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## TRANSCULTURAL EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES: NETWORKS, IDENTITY, COMPETENCE

The purpose of the article is to substantiate the relevance of transculturalism concept for understanding and designing the new strategies for education in the context of the global society development and defining its tasks as arranging educational networks, the formation of identity and transcultural competences.

The current stage of the development of national societies is characterized by internationalization of relations, interconnections of cultures, the emergence of transnational networks that sprout like rhizomes over the barriers of political, national, cultural, ethnic and other localities. Global mainstream is objectively and subjectively aimed at forming a “global society” (Castells), with its transnational identities, global citizenship and cosmopolitan humanism as desirable scenario of the common future of humanity. Information and communication revolution creates conditions for widespread “border crossing”, the transgression beyond the barriers of paradigms, rationalities, social and cultural integrity; a transversal thinking is taking shape, aimed at creating “bridges” and transitions between differences, connecting, but not reducing them to a common<sup>1</sup>.

In this context, the issue of creating such a global educational space in which the interests of the individual, national needs of countries could be implemented in the most effective way, and joint search for transnational solutions to the problems of vital importance to human civilization as a whole can come

to life, is becoming more and more topical. Traditional education in Ukraine based on outdated notions of national culture and person self-identification is becoming increasingly divorced from real life. There is a need for alternative educational strategy, which would be aimed at turning it into a means of social and personal transformation in order to build a fair and free world of global society. This creates a powerful socio-cultural educational challenge and encourages finding ways to mutual understanding through a new vision of culture. On which cultural concept should we base in the process of transformation of the content and meaning of education in transitional societies, to which Ukraine belongs?

It should be emphasized that the cultural concepts are not only descriptive, but also operational ones. Our understanding of culture is an active factor in our cultural life. In this sense, the “reality” of culture to a great extent is a consequence of our cultural concepts. We should always be aware of the responsibility that we take as scholars and teachers: we have to use the concepts that are not only descriptively adequate, but regulatory acceptable, and which pragmatically form the desired horizons of the future. Relevance of certain cultural concepts in the context of globalization manifests itself in the view of the effectiveness of our experience of intercultural interaction, and its rationale is the subject of the scientific discourse, which also contains the discussions of such problems on the pages of journal “Philosophy of Education”<sup>2</sup>.

1. L.Gorbunova, *Thinking in the world of plurality: project of transversal reason by W.Welsch*, “Філософія освіти /Philosophy of Education”, Kyiv 2012, N.1-2 (11), p. 92-110; L. Gorbunova, *Transvesality as a modern intellectual strategy*, “Moldoscopie” (Probleme de analiza politica), N.1 (LX), Chisinau 2013, p. 7-15.
2. L.Gorbunova, T.Grytsenko, O.Gomilko, et al. *Multicultural Education: American Experience and Its Interpretation in Ukrainian Context*, “Філософія освіти/Philosophy of Education”, Kyiv 2013, N.2 (13), p.166-220. <http://www.philosopheducation.com>

The traditional concept of single cultures, developed during the Age of Enlightenment in the late 18th century by Herder, was established under the influence of social changes and was related rather to the national structure of society than to individual determination. Culture was interpreted as a mirror to human groups as well as a criterion for their differentiation and segregation. Culture was seen as an expression of the singularity of nations, their inner value, based on the “soul of the people,” as Herder wrote. Welsch describes this concept by three elements: (1) social homogenization, (2) ethnic consolidation, (3) intercultural delimitation. This meant that “the traditional concept of culture is the concept of internal homogenization and foreign separation at the same time”<sup>3</sup>.

This concept of culture as “popular” easily became the foundation of nationalist cultures and their mutual separation. Culture united certain people in order to separate them from the others. The definition of what should be considered as “we,” and that as “other” was sham and marginalized. The nations emerged as imaginary communities; and the act of imagination was used on the basis of tradition rethinking. This is what can be called a nationalist tradition of culture. Although the concept of a uniform culture still exists as a political tool to impose collective consciousness and social integrity in an ethnically and culturally different societies, it becomes apparent that it is not valid in the socio-philosophical analysis. Its discrepancy lies in the fact that it views culture as a tool of unilateral assimilation, which means the destruction of cultural and ethnic diversity under the motive of homogenization. In addition, the assimilation is often associated with internal and external segregation of the communities and is a constant cause of social and political confrontation.

Social and cultural isolation works only temporarily and under certain conditions. The history of contemporary society has demonstrated that every society and every culture developed only because of their constant and growing interlacement with the “others”. Unity through diversity means that any

contemporary society is able to establish useful and effective relations with other cultures. This fact is reflected in such concepts as acculturation, interculturality and multiculturalism. Yet they do not solve the problems created by the concept of a single culture.

