

Czech Contributions to Searching for Starting Points of Transculturality

Frantisek Burda

University of Hradec Králové, Faculty of Education, Department of Cultural and Religious Studies, Czech Republic

ABSTRACT

This study concerns with defining and classifying particular attempts to find outlines of transculturality in the Czech surroundings. It makes efforts especially to characterize the so called Hradec Králové school of transculturality, which it reduces into two dominating different streams: the socio-cultural and the metaphysical stream. The study divides the socio-cultural ways of transculturality into three central models: the nihilistic, the symbolical and the humanitarian-psychological model. The metaphysical stream is then divided into the biblically anthropological and the historically contextual model.

Key words: *transculturality, transcultural communication, nihilism, socio-cultural way of transculturality, metaphysical way of transculturality cultural relativism*

Introduction

Recently the need has occurred to search for transcultural mutuality in connection with globalizing trends. So far there are not many texts that would be trying to grasp transculturality. In this contribution we will attempt to outline perspectives and flaws of the Czech attempts for seeking transculturality. No systematic monograph analysing transculturality and its preconditions has emerged yet. Nevertheless, there are sketches of the theory of transcultural communication that showed up at the Department of Cultural and Religious Studies at the University Hradec Králové, where the eponymous study branch was founded.

The attempts to deal with the perspective of transculturality in the Czech language surroundings are to be found at only one place. All of such attempts in fact arose either directly at the Department of Cultural and Religious Studies or at least in cooperation with it. Also the author of this writing is a member of this department. Some of the contributions to the conference organized by the above mentioned department under the title »Man as a Starting Point of the Dialogue of Cultures – Conceptual Preconditions of Transcultural Communication« came closest to an attempt for a serious analysis of transcultural communication starting points. We are going to concern with these contributions, as well as with other inspiring attempts that emerged in some authorial monographs

on a similar theme, where the theme is dealt with. The need for methodological and conceptual reflection, which resulted in the conference on the given topic, crystallized on the basis of awareness that non-structurally accumulated data would lead just to a subjective, patchy, inconsistent and as such at length the unreliable, unconvincing approach influenced by contingency. It was then a need to make clear what exists and why it exists in the case of the transcultural perspective.

There are basically two different approaches profiled in Hradec Králové attempts to define transculturality, namely the metaphysical and the socio-cultural approach. While the metaphysical approach presupposes the socio-cultural dimension in itself and does not delimit towards it, the socially cultural approach methodologically tends to the hermetic closeness in immanence, though, as we will see, such closeness has also significant ruptures, which let the metaphysical issue enter the game again. These two different and to some measure contradictory positions are profiled also in already mentioned contributions to the conference »Man as a Starting Point of the Dialogue of Cultures – Conceptual Preconditions of Transcultural Communication«, which attempted to define the meaningful and examinable relationship of logical and consistent, mutually interconnected criteria of the transcultural perspective. The earlier mentioned positions we

can also find in several monographs that try to take the transcultural perspective seriously and to deal with it methodologically.

We will spend some time at six authors in total. Three of them we will categorize into the socio-cultural way to comprehend transculturality, although we can find here more and there less evident metaphysical potential. It will be comparatively easier to categorize three authors into the metaphysical way how to understand transculturality, though we can find the pronounced and consistently elaborated position only at one of them – Jan Hojda.

Socio-Cultural Path

Nihilistic socio-cultural model

Let us have a look at the authors that we consider incentive and essential at defining the content of transculturality and subsequently at defining presuppositions of transcultural communication. First of all we will concern with those, who, according to our assessment, are setting up the way, which we call here the mostly socio-cultural way how to grasp transculturality. So far the most integrated attempt to found starting points of transculturality is without doubts work by Zdenka Sokolíčková, which deserves to be named on the first place.

