the Bratislava school

of experimental psychology did not come about by confronting other theses. They were and are the result of generating several hundreds research projects (circa 50 were mine). The majority of them were conducted within the framework of the State Plan for basic research of that time in Czechoslovakia where in the 60's-80's I, as a coordinator of the main projects, directed the corresponding research activities of several teams. The above stated and some other theses of the Bratislava school of experimental psychology were published in 1985 in my monograph titled *The Theory of General Psychology*. The book was sold out in one month. It received great reviews not only in all psychological but also in other journals (altogether 14, of which 3 were from abroad). In 1986 it received one of the 3 main awards of the Slovak Academy of Sciences for original work. With approximately 100 quotations this monograph was among the most often quoted literary sources in Slovak and Czech psychological literature at the end of the 1980's and beginning of 1990's. I received offers from several countries to translate this book but the 1990's were approaching - the transformation decade of Europe and so without my cooperation only an abridged selection from this monograph was published in Germany in 1991.

II. BIO-PSYCHO-ENVI MODEL OF PERSONALITY

Its first version was sketched within the framework of the development of the psychoregulatory concept in my monograph in 1985. Later, based on research and studies I decided that this concept needs further elaboration. Its last state can be briefly summarized as follows:

Personality is a unity of internal dispositions (heredity - innateness) and external factors (environment - culture) formed by one's own "self" as long as an individual has the will and ability to do so. The result of the creation, forming and development of personality is dependent on two things: mainly which of the three main sources is becoming (has become) the dominating one for a mature and integrated personality and which psychological regulator is most effective here.

In the first approach we can, as a prototype, delimit the rudimentary personality - the prevalence of inherited and innate determinants, a well adjusted personality - dominance of influences of the actual environment and a cultivated personality - self-development, self-education, self-regulation and self-improvement. In the second approach, the role of psychological regulators in the forming of a personality is involved. These regulators are, above all, the universal human experience which is usually individual - specific (attained abilities and competences) and can even be systemic, i.e. such complex psychological potentials which enter the core of human behavior, in other words, human actions. Unlike in the case of the known factor characteristics, including the most recent robust "Big Five", these include wisdom, consciousness, modesty, tolerance, humbleness, etc. as well as the desirable psychological regulators such as deep-rooted spirituality as an opposite to consumerism, global prosocial behavior as an opposite to unlimited individualism, responsibility for the world as an opposite to attaining riches at all costs, etc. In psychology these factors have not been studied much so this is a challenge to develop new methodological tools to study/identify them. We can already emphasize their educational or self-educational

application in the process of primary change of personality. This change is one of the decisive preconditions for the survival of civilized mankind in the globally threatened world at the turn of the millennium. Recently (1997) I discussed this subject in detail in my study titled *Environmental Alarm - but for whom?!*

III. PAIR INTERACTION IN MAN

This problem kept my attention already in the 1950's when it appeared as a side product of differently oriented experimental research. Later, (1970's), within the framework of a partially interdisciplinary cooperation, the Institute of Experimental Psychology worked on 28 research projects (some were dissertations) using several thousands of subjects. The most important one was a semilongitudinal research project involving children from three areas in Slovakia (N = 406) using 43, mainly original, methods. Based on the principles of the Bratislava school of experimental psychology we decided to dispute several traditional but nomothetically invalid knowledge about right-left preferences in human behavior which evoked a great response. In verifying the five-point hypothetical concept, we managed to gain neuro-psychological and psychological - personality knowledge of phenomenon mainly through the following facts.

Non-optimal lateral relationships of pair functions (insignificance, excessive preference, etc.) are not only part of the basis of emotional ability (neuroticism, anxiety) but are also a handicap in mental performance measured by intelligence tests. Optimal lateral-preference relationships are one of the predispositions for the development of integrated personality which have not been taken into account sufficiently.

Various disorders in lateral-preference relationships are an etiological component of a whole number of mental illnesses. However, because of one of our colleagues died and two left the team we were not able to make evident or prove the hypothesis that there are great reserves, in terms of the improvement of man, in guiding the development of optimal lateral-preference relationships in the functioning of personality. However, some of the methods of lateral preference, which we developed in cooperation with G. Horkovič and K. Jariabková, are still in use in diagnostic practice.

IV. QUALITY OF LIFE

In the framework of environmental-psychological grants at the IEPs S.A.Sc., since 1992 in my research I have concentrated on theoretical-conceptual and methodological aspects of this phenomenon which later lead to the question of quality of life. Independently of the transcultural activities of the WHO - WHOQUOL project, which reflect various previously known clinical findings, I made an effort to generalize the approach to this complex phenomenon.