It is well known that acculturation is a process of integration of cultural elements that are alien to any given culture. This process often occurs spontaneously and is powered by the benefit that alien cultural elements may have in their own cultural development or learning process in general. People take cultural elements from “others” because they enrich their own cultural and personal experience. But in many cases acculturation is a consequence of the imposition of culture, cultural manipulation of power relations, as can be seen in colonialism or ethnocentrism.

The concept of interculturality refers to such situations and displays such cultural actions which seek to establish institutionalized bi-national relations between different national cultures. Examples include fairs, festivals, cultural events, sports, art events, educational programs etc. Their goal is to find “the ways in which these cultures could recognize and understand each other and share with each other”<sup>4</sup>. However the interculturality contains latent conflict between national cultures. Its disadvantage is that it entails continued prerequisite of the traditional concept of culture. It still proceeds from a conception of cultures as islands or spheres. The classic conception of culture with its separatist character of cultures creates the secondary problem of a structural inability to communicate between these cultures. Therefore this problem can, of course, not be solved on the basis of this very conception. The recommendations of interculturality, albeit well-meant, are fruitless. The concept does not get to the root of the problem. According to Welsh, it remains cosmetic.

The concept of multiculturalism is very similar to the interculturality. This is evident in the works of J. Banks, C. Grant, S. Nieto, C. Sleeter, D. Bernal, S. May, P. McLaren, P. Bode, G. Gay and others. Mul-

3. W.Welsch, *Transculturality - the Puzzling Form of Cultures Today*, [in:] *Spaces of Culture: City, Nation, World*, ed. by Mike Featherstone and Scott Lash, Sage, London 1999, p. 195.

4. W.Welsch, *Transculturality - the Puzzling Form of Cultures Today*, [in:] *Spaces of Culture: City, Nation, World*, ed. by Mike Featherstone and Scott Lash, Sage, London 1999, p. 196.

ticulturalism aims to show the relationship with different cultures living together in a society. It contains the idea that the only homogeneous cultures are seen as micro-national units within the national system of the society, i.e. in this case, the traditional concept of culture as an isolated autonomous integrity is dominant. Multicultural societies on the basis of this construct are a combination of national / ethnic units which want to coexist, including segregation and ghettoization.

Postmodern societies tend to be multicultural due to the facts of migration, communication and education, but they maintain the germ of cultural, social and even political division as far as cultural

### **Transculturalism**

To reach a new level of understanding of intercultural relations, it is necessary to clarify the basic concept of “culture”, relevant in today’s context of cultural dynamics and speed of globalization weaves and mixes. In our view, the concept of culture that was developed in the framework of “*Cultural Studies*” Birmingham Research Centre for Contemporary Culture (The Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies) (R. Johnson, R. Hoggart, E. Thompson, R. Williams, S. Hall, T. Bennett) is promising in terms of implications in educational theory and practice. Cultural Studies are based on the notion that the modern world is a total multiplicity - class, racial, ethnic and cultural. The idea of culture as unified, coherent and homogenous changed its understanding as a set of multiple, private, historically and socially constructed cultures. These cultures are interpreted as a part of Cultural Studies not as a way of life in general, but as a variety of ways of life. In this sense culture is primarily a designed social phenomenon, not the “amount of aesthetic ideals of beauty” and not the “voice of reason”, which penetrates the boundaries of time and the nation and speaks for the hypothetical universal person. These are the diversities of ways of life, value creation processes, and complexes of practices which form the identity of subject, class, race and gender.

segregation is maintained as the consequence of an essentialist interpretation of cultural differences. As we can see, interculturality and multiculturalism are only reactive concepts of cultural change within a world shaped by the idea of a separated, monolithic and isomorphic national culture. But today’s global reality points less to separation than toward exchange and interaction. Today’s cultural dynamics no longer expresses social and national separation; they rather indicate the necessity to rebuild our social systems in accordance to the global impact of culture as a determining element of human evolution, as Gerhard Steingress says<sup>5</sup>.

Culture is defined as an agency of ordinary people for the perception and production of cultural meanings that are social constructs and are historically volatile and fluid. Culture is communicative by its definition; it is a mode of its existence that involves various forms of symbolic exchange: from unions to the phenomenon of mass communication. Especially the idea of its formation, historicity, contextuality, correlation and interdependence of all institutions and processes is emphasized. That culture in the paradigm of Cultural Studies is total; it interconnects with all social practices and activities. It is the place of manifestation of social differences and the struggle for ideological priorities. It is conceived as a process, as “praxis”, as something mobile, rapidly transforming, where there is a plurality of determinations. It is difficult to separate situational, short-term factors of influence («fresh determinations») from manifestations of long-term relationships and values. Thus, culture is not unified and homogeneous but differentiated and based on the principle of distinction. Even if this is unity, it is complex “unity-in-differences” and “articulated integrity.”