Zdenka Sokolíčková in her attitude takes off the thought by the Italian philosopher Umberto Galimberti, how he expressed it in his not thick but in Italy very successful book »L'ospite inquietante. Il nichilismo e i giovani« (in Czech Znepokojivý host. Nihilismus a mládež, translated by Zdenka Sokolíčková) In her new book the author's main intention is a sincere effort to overstep culturally determined stances. During the search how to overstep the cultural determinants she discovers nihilism as a certain opportunity to redefine value anchoring and at the same time as an instrument for weakening of cultural determinacy, which enables openness to encounter with unlikeness. She does not, similarly as Galimberti, conceal the negative impacts caused by the atmosphere of nihilism, but she sees them as an impulse to a creative response. Nihilism carries with itself gradual corrosion of any sense and meaning, nevertheless at the phenomenal level it manifests itself first and foremost by the value insecurity. Loss of the sense is a consequence of horizon loss, due to which man ceases being a person and becomes an automatically declaimed role. The world is mauled to pieces, it is fragmentarized, it is not possible to agglutinate it, to put it together, into the whole that would be sensible; things in it lose their meaning, out of the blue they become just neutral and depleted entities taken out of any order and values, put off the salvational sector of the whole, or the sense. »The debacle of memory, loss of coherence notion, solidarity, accountings, loss of the will to superpersonal duty...«¹ are then concomitant circumstances of the sense loss. There is indeed the time continuum, but there are not events that would make sense, all processes and situation are alike in it. There is no difference between the noble and the profane.

Nevertheless, according to the author, this so called passive level of nihilism, i.e. succumbing to and absorbing facticity of the period atmosphere, can stimulate also the active nihilistic response. However here she is getting in the terminological contradiction, which she recognizes, since the active nihilism is in substance anti-nihilism. The active nihilism does not make do only with permanent deconstruction and demythologization of all concepts and constructions, but it makes for affirmation of a sort of a cementing constitutive starting point of the future dialogue inside diversity. Zdenka Sokolíčková finds such a starting point in the value of equality, liberty and humility in the relation towards nature.

The awareness that the struggle for the active nihilistic approach, which is all the time taking place on the level of extremely tense relationships, where a step aside and ceasing effort lead to unleashing conflict and the violence spiral, is an inspiring factor. She thus does not tie the possibility of transculturality stored in the nihilistic perspective to a kind of ideal and harmonious image of normal human naturalness. She perceives the transcultural dimension of human existence as a determining correlate to that that man would not be a mere mechanical puppet of his own culture. Indeed, completely in contradiction to that all facts touching the human world she perceives as socially constructed, she eventually postulates the human essence – humanity, to which transculturality is aimed.

Even if the author delimits herself against capture in absolute validity of cultural determination, in the accord with Jan Hojda's theses suggests a possibility of transculturality as a dialogue despite cultures, her discourse stays necessarily in capture of a culturally determined, though revised horizon of all immanence. The author's conception of nihilism, which actually by the values affirmation eventually negates nihilism, is similarly inwardly discrepant. Nihilism is here more a description of weakening and ambivalence of certain phenomena on the ethical and moral, logically consistent, personally-spiritual level, but it is not the acceptance of ontological or absolute nihilism that is negation of a possibility of any affirmation, pure cognitive resignation. Sokolíčková's nihilism is more a synonym of a critical discourse, relativism and negation of relativism, deconstructivism and demythologization or even kenotic thought. Her nihilism is an expression of more postmodern and postclassical, also post-Christian discourse, but not anti-modern, anti-classical or anti-Christian.

Though, is this still negativism? Is the thesis or a presupposition of a friendly face of nihilism, a presupposition of a starting point out of a vicious circle still nihilism? On the other hand Sokolíčková speaks about absolute validity of immanence. Transcendence of transvaluation that she postulates and to which absolute nihilism leads them is closed only in immanence. Such nihilism is anti-nihilism that incessantly renews the bond to the world. An anti-nihilist is aware of the stalemate of nihilism that cannot end other way than misery and through active nihilism he connects his relation to the world and the Other again. Here Sokolíčková omits metaphysical consequences of

such intrinsically contradictory concept of nihilism. If she finds here a universal rule despite cultures in Havelian concept of life in truth, then she insufficiently reflects the fact that every thought and conceptualization inside immanence is culturally determined, thence she finds herself in a vicious circle in which despite cultures either does not apply or applies to a limited extent/determinably in the intention of interculturality or crossculturality. Thus also the principle of the image of universality, transculturality or transcendence, constructed »despite culture«, is culturally determined. To search a guarantee of truth in universally acceptable immanent values is an enterprise pre-judged to a crash. Are there at all in the immanent frame any values, which would not be culturally determined and which would be acceptable for all? Neither will the values constructed on the road, as Zdenka Sokolíčková suggests, such as liberty and equality, be ever on the platform of immanence accepted by all, because all concepts of liberty, equality and relationship with the nature are in the immanent horizon always culturally determined.