I created a model which differs from other concepts known to me in that it perceives quality of life as a multi-level phenomenon: this should allow for its plausibility in idiographic as well as nomothetic understanding. Indeed, if there are generally valid human rights than there should exist a corresponding psychological concept or interpretation. In our understanding it involves mainly a basal level of quality of life which includes the somatic state, psychological functions, family, satisfaction of fundamental needs, favorable environment and certain economic status. In spite of various phases,

forms and stages of development of various societies in the world, I am of the opinion that the six mentioned components of quality of life can be considered universal. Moreover, they form a certain unit, albeit individually or socially - culturally variously structured. Quality of life cannot be determined only by somatic indicators such as the absence of illness, pain and hardship nor by psychological criteria such as wellbeing, independence of others, joy of life, etc. And it is totally erroneous to base quality of life only on material riches, a stuffed grocery cart, civilization comfort, etc. The complexity of quality of life at the mezzo-level is expressed by such components as the education - cultural level, belonging to a society, social status and many other things. After all, the meta-level, which reflects cultivated personalities, reflects quality of life in the form of spiritual values leading to continuous development, to prosocial behavior, to the creation of a "better" world. The individual levels and within them all the components of quality of life are integrated by one of the most effective regulators of human behavior and that is the meaning of life. As we can see from the conceptions above, quality of life requires not only interdisciplinary - systemic approaches but also transcultural research. The turn of the millennium could be the impetus for such research.

V. HISTORY OF PSYCHOLOGY IN SLOVAKIA

My first task, as a researcher at the psychology department of the Philosophical Institute of the S.A.Sc. (1953-1955), was to map the development of psychology in Slovakia in the years 1918-1948. I think that I managed much more, as testified by the supplement of the Psycholo-

gical Studies S.A.Sc. II from 1960. Incidentally, in 1949 I became a part of further development of psychology in various centers around the country, topped by the work on a grant task in 1993-95. Its chief results can be summarized as follows: a reassessment of the previous development of psychology in Slovakia, including an all-state conference, was made (Kováč, ed., 1993). I made several analyses of this development and presented them at various international conferences. With V. Kováliková and J. Koščo, we wrote a 200 page document on the modern development of psychology in Slovakia in 1918-1989. It is evident from the text that the following characteristics are typical for the development of psychology in Slovakia: discontinuity, maintaining contact with the events abroad and, compared to other countries, quicker rate of development of psychology's main potentials.

QUASI FINALE?

It is obvious from the text above that 50 years of my life with psychology did not take place in Slovakia only and was not limited to research. Although in my Curriculum Vitae I called myself "predominantly experimentally active psychologist", from the 1960's this honorable mission was gradually overtaken by organizational, editorial, pedagogical and partially application activities. All this, but mainly the general development of the institute, later reached such dimensions that I had to work on my professional work, my own tasks (books, studies, presentations) mainly over the weekend. On Friday, I tried to avoid solving unpleasant problems; Friday afternoons were left to be the most pleasant part of the week. However, weeks went by very quickly, except for those

spent abroad. Coming back home was always the most beautiful experience. Thus psychology became an inseparable co-traveller in my life, even though I suffered wrong on many occasions.

In an effort to make more general conclusions from my life with psychology I have the following to say:

1. Psychology is still like a child that needs kindness and care so it can develop properly. The "child-like" position of psychology, however, is not the result of its historical youth only. It is, above all, a greatly complex subject; its scientific knowledge has brought, so far, more hope than business. We have little scientific facts and not too many verified methodological approaches and plausible theories.

2. The development of psychology, unlike, for example, geology, physics or mechanics, is often decisively dependent on the favor or the lack thereof of the environment, often represented by subjective factors. Although psychologists are to bring knowledge about the most inner thoughts of humans, the paradox is that many people are normally not interested in that. Of course as long as they are not handicapped or have some other serious problems. There are many of those who refuse the entire field. Indeed, psychology holds a mirror in front of not only individuals (to show them the difference from subjective self-image) but also to various social structures (education system, health care, political concepts, etc.) to indicate how these function in terms of contributing to the optimal development of everyone. Therefore, psychology can point to such problems which are more or less unpleasant, it can disrupt a deep-rooted empire and convict individuals for possible incompetency and incapability.

3. People who learn a certain minimum about psychology in basic education, psychology as scientific knowledge and optimizer of practical life, are the ones to create a suitable environment for psychology. However, our traditional school (and probably elsewhere as well) tortures children with information about the structure of precious minerals, about the tributaries of the Amazon, about African perissodactyls, etc. but their knowledge of their own mental functioning, as I found out in experimental research, is about as weak as that of the Australian aborigines. Similar is true concerning the high school and university graduates. The humanization or hominization of "Super Specialists" is quite rare.

4. Unlike the majority of natural, technical, biological and other sciences, which are very demanding in terms of material - technical, i.e. financial means, progress in psychology is dependent mostly on new ideas rather than expensive research technology. And since original ideas, as easily proven by the history of psychology, are not dependent on the size and location of this or that state or society, the hegemony of some regions is only quantitative.

5. The consensus prevails that psychology as a modern science was formed in the 19th century in Germany and then developed quickly in USA in the mid 20th century. At this time, it is among the most developed professions, mainly in small countries such as Holland, Belgium, Israel, Finland, Switzerland, etc. So it is not a question of world powers here; psychology was developed mainly in those areas where the care of a human being is understood complexly, i.e. on the basis of the results of modern sciences of man. We can even dare to say: "Tell me how many psychologists there are in your country (city, locality) and I'll tell you how thor-