Jeff Lewis in his article “*From Culturalism to Transculturalism*” emphasizes that culture is mainly formed by methods of meaning-making<sup>6</sup>. Culture is an “assemblage” of imaginings and meanings that may be consonant, disjunctive, overlapping, conten-

5. G. Steingress, *Globalizing cultures: a challenge for contemporary cultural sociology*, “Eurasian Journal of Anthropology” 2010, N.1(1), p. 1–10. <http://www.eurasianjournals.com/index.php/eja/article/view/326/484>

6. J. Lewis, *From Culturalism to Transculturalism*, “Iowa Journal of Cultural Studies” 2002 (Spring), N.1, p.14-32.

tious, continuous, or discontinuous. In other words, culture is always transitional, transformative, open, and unstable. Culture is constructed by humans in order to communicate and create community. An individual human subject may participate in many different cultures simultaneously. Each of these cultures may have its own system of meanings which articulates itself through norms and values, beliefs, political ideals, rituals, clothing styles, vocabulary, status positions, and so on. Thus meaning systems have many different dimensions that are formed through various levels of prevailing values. Meanings are fundamentally fluid, and they are absolutely impossible to control. People create meanings through their social groupings and everyday experience. New cultures and new meanings erupt through cracks and echoes of old structures that are trying to hold them back.

The concept of transculturalism is offered by the followers of Birmingham school as a further development of the original Johnson's concept. Transculturalism mobilizes the definitions of culture outlined above through the expression and deployment of new forms of cultural policy. First of all, transculturalism is distinguished by its emphasis on the problems of contemporary culture, most particularly in terms of relationships, meaning-making, and power formation. However, transculturalism is as interested in dissonance, tension, and instability as it is with the stabilizing effects on social connections, communalism and organization. It seeks to enlighten the various gradients of culture and the ways in which social groups "create" and "distribute" their meanings, how they interact and feel the tension. In other words, transculturalism emphasizes the transitory nature of culture since it gives the possibility to

transform<sup>7</sup>. It recognizes the illegality of solid knowledge and the possibility of the existence of any truth, except temporarily. So it has to deal with the opportunities, viewpoints and strategies. Cultural patterns which it is faced with and which it illuminates, are a manifestation of transition, so that makes sense only in a limited present time.

Thus, culturalism and transculturalism give us a new socio-anthropological vision of culture, set new paradigm boundaries of theoretical research of intercultural and transcultural dynamics in the making of global society. At the end of the twentieth century Wolfgang Welsch<sup>8</sup> according to the praxis of cultural processes on the macro- and micro-social levels offered the concept of transculturality as one that is most suitable for most modern cultures. During the deployment of "culturality" a gradual move from "multi" through "inter" to "trans" can be seen, indicating that the increase in the degree of conscious handling of nuances contained in these terms. The term "multiculturalism" (usually in the European sense) corresponds to the passive tolerance, which may ultimately lead to parallel societies. Interculturality can mean very constructive dialogue between cultures. And finally, transculturality which is based on a new understanding of culture is what can lead to a real cultural interchange and cultural perspectives of global society. In this sense the concept of transculturality, describing real trends in culture and constructing a scenario of valuably acceptable future, creates new horizons for the values and concepts of multi- and interculturality opening them rich connotative prospects in the context of the global society making and forming a new, cosmopolitan universal culture.

### **Transculturality on social macro and micro levels**

In the process of international cooperation the transformation of cultures to a post-national state takes place. Post-national cultures are cultures that are generating new cultural forms that express new

social spaces of cultural experience<sup>9</sup>. These spaces are the consequence of social relations that characterize social reality in postmodern society and allow transcendent cultural production and experience<sup>10</sup>.

7. J.Lewis, *From Culturalism to Transculturalism*, "Iowa Journal of Cultural Studies" 2002 (Spring), N.1, p.14-32.

8. W.Welsch, *Transculturality - the Puzzling Form of Cultures Today*, [in:] *Spaces of Culture: City, Nation, World*, ed. by Mike Featherstone and Scott Lash, Sage, London 1999.

9. R.Alexander, *Dialogic Teaching and the Analysis and Improvement of Classroom Talk: a Developmental Bibliography*, University of Cambridge 2012. <http://robinaalexander.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Dialogic-teaching-bibliography.pdf>

10. Ibid.

Today, cultural experience depends less on the kind of national culture one belongs to, than on the social position it occupies in the international system of labour-division, professional attitudes and related life-styles. These new spaces of cultural production and experience are the consequence of a new life-style that is not limited by borders of national culture. On a macro-sociological level, transculturality is characterized mainly by three main social facts. Firstly, today's cultures are the consequence of interweaving cultural processes that lead to the inner differentiation and complexity of modern cultures.