Although Zdenka Sokolíčková postulates certain ethic of wanderer, which is a variant of situational ethic as it was constituted in the sixties of the twentieth century in the Western philosophical discourse, she moreover postulates also human naturalness-humaneness that should be a regulative of constructing. According to the author, this ethics will participate on the forming of an individual's identity. The identity, according to her, cannot be indefinite, obscure, but it is unceasingly constructed by constructing of liberty and equality. The suggestion to construct it on the basis of active nihilism by affirmation of essential values is supplemented by warning that it can be constructed humanly or non-humanly. Here Zdenka Sokolíčková differs from the nihilistic platform of existence again. She, that is to say, refuses strangeness as the very own feeling of our being. Her wanderer is the excluded wanderer Ahasver who is carrying in himself, inside scrappy fragments of existence, a flash of complemented unity, a Dream with the capital »D«, humanity.

The ethics of wanderer comes out from the presupposition that all people find themselves in the middle of the state of identity constructing, on its threshold and not in its destination. This enables individuals put the identity into brackets. The author herself realizes that the dialogue despite culture, the perceiving of transculturality as a motion across, remains imprisoned inside cultural thrownness. Is it possible to presuppose hermetic closeness of the immanent horizon and at the same time presuppose a possibility to be outside of the cultural thrownness? Such a position is disputable and it in principle excludes itself.

On which basis can the perspective of an immanent stalemate open in the direction of hope, a starting point, meaningfulness? Where is that born »I know that I cannot be« but despite it »I must«? Here are we standing on the threshold of Nothingness and knocking on the door of the Absolute, or, vice versa, we are knocking on the door of the Absolute and finding ourselves on the threshold of Nothingness.

On the other hand the space opens in the affirmative mode of postulating of the friendly face of active nihilism, which way affirmation of meaning enters the game. The truth is of an affirmative dimension which it finally does not draw out of immanence. A question stands in the background of this concept, what is the last guarantee of affirmation. The refused transcendental vertical line, in a way of negatively theological thought, through the back gate enters the game again. The author postulates a thesis of a certain transcultural capital of cultures that contains thoughts and principles independent on culture. The thesis of the transcultural capital stands in contradiction with the thesis about the implementation of an actively nihilistic identity and transculturality exclusively in the horizon of immanence. If the thesis about the transcultural capital applies, then it necessarily presumes presence of transcendence in immanence, a breakthrough into the hermetic circle of immanence.

Philosophical nihilism comes out from consciousness that our language does not coincide with human reality, which defies translation. Nihilism explains that that this problem is inextricable. Substantially it is a failure of the rational vision of the world such as it was elaborated in the era of Enlightenment. Active nihilism thus hides in itself a potential of negatively theological thought transcending a rationalistic reduction, a potential that in this position opens an implicit perspective of the non-notional metaphysical way of transcultural discourse.

Symbolical model

The second very incentive author who represents first of all the socio-cultural way of transculturality is Jana Karlová. This author puts searching for the transcultural perspective into the culturological discourse. She, as well, queries after humanity and is not satisfied with a mere reference to innate naturalness. She looks for an answer in the field of symbolical structures where she finds out a fundament of the second naturalness of man. With the help of the ability to symbolize people grasp the world and strive to understand it. Here Jana Karlová finds the phenomenon of overstepping, transcending e.g. in situations where people come in touch with another symbolical orders and feel confused and disturbed. Only, all people subconsciously and in everything seek their domestic order. It is as if this symbolical construction of reality develops or continues in natural creativity. For example man sees order and accord in nature and abstracts it in the category of harmony. There is a certain givenness and a continuum of its development here.² The »second« order constructed in this way provides to man a feeling of insight, a feeling of solidarity, a feeling of symbolical anchoring, from which concentrated circles of a feeling of home, an identity and existential support are born. According to the author, culture is the second nature that creates itself on the basis of symbolical multilineal evolutionism that to certain measure corresponds to creativity of evolution in nature.² This leads the author up to the position that she perceives searching for boundaries between people

and animals as an almost superhuman task. She even implicitly asks a question whether such a boundary exists.² The doubt of the boundary between man and an animal is a necessary consequence of conceptual starting points of horizontal clinch in immanence.

Nevertheless the author, on the other hand, finds the difference between man and an animal on the level of a cognitive mapping of reality. While with animals the world is reduced on an objectively physical reality, with man to reduce the world on the objective physical reality is not possible. Namely because it is interwoven by knotty braids of symbolical relations and messages. Jana Karlová even speaks about symbolical orientation of man as »a breakthrough to full humanity«.² Just in a symbolical character of culture Jana Karlová strives to found transculturality and a potential of a transcultural dimension of communication flowing from it. However here we are standing at the first dilemma. To come close to the possibility to found real transculturality outside a cultural thrownness, we have to deal with the complicated issue of the origin of symbolization. The vague reference to the fact that it cannot be done, that such beginning lies in impenetrable fog, would be quite insufficient. This issue is handled in the fundamental way e.g. by the discipline of generative anthropology that systematically and with methodological consistency deals with the issue of the origin of language from the very point of view of symbolical structures.^{2,3}

Nevertheless the intuition that symbolical structures are the essential referential mechanism of the orientation of human existence is very stimulating. In other words, the symbolical disorientation causes estrangement to oneself, the others, the world and culture.² She then identifies a feeling of man's uprooting in modern postindustrial societies as a deficiency of domestic comprehensibility on the symbolic-existential level of meaningfulness. The symbolical space of the world swelled into monstrous criteria that cease to be comprehensible, namely human, for many. The rise of symbolic complexity makes stability and certainty of the social environment, in which man finds himself feeling anxiety and non-meaningfulness increasingly, unstable. His relationship to the world ceases to be not only self-conscious but also creative and responsible.² The uprooting though is not the only one answer for stress from not understanding. The anxious effort to accent, support by power or force also non-consistent interpretative and schematic frames can be another variant. This situation, founding mutual mistrust, stands as a result in the background of most, if not quite every conflict, of which dividing beliefs into right and wrong is the basic warp and weft.² Jana Karlová with the reference to Durkheim shows a certain measure of scepticism in the direction of whether we are able to step out from the symbolical stream of culture. Here she meets the same limits as Zdenka Sokolíčková that are related to immanent omnipresence of cultural determinacy, which complicates if not disallows foundation of transculturality, just because she reads transculturality in intentions only horizontal (immanent) transcendence as a universal principle in human ability to symbolize.

Psychological and humanistic model

The last author who strives to construct transculturality in the socio-cultural horizon of psychosocial mechanisms is Petr Mikoška. This author comes out from Rogersian (anti)therapeutic approach oriented on the client, which he strives to apply into pedagogical practice. At the first sight his position could seem to be closest to the metaphysical way how to define transculturality, because he builds on respect and esteem to the other, while he is aware of human uniqueness, substantial difference and psychological irreducibility of man.⁴ However at the more attentive sight the first impression happens to be more complicated. At the background of his approach the anti-essentialistic dogmatism derived from a »linguistic turn« of thought, whose core of defiance is built on the historically irreducible element representing the absolute that supposes and counts with a victim, is floating. This turn in the consequence deconstructs all great narratives but what it is not able to is to deconstruct the essential and absolute element – victim as a core of Western ethical thought and all our political and moral worries that stands in the very centre of linguistic thought. Mikoška comes out from Rogers's thesis about the danger of a judgement based on persuasion of obligation of only one reality and a tendency to force the others to believe in this reality. This infers a historically verifiable tendency of a society to trigger a persecutory mechanism, whenever any alternative sight at the world against the one legitimized by the authority of power occurred. Similarly as Michel Foucault both Rogers and Mikoška see social accords as power constructs repressing an individual. The persuasion is born out from this that a healthy and reasonable stance fuses in itself an ability to accept even the infinite multiplicity of »real worlds« in the sense of that each person is of different perception of reality. While Rogers infers his starting point for plurality from vertical transcendence⁵, Mikoška admits vertical transcendence as one of almost infinite quantity of human realities. In the consequence it could seem that such position would lead to certain likeness of accepting nihilism that founds a possibility of unity, non-violence and harmony. Yet in accord with a postmodern discourse he asserts the absolute of incomparability of different discourses, conceptual schemes and notions of the world (real worlds) that are in the globalizing world proper to various cultures but in substance he thus appears to be penetrated by victimizing residues. In the applying this incomparability the principle of exclusion the other is activated at the same time so that the identity of this absolute would be confirmed.