Secondly, today's cultures develop within and due to the external cultural networking: no culture can maintain itself separated from the others. Postmodern life-styles transcend the borders of national cultures, to merge with those of other cultures. The national aspects of cultures have become secondary and now transcultural manifestations develop, reflecting the socially more significant reality of life-styles. These new social facts are mostly the consequence of three global processes: the expanding migratory processes, the worldwide impact of communication systems, and growing economic interaction.

Thirdly, today's cultures are characterized by hybridization, as every culture has to deal with all other cultures. All cultures are exposed to the impact of the other cultures and must respond by their own means. For that reason they have to synthesize cultural forms according to their own necessities. This fact requires the capacities to transcend the national definition of culture and to establish hybrid forms that express the reality of new social relations and life-styles. The "other" is no longer an external point of reference, but a dynamic aspect in the definition of one's own identity. The cultural system of any society becomes a very complex and diverse compound of possible decisions. Monolithic cultures with their necessary uniformity are reshaped in a differentiated system of elements available to individuals and social groups in order to define themselves.

Such cultural complexity influences the micro-level of individual identity. Globalization has brought the people physically and mentally clos-

er than ever before. Modern life-styles are a compound of experiences of different social worlds that are blended into new forms of individual identity. These "cross-cutting identities," have turned into a mass-phenomenon that influences the daily life of a great part of society. It is important to recognize that it does not fit into the concept of national identity and requires one to differentiate between a civic and a cultural status or identity of any given person: someone might possess a Ukrainian or American passport, insofar as they belong to a politically constituted collective, but their cultural identity might be more complex and express their civic right to differing cultural interests.

This means, that cultural identity is no longer an heirloom that is got through nationally defined and controlled socialization and enculturalization. It is rather the consequence of personal decisions induced by the growing opportunities of experience and integration of other cultural elements into one's own cultural identity. The cultural determinants have become transcultural. As Slimbach wrote, "a "transcultural era" is upon us"<sup>11</sup>. A great advantage of existing transcultural identity type over sort of monolithic nationalist identity in old Herderian sense should be noted as well. Transcultural identities, despite their differences in some respects, in most cases also have a number of common elements. Due to the fact that there are bindings and interconnections between them, they can exchange, provide understanding and transitions between these networks. That's why transidentities of transcultural type are generally more capable to affiliate with one another, rather than old cultural identity. The essential feature of trans-identity is the dynamism of its structure, fluidity, flexibility and the ability of quick transformation in accordance with the needs and problems of existing specific situations and events, avoiding the limits of formless. We are talking about its nomadic nature.

Can education help to clarify the identity and the formation of transcultural identity of individuals? In answering this question, James Banks has developed a typology of stages of cultural development, which may serve as a navigation map to be used by teachers

11. R.Slimbach, *The Transcultural Journey*, "Frontiers: the Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad" 2005, Fall, p. 205-230: <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ891470.pdf>

in their quest to help students to form and develop a clear cultural, national and global identification<sup>12</sup>. Typology is the concept of ideal types, therefore, it does not claim to real description of the specific identity of each individual. It is rather the basis for understanding and comprehension the characteristics of the processes of students' identity development in its structural dynamics.

During Stage 1 (Banks calls it "*Cultural Psychological Captivity*") individuals internalize the stereotypes and beliefs about their cultural groups that are institutionalized within the larger society, and for marginal groups they may exemplify as cultural self-rejection and low self-esteem. Cultural exclusiveness and the belief that their ethnic group is superior to others, characterize stage 2 – "*Cultural Encapsulation*". Often individuals within this stage have newly discovered their cultural consciousness and try to limit participation to their cultural group. They have ambivalent feelings about their cultural group and try to confirm, for themselves, that they are proud of it. In Stage 3 – "*Cultural Identity Clarification*" - individuals are able to clarify their personal attitudes and cultural identity and to develop clarified positive attitudes toward their cultural group. In this stage, cultural pride is genuine rather than contrived. Individual within Stage 4 – "*Biculturalism*" - have a healthy sense of cultural identity and the psychological characteristics to participate successfully in their own cultural community as well as in another cultural community. They also have a strong desire to function effectively in more than one culture. At Stage 5 individuals ("*Multiculturalism and Reflective Nationalism*") have clarified, reflective, and positive personal, cultural, regional, and national identifications and positive attitudes toward other racial, cultural, ethnic groups, and religious groups. At Stage

6 – "*Globalism and Global Competency*" - individuals have reflective and clarified national, regional, and global identifications, and internalize human rights values. They have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to function effectively within their own cultural communities, within other cultures within their nation-state, in the civic culture of their nation, in their region, as well as in the global community. Individuals within Stage 6 exemplify cosmopolitanism, believe that people around the world should have human rights, and have a commitment to work to attain those rights. The primary commitment of cosmopolitan individuals is to justice, not to any particular human community, says Amy Gutmann<sup>13</sup>.