The question is, to what extent is the acceptance and ability to see more than only one perspective of only one reality the real plurality. Does not the cluster of realities in one conscience become one reality again? Do we indeed strip off the mechanism of exclusion, off hierarchization, control and punishing some realities on the level of political, ethical, pedagogical and other decisions? Is this methodological stance aware of the potential of the persecutory mechanism that it is, in the same way as any other concept, carrying in itself? Or is it persuaded that it repre-

sents a higher, if not the highest, form (reality) of Humanism?

This conception finds its anthropological optimism on persuasion that human naturalness is alike noble as it was e.g. in case of J. J. Rousseau. It sees the evil practically alike as Marxism or liberalism as a structural matter, though it responds to it in a different way. According to both, Rogers and Mikoška, what is the first to do is to adjust the conditions so that man could develop his potential. Even the transcultural potential flows here. It is stored in a universal and inborn self-actualizing tendency that leads to development of the proper potential.⁴

Although a human individual is comprehended as a secret for others, for himself he is a secret less. An individual is thanks to persuasion about utter positivity of his naturalness perceived as the only one and competent specialist on himself. The therapist's, the pedagogue's, the helping professional's assignment then lies in the support of the client through »congruence« (authenticity), unconditional »acceptance« and »self-acceptance« and »empathy«. Thanks to persuasion mentioned above about positivity of human naturalness, which utterly misses out that violence is something what is proper to social dynamics, can both, Rogers and Mikoška constitute proper experience as the highest priority and on its basis to learn the »truth about oneself«, and to accept this authority as a criterion of reality, authenticity, even autonomy. An individual does not have to bother with auto-censorship, he assumes a feeling of more liberated experience and reaches a facilitating feeling of self-acceptance. Similarly, the facilitating of a liberate choice is reached. Liberty is reduced on an »individual's ability to perceive impulses, motives, needs and emotions of an organism and ability to react on these data in his own profit«⁴. Such individual is then called a »fully functioning person«. The question is, whether therapy or pedagogy understood in this way in case that human naturalness and the construction of social reality would be a bit more complicated, does not become more therapy or pedagogy of simplifying and consoling.⁴ Indeed, this strategy reflects a dilemma whether instead of fortifying the belief in the personal strength to »resist powerful situational and systematic pressure...« does not rather fortify »consoling illusions of invulnerability«? Whereas the consequence is that »maintaining this illusion only serves to make one more vulnerable to manipulation by failing to be sufficiently vigilant against attempts of undesired influence«.⁶ For example the every year number of a million of underage pregnant girls is interpreted as a revolt against the lack of understanding their sexuality.⁴

The essential problem that plays the main role at constituting the presupposition of transculturality stays a question of guarantee of human naturalness and human dignity connected with it. If transculturality is to be space outside cultural determination, it is an inherent factuality inside reality, not an accidental element of reality, which it is possible to reduce easily for example on experience. Without metaphysical anchoring it stops being transcultural and becomes maximally crosscultural or

intercultural potentiality. As such, it needs rather meta-phenomenological or even trans-phenomenological anchoring in the synthesis of the phenomenological approach with the metaphysical one, as Karol Wojtyła formulated it in his extensive study »Person and Act«. Wojtyła speaks about transphenomenology that we can esteem as one of forms of a synthesis of phenomenology and metaphysics, or as metaphysics based on phenomenology, but which can be also considered as a form of philosophizing that is aware of limits of phenomenology, and which steps over phenomenology towards metaphysics.⁷ That is to say, it is quite possible that transculturality is either founded by vertical transcendence that postulates a possibility of stepping out from cultural determination, or there is none and then it is just a rhetorical figure denying in the socio-cultural perspective itself.

Metaphysical Path

Biblical-anthropological and personalistic model

Now let us come up to the authors whom we could categorize under the frame of the metaphysical way of grasping of transculturality. Jan Sokol in the introduction of the collective monograph »Člověk jako východisko dialogu kultur – konceptuální předpoklady transkulturní komunikace« (Man as a Starting Point of a Dialogue of Cultures – Conceptual Suppositions of Transcultural Communication) raises a question about easiness of using a term of a cultural dialogue or of a dialogue among cultures. He problematizes understanding the dialogue among cultures as something axiomatic. The essential warp and woof of his thought is reflection of starting points for the presupposition of all-human universality as a necessary pillar of cultural dialogue. In accord with the oldest philosophical tradition he shows that the primary competence of man's understanding is not language communication, a language competence, but »logos« as a meaningful tongue which is possible to understand and which cannot be shut up in any definitions. Also the biblical metaphor about confusion of languages, according to him, points out to logos as to the originary beginning. According to the Book of Genesis man was created in the image and likeness of God. Thus he is free and as such he overreaches, similarly as logos, each definition and limit. Misunderstanding, cruelties, acts of violence, conflicts and wars are in this context perceived as a consequence of non-understanding. This biblical universalism is perceived by anthropologists, culturologists and other social scientists as a cultural thus a partial text. Nevertheless it carries in itself and also uncovers an essential anthropological testimony about man that is of an implicitly significant transcultural potential.⁸

The next author whom we would assign to the so-called metaphysical way how to define transculturality is Jan Hojda, the main of intellectual architects of the whole Hradec Králové concept of the study branch Transcultural Communication. Hojda comes out on the first place from intentions stated by the philosophy of dialogical per-

sonalism, for which perceiving of a human individual as a person is a key referential norm. Consequently man's understanding and perceiving in the frame of socio-cultural contexts unwinds from this. The socio-cultural frames themselves, according to him, have and realize the transcultural potential to such extent, which they in their single segments correspond to man as a person. To this starting point corresponds also the substantial agglutinating element of the Transcultural Communication Department's construction, which is built on three equal and complementary beams. The first is the culturally anthropological pillar, whose main object is understanding man-person in cultures from the perspective of theories of culture. The second is the philosophical pillar whose objective is reflection of ideological bases of persons' transcultural communication, and the third is the ethical pillar, which concentrates on ethical starting points of transcultural communication respecting human dignity. These pillars are wedding in themselves the question »how is man?« with the way how to penetrate into his being in culture with the question »who or what is man?« and from where to derive what is good or bad, better or worse for him and why.

For Hojda, a springboard of the transcultural dimension of human dwelling in the world and in cultures is a receptive-donative nature of being a person or perichoresis of the motion of ecstatic self-donating and kenotic openness. Man by his existence mirrors a circle of sharing that is eventually unclosed, aiming to infinity, to the transcendental source. This unique way of being, which in the world is proper only to man, shines through, emanates in all elements of culture.⁹ We could call the transcultural basis conceived this way *protophany*. It is not chemically clean and evident presence of being a person in culture. Man is of a paradoxical nature; on one hand his self-determination is connected with stepping over himself, on the other hand he closes himself and locks himself in secure cultural shells that he then needs to overcome. He is all the time finding himself and at the same time he is losing himself. Thanks to this his experience he nevertheless gains a certain relative distance both from himself and the world and a certain pluralistic sight at the world. Of course, not always and not in equal measure.⁹

The human world appears to Hojda on the phenomenological level as ceaseless searching for a transcendent source of personality. This searching itself is of the transcultural, transphenomenological, translogical and even transpersonal nature. It is present everywhere and in everything and it is not possible to reduce it only on theoretic discourses.¹⁰ The author himself though mostly reflects it on the background of a platform of different forms of artistic expressing. He crashes into it during searching for the foundations of humanity. Here Hojda comes to conclusion that the ground of humanity is personality. Searching for anchoring humanity in pure naturalness that could perhaps aboriginally found some originary harmony is failing. The material, biological, psychic and social dimension of »naturalness« as a guarantor of humanity the guarantee of humanity cannot be. In contrary, in the framework

of such starting points reduction or instrumentalization of a person or an individual happens. Hojda reveals the »bed« of humanity in the personalistic category of human dignity that connects the horizontal line of human being in naturalness with the vertical line of its out-natural or supernatural metaphysical anchoring.¹⁰ This reality is a foundation of a certain »sacred space« inside the life and story of people. Fascination by this space is, according to him, at the roots of symbolical systems (cultures) that strive to make the path to the secret of the others and oneself accessible. Here, in awe over the secret that man both conceals in himself and reveals, is, according to him, the reservoir of the transcultural potential and the starting point for the possibility of transcultural communication deposited.¹¹