Thus, wherever the individual is influenced by different cultural interests, linking such transcultural components with each other is the specific task of identity formation. Work on such identity is increasingly recognized as an urgent educational strategy which is aimed to integrate the structure of the individual components that have a different cultural background. And only in the course of transformative education their ability to transcultural crossing is successfully formed and can guarantee our cultural identity and competence in the long term. Strong, positive, and clarified cultural identifications and attachments are a prerequisite to cosmopolitan beliefs and the internalization of post-conventional values. This is the main goal of transcultural education: to support and affirm the identities of students from marginalized cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups if we expect them to endorse national values, become cosmopolitans, internalize human rights values, and work to make their local communities, nation, region, and the world more just and humane.

### **Transcultural networks: a new type of diversity**

As culture develops in diversity of different directions in its local forms and their interpenetration, its transcultural manifestations are changing, forms of diversity may vary as well. Former diversity that

has traditionally been presented in the form of individual ethnic cultures is prone to erosion trends. However, a new type of diversity takes shape: the diversity of different cultures and life-forms, each aris-

12. J.Banks, *The Stages of Cultural Identity. Diversity and Citizenship Education in Multicultural Nations*, "Multicultural Education Review" 2009, Vol. 1, N. 1, p. 1-28.

13. A.Gutmann, *Unity and diversity in democratic multicultural education: Creative and destructive tensions*, [in:] J. A. Banks (ed.), *Diversity and citizenship education: Global perspectives*, San Francisco 2004, p. 71-96.

ing from transcultural permeations. Complex transcultural networks rise and they differ in their content and structure.

Transcultural tissues appear to be woven from various threads, and in various ways. Therefore, on the level of transculturality, a high degree of cultural differentiation and manifoldness results again - it is certainly no smaller than that which was found between traditional single cultures. It's just that now the differences no longer come about through a juxtaposition of clearly delineated cultures, but result between transcultural networks, which have some things in common while differing in others, showing overlaps and distinctions at the same time. The mechanics of differentiation has become more complex, but it has also become genuinely cultural for the very first time, no longer complying with geographical or national stipulations, but following pure cultural interchange processes.

Moreover, these transcultural networks are more capable of affiliation with one another than were the old cultural identities. They include segments that are also found in other networks, and therefore are points of affiliation between different transcultural forms. So the new type of differentiation by its very structure favors coexistence rather than combat. This is the obvious advantage of the transculturality concept by Welsch over competing concepts. Because using the same formula as transcultural networks he explains the processes of standardization as well as process of a new variety emerging.

But how can we build education to promote the future development of diversity, creativity and socio-cultural innovation? This question arose in UNESCO document entitled "*Our Creative Diversity*"<sup>14</sup>, which considers the problem of social creativity. The answer is contained in the concept of transculturality. It argues such a position within multicultural and interconnected society, which envisages the dialogue character of cultural influences and expresses desire to interact as "mutual interweaving" rather than emphasizing the differences and polarization. The networks are the embodiment of this nature of cultural relationships.

Transcultural educational networks form the huge potential of social work. The Learning Network on Sustainability (LENS) can be an example to this. It was established as an informal educational network between higher education institutions in the pilot didactic and research project. LENS includes seven universities in industrialized countries and developing countries (Italy, India, Brazil, China, Turkey, and South Korea). The objective of this project is in fact that by creating a network between universities in the multilateral process of transcultural studies combine new advanced research problems of didactics through the development of specific social projects for sustainable development. Originally the concept of sustainable systems is developed in different centres, and then it is gradually exposed to critical examination, commenting, refining and processing in the exchange between university teaching and research groups from different countries. This ends-up in a set of sustainable system concepts for the various campuses. Finally, a digital exhibition of sustainable ideas is prepared and put on the web for dissemination and circulation. In 2006 it has been activated the first release a web platform to facilitate the multilateral exchange and to store all results emerged and specifically the catalogue of sustainable ideas emerged<sup>15</sup>.

The experience has shown that creating a network guarantees a multilateral transcultural learning process as a result of sharing and feedback. It allows participating students and professors to discover a different context from their own, another's culture interpretation, to detect unusual ideas, to build shared visions of possible changes with a catalogue of sustainable ideas. Analyzing the process of the project, one of its leaders Carlo Vezzoli notes that LENS mechanisms have fueled a lively debate among the participants and helped to set up joint know-how<sup>16</sup>. The results encouraged participants to consider the further development of the project. At the beginning of the experiment there has been a radial kind of network, centred at *Politecnico di Milano*. After the end of the experiment participants intended to move from the existing radial network

14. UNESCO: *Our Creative Diversity*, UNESCO Publishing, Paris 2005. [http://www.unesco.org/culture\\_and\\_development/ocd/ocd.html](http://www.unesco.org/culture_and_development/ocd/ocd.html)

15. LENS (2006): <http://www.lens.polimi.it>

16. C.Vezzoli, *Educating designers to transcultural creative-thought for sustainability*, [in:] Engineering and product design education conference, 7-8 september 2006, Salzburg University of Applied Sciences, Salzburg, Austria: <http://m.designsociety.org/index.php?Menu=31&action=28263>

model towards a multi-polar one, which empowers each participant as a source of input data, as a critic and as a participant of the design phase. Moreover, the main purpose of the project was announced as continued promotion of new common framework for courses and training modules / research, under the implementation of the proposal was put forward last all universities in the world as the result of a multi-lateral and transcultural effort/approach<sup>17</sup>.