Historically contextual model

The last of the authors who contributed something into the discussion about starting points of transcultural communication is a historian Tomáš Petráček, the head of the Department of Cultural and Religious Studies in Hradec Králové that came up with the concept of transcultural communication in the Czech milieu. This author is also probably the most visible representative of the transcultural communication concept and its untiring propagator and promoter.

Petráček strives to find the perspective of transcultural communication in the frame of the historical anthropology discipline. He realizes that in our time ahistorical thought becomes a source of success of quite a number of ideological schemes, thought that does not lean just on factographic ignorance or illiteracy but first of all on shallow historically contextual thought or even on historically contextual wilfulness. However, inside singular particular historical contexts it is not possible to reduce the entire knowledge only on temporary meanings and notion; we can find there a line of an irreducible need to balance the pole of unity with the pole of difference, from which, e.g., the concept of tolerance or comprehending man as a person stems out. Human reality and identity is historical. It is historically anchored, it is never constructed ahistorically on a greenfield site. In history we can find worthwhile material that is of an essential value in the sense of self-understanding. For Petráček, history is shattering the naive certainty of the sense.¹²

Contextual historical thought can thus help us to distinguish the measure of legitimacy of our value judgements. Petráček is aware of the fact to which Liessmann points out, namely that »historical data that are not interlaced according to the logic of historical sciences but collected according to political or emotional facts are not knowledge but ideology«¹³. Methodologically consistent contextual historical thought provides us not only with support for value judgements but it can also help us to establish starting points of legitimate transcultural judgements. That is to say, we learn that every historical context, to different extent and intensity, contained also a certain potential of transcultural mutuality and commu-

nication. Petráček demonstrates it first of all on the background of diversity issues inside the Middle Ages society. He perceives diversity, which is here the premise of transdiversity, first of all as combination of a strong value framework and dynamic space for variations. Plurality, according to him, in agreement with classical philosophy, G. Sartori and others, is not given by the summation in the boundless space, but by the unified value framework. However it, from the viewpoint of transcultural perspective, cannot be specified by any convention, but it stems out from the transcendental framework. In the Middle Ages it was the Gospels, what has been a critical referent of cultures and cultures have never complied them. One of their content referential capitals suitable for plurality and cultural mutuality is a discovery of dignity of man as a person.¹²

Another author, whom we, even if with reservations, classify under the metaphysical path of conception of transculturality, contributed to the discourse and reflection of the concept of transculturality rather marginally. He, that is to say, is not an author of a study that would elaborate starting points of transculturality analytically. However in one of his publications he refers in methodological starting points to transcultural communication. In this book we can find a passage where he tries to clarify to a reader what he minds by it and finally he follows this methodology at least in some chapters. It is a book by Karel Sládek, who concerns himself in the long term with thought of the Christian East, specifically with Russian authors.

In a recently published book on the Russian minority in the Czech society this author has also a chapter about transcultural communication in practice.¹⁴ In the introduction of this chapter he strives to sum up already existing, methodologically incoherent starting points of transcultural communication. The proper discourse of his texts shows first of all an intercultural than a transcultural perspective though. As the main and key issue Sládek considers gaining of values that could support mutual coexistence of various cultures and at the same time he believes that not explaining such values generates fear and strengthens ethnicization. Sládek on the practical plane of realizing mutuality in diversity points out to the essential factor determining the future likeness of coexistence. The issue touching upon fundamental values on the basis of which the coexistence will be constituted is that factor, similarly as we have seen it at Zdenka Sokolíčková. What values will establish the coexistence? From where should they be drawn? At the same time it is clear that such values have to be concrete and understandable so that individuals are able to identify with them and socialized with them. Sládek does not solve these issues in the final result trans-culturally but cross-culturally. He searches for a projection across the Czech and Russian culture that he finds e.g. in Christian artistic symbolism.¹⁴ From the mentioned above it is obvious that we could classify Sládek under socio-cultural discourse on the theme. However the author himself would rather refer intentionally to the metaphysical pole of transcultural continuum.