This example demonstrates the effectiveness of transcultural educational networks and gives other universities an opportunity to look at themselves

### **Transcultural education: how to learn to build bridges and transitions**

The concept of transculturality is aimed on multi-network and inclusive, not on exclusive and separatist cultural understanding. It embodies the pursuit the culture and society understanding that provides the pragmatic qualities of culture that are not in the delimitation and the ability to bind to overcome differences and transitions between them. In the immediate pragmatics of our actions at a meeting with another way of life, we can always reveal not only differences but also opportunities for communication, which can lead to the formation of a new lifestyle. This is related to readjusting our inner compass: from the concept of polarity of “*Our*” and “*Others*” to accentuation of what can be common and unifying, where we encounter the alien phenomena. In this respect the experience of education in Europe is indicative<sup>18</sup>.

As known, in all European countries education was linked to national construction. It has played a positive role in creating a nation-state, national identity and national consciousness. This orientation was decisive in the XIX and XX centuries. After the World War II, education in the European Union is developing with European and cultural diversity. At present, we can say this with certainty: it is *culture in*

as a potential center of a multi-polar network that has enormous creative potential for research, training and simulation solutions to social problems of different levels based on the joint efforts of students and teachers from different countries. The most positive result of development and implementation of such projects are not even specific models of decision-making, but the formation in its members an especially creative, transversal thinking that can be open, to overcome cultural, disciplinary and paradigmatic barriers and find solutions in combination the different.

*its diversity*, including the national culture and the culture of the *Other*, seen as a central reference point for education in Europe. We should be based on a broad understanding of culture that encompasses the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage<sup>19</sup>.

This concept of culture also forms the basis of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions<sup>20</sup>, which was approved by an overwhelming majority of countries and now ratified by over 100 countries. This convention, affirming that “cultural diversity is a defining characteristic of humanity, its common heritage of humanity and should be cherished and preserved, being aware that cultural diversity creates a rich and varied world, which increases the range of choices and nurtures human capacities and values”, emphasizes the need for not only the preservation of cultural diversity in the face of the challenges of globalization, but also all kinds of assistance to it for the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration

17. C.Vezzoli, L. Penin, *Campus: “lab” and “window” for sustainable design research and education. The DECOS educational network experience, conference EMSU2004*. Proceedings of Environmental Management for Sustainable Education, Monterrey, Mexico 2004: <http://m.designsociety.org/index.php?Menu=31&action=28263>; C.Vezzoli, L.Penin, *Designing Sustainable Product-Service System for all*, Milan 2005: <http://m.designsociety.org/index.php?Menu=31&action=28263>

18. Ch.Wulf, *Education as Transcultural Education*, “A Global Challenge Educational Studies in Japan: International Yearbook” December 2010, N.5, p. 33-47.

19. UNESCO: *Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage*. Paris: UNESCO 2003.

20. UNESCO: *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*, Paris 20 October 2005: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001429/142919e.pdf>

of Human Rights and other universally recognized documents. It also says that culture is no longer the equivalent of national culture, but it should be understood in the above sense, which directs the focus of the convention on *cultural identity* and not on *national identity*. The rights to cultural identity are understood as human rights, the implementation of which should be protected and supported by the international community<sup>21</sup>.

The creation of conditions for *free interaction* of different cultures for mutual benefit, promoting *dialogue* between cultures in the interests of a *culture of peace* is proclaimed as the objectives of the *Convention*. All people should have the opportunity of cultural development in dialogue with other cultures in a spirit of mutual respect and recognition. In the article, which is the most important for education, is said that one of the goals of the convention is “to foster interculturality in order to develop cultural interaction in the spirit of building bridges among peoples”<sup>22</sup>.

Any culture is a uniquely definable ensemble of practices, values, symbolizations and imaginations. The borders between cultures are dynamic and change according to context. They allow themselves to be crossed by many cultural phenomena and prevent other phenomena from crossing. Cultural phenomena overlap, intermix and change within and between cultures. They flow back and forth between the cultures. The processes of exchange are the result of many constructive and destructive energies. Mimetic assimilations and translations of the cultural phenomena into new contexts occur in many of

these processes of exchange. Economic, political and social processes as well as electronic media play an important role. An overlapping of the global and the local occurs, leading to the creation of “glocal” phenomena whose origins are often difficult to trace. In these processes, new forms of the cultural and social imaginary as well as contradictions and conflicts are created<sup>23</sup>.