Conclusion

These sketches of transcultural communication have been waiting for systematic and structured elaboration yet. The Hradec Králové concept itself, though in the state before the elaboration, is very incentive and looks perhaps hopefully, anyway it is strongly jeopardized by the tendency to precipitous rush to apply something, what in fact does not even exist yet, which could make the whole effort untrustworthy and discredit it definitely. It could happen easily that the whole conception will satisfy itself with a few well-worn clichés, would-be noble phrases that will be glued here and there mechanically practically on whatever theme. The next stumbling block could be the tendency to immanentistic reduction of transculturality to which the humanities are pressed by ubiquitous and almost universal dogmatic intransigence of consciousness philosophy towards philosophy of being. Hradec Králové models of transculturality are so far double track. While the metaphysical models of transculturality socio-cultural include the socio-cultural approach in themselves, from the side of representatives of so called socio-cultural models the openness and willingness to reflect their metaphysical potential, to put the fundamental question about the guarantee of humanness that they postulate, are missing. Socially constructed and culturally conditioned humanness hardly can be the base of transcultural mutuality. In the frame of the cultural conditionality the notion of transculturality is a synonym of the higher level of interculturality, multiculturalism or crossculturality.

To be able to cogitate about the effective mode of transcultural communication, we cannot work with any hypothetical definition of transcendence in its background. Communication, let us say its concrete forms, always flow from theoretical starting points either reflected or non-reflected, of which they are the consequence. Transculturality is proper to culture, though it, at the same time, transcends culture from inside. It is present and at the same time absent in culture. We could express or capture it in five dimensions. The first dimension catches it as the transculturality that stands against culture. This dimension presupposes and extracts principled tension and conflict between cultural and transcultural values. The second dimension of transculturality is detected in culture itself. Culture is here perceived as a privileged place of transcultural integrating forces. In this perspective processes of converging, uniting, processes of cultural diffusion that reach global spread are emphasized. The third dimension of transculturality is registered as a reality of reality standing above culture. It is connected with its preceding position; it is an attempt to find balance between its presence in culture and out of it. In the fourth dimension of transculturality we grasp it as a paradox of culture and transculturality. Man is perceived here as a citizen of two worlds at the same time. The laws of both worlds apply here simultaneously but they are incompatible as for example incompatibility of human dignity with killing little girls from the reason of the lower value of one gender in various cultures. The last dimension of transculturality is its presence in culture as a reality of reality

transforming culture. It is grasped in the dynamics of its transforming influence in cultures here.

Then how to approach concretely to transculturality, how to encounter with it in these dimensions of it when the translation of transculturality into the language of the discourse is difficult if not impossible? If we tried to find

some philosophical equivalent for the reality of transculturality, we could use Gabriel Marcel's terminology and define it as approaching to ontological mystery.¹⁵ Albeit in this context man cannot become a descriptor of transculturality, however he can be its witness.

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F. Burda

*University of Hradec Králové, Faculty of Education, Department of Cultural and Religious Studies, Rokitanského 62, 500 03 Hradec Králové, Czech Republic
e-mail: frantisek.burda@uhk.cz*

ČEŠKI DOPRINOS U POTRAZI ZA POČETNIM TOČKAMA TRANSKULTURALNOSTI

SAŽETAK

Ova studija se odnosi na definiranje i klasificiranje određene pokušaja da se pronađu obrisi transkulturalnosti u okruženju Češke. To što čini napore posebno teške za karakterizaciju su tzv. škola transkulturalnosti u Hradec Královéu, što ga smanjuje na dvije dominantno različite struja: društveno-kulturna i metafizička. Istraživanje dijeli socio-kulturne načine transkulturalnosti u tri središnja modela: nihilistički, simbolički i humanitarne-psihološki model. Metafizički tok se zatim dijeli na biblijsko-antropološki i povijesno-kontekstualni model.