How to avoid violence and war in these conditions; can a sustainable development as a political goal be achieved? To a large extent it will depend on how the problems associated with cultural diversity will be solved. The mission of transcultural education is the contact with others and otherness in a way that is free from violence. Sensitivity to the otherness of nature and its resources includes integration of sustainability in cultural exchange and the consequent reduction of violence against nature. From the perspective of UNESCO, to promote cultural diversity, education must be supplemented by the inclusion of peace education and education for sustainable development. That is why the recommendations of the Conference of Ministers of Education and Culture of the EU the objectives of promoting cultural diversity were supplemented by implementation of objectives of education for peace and sustainable development, which are also performed only in a separate direction<sup>24</sup>. With the integrated implementation of these objectives education system is believed by representatives of scientific and educational community the EU will make an essential contribution to the response to major challenges for mankind<sup>25</sup>.

### **Transcultural competence: attitude to otherness**

In the process of globalization, which not only includes cultural diversity as its own condition, but also contributes to it, the focus is on the question of how the attitude to the “other” can be formed, representing another culture, and how to teach and inculcate the necessary skills as part of the process of

education. Cultural differences - this is exactly how to begin communicating with others. But this is not always understood by people otherness in themselves and in their own cultures. Exemption from myths about their monocultural identity and internal homogeneity would open new possibilities for

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. B.Huppauf, Ch.Wulf (ed.) *Dynamics and Performativity of Imagination. The Image between the Visible and the Invisible*, New York 2009.

24. V.Georgi, (ed.) *The Making of Citizens in Europe: New Perspectives on Citizenship Education*, Bonn 2008; N.Stevenson, *Cultural Citizenship. Cosmopolitan Questions*, Berkshire 2003.

25. Ch.Wulf, *Education as Transcultural Education*, “A Global Challenge Educational Studies in Japan: International Yearbook” December 2010, N.5, p.33-47.

understanding otherness of other people and other cultures, as well as for the development of thinking in terms of another. This problem would be solved by the transcultural education, the foundations of which were laid in the famous Delors Report (1996)<sup>26</sup> and the report on global perspectives of education for sustainable development VENRO (2009)<sup>27</sup>. In order to be able to cope with cultural diversity, we need the experience of the *Other*. Both cultures and individuals are formed by sharing with each other. Some authors determine transculturality as “seeing yourself in another”<sup>28</sup>.

So it is important for students to understand the knowledge that society and culture are created by contacts with otherness. People can only understand themselves as reflected by and through the reactions of other human beings and cultures. This implies that knowing ourselves means that we must be aware that there are limits to our understanding of alterity. How is it possible to accept one's experiences of other people without triggering mechanisms that reduce them to the known and trusted? One way to bear the alterity of strangers is based on *the experience of one's own foreignness*, i.e., feeling surprised by one's own feelings and actions. This experience constitutes a basis for developing the ability to think and feel from the perspective of the other, in the context of which the engagement with the non-identical becomes creative and transformative. Such experiences can be expected to increase sensitivity and the readiness to be open to what is new and unknown. In turn, this results in a better ability to bear complex situations emotionally and mentally without acting out stereotypes<sup>29</sup>.

A consciousness of the non-identity of the subject constitutes an important prerequisite for openness toward the other. In the confrontation with foreign cultures, with the other in one's own culture and with the foreign in oneself, the capability is to be developed to perceive and think from the perspective of the other. This change in perspective makes

it imperative to avoid the reduction of the foreign to the own. An attempt is to be made at suspending the own and experiencing it from the perspective of the other. The objective is the development of heterological thinking. Its focus is on the relationship of the familiar and the foreign, of knowing and not knowing, and of certainty and uncertainty.

The increase in the inscrutability of the world leads to an increase in the uncertainty of the individual, who must tolerate the difference between him- or herself and the other. In this situation, uncertainty and insecurity become central characteristics of life in society. On the one hand, they have their origin in the world that is exterior to the person; on the other hand, their origin lies in the interior of the person and ultimately in the interrelationship between the interior and exterior. Often the discomfort associated with uncertainty leads to the exclusion of any alternatives.

What is subject to excluding is determined on the one hand by the psychological and social constitution of the individual and, on the other hand, by the societal power structures and processes of setting and excluding values, norms, ideologies and discourses. These processes often lead to the otherness of the other not being perceived and the closing of the mind to the possibilities of perceiving and thinking from the perspective of the other. Students' understanding of such protective mechanisms at the micro and macro levels of social opportunities to overcome them in the process of intercultural interaction can be formed by using the same transcultural learning.

The main role in understanding of the relationship with *Other*, another and otherness within transcultural education belongs to the concept of transgression. Transgression consists of overcoming the limits set by rules, norms and laws on the one hand, and overstepping historically created boundaries on the other. These acts of transgression can be non-violent, but they frequently also involve manifest struc-

26. J.Delors, (ed.) *Learning – The Treasure within*, UNESCO, Paris 1996.

27. VENRO (Verband Entwicklungspolitik deutscher Nichtregierungsorganisationen e.V.): *Global Learning, Weltwärts and Beyond. Global Perspectives on Education for Sustainable Development*. Conference Report and Collection of Essays, VENRO, Bonn 2009.

28. D.Cuccioletta, *Multiculturalism or Transculturalism: Towards a Cosmopolitan Citizenship*. “London Journal of Canadian Studies”, 2001/2002, Vol.17, Plattsburgh State University of New York, Interdisciplinary Research Group on the Americas: [http://www.canadian-studies.net/lccs/LJCS/Vol\\_17/Cuccioletta.pdf](http://www.canadian-studies.net/lccs/LJCS/Vol_17/Cuccioletta.pdf)

29. Ch.Wulf, *Education as Transcultural Education*, “A Global Challenge Educational Studies in Japan: International Yearbook” December 2010, N.5, p. 33-47.

tural or symbolic violence. At the individual level, social transgression serves as an act of overcoming its own social and cultural conditioning, kind of an act of self-transforming, accompanied by a certain psychological and emotional discomfort. This requires the education to find rational and psychological compensators.

Cultural transgression of the society consists of many individual acts of transgression. In dealing with cultural diversity, boundaries are often reconfigured, leading to the creation of something new. Transgressions change norms and rules, ways of life and practices. They change and shift borders and create new cultural relations and constellations in the process. As a result, today people live life, which connects “their” and “foreign”, local and global more than before. They are increasingly transcultural, uninfluenced by the objective process of becoming a global society. But their converting to the subjects of the process can consciously shape their future, requires appropriate education, namely transcultural competence.

In an attempt to lay a course for transcultural competence Richard Slimbach in his essay “*Transcultural Journey*”<sup>30</sup> presents a number of organizational suggestions as cognitive “map” to direct the path of the student. Each proposal is accompanied by a set of student competencies describing the changes that can be expected along the way. Based on Slimbach and other authors’ proposals, I’ll try to present my own vision of the most important transcultural competencies that individuals have to master in the transcultural education.

**Critical thinking** as the ability to constantly wonder about the source of ethical judgments and assumptions, which leads to the habit to consider things from the standpoint of the mind and heart of others. **Heterologous thinking** as keeping a balance between the different positions, not reducing them to one another. It is ability to transgression.

**Diversity research** based on **contextual approach** (context balancing of specific, universal, global). Ability to use an appropriate conceptual tools, including **relevant concepts**. This means the

ability to **think nomadic**, i.e. comprehend the multiple existence as a phenomenon in the development of diverse, in the interconnection of changing contexts, but not by old-fashioned conceptual and categorical forms that have lost the touch with reality long time ago, but with *nomadic* concepts – dynamic structures that create senses “to express the power of mobility and diversity of life” that are able to combine different contexts and thus serve as tools of “binding” fragments “of the disintegrating world”<sup>31</sup>

**Communicative ethics** as a basis for intercultural dialogue.

**Global awareness**: a basic awareness of transnational conditions and systems, ideologies and institutions, affecting the quality of life of human and non-human populations, along with the choices confronting individuals and nations.

**World learning in direct experience with** contrasting political histories, family lifestyles, social groups, arts, religions, and cultural orientations based on “**inclusion**” and **interaction** within multicultural and international environment.

**Language competence** - foreign language proficiency: a threshold-level facility in the spoken, non-verbal and written communication system used by members of at least one other culture.

**Affective development**: the capacity to demonstrate personal qualities and standards “of the heart” (e.g., empathy, inquisitiveness, initiative, flexibility, humility, sincerity, gentleness, justice, and joy) within specific intercultural contexts. This model offers quite attainable ideal of a transculturally competent individual. To acquire it the student must leave the classroom to the community by participating in a kind of field work, direct and emotional, immersed in the appropriate cultural environment. This experience opens up opportunities for the formation of complex personal positions, social sensitivity and intellectual skills which are rarely achieved in ordinary classrooms. This practice helps students to step beyond their own world and plunge into the world to study other people’s lives in a variety of conditions. Of course, the purpose of the transcultural study is not to convert students in anthropologists or inter-

30. R.Slimbach, *The Transcultural Journey*, “The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad”, (2005, Fall, p. 205-230): <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ891470.pdf>

31. L.Gorbunova, *Nomadizm as a way of thinking and educational strategy. Part 3. Epistemological position*, “Філософія освіти/Philosophy of Education” Kyiv 2011, N.1-2 (10), p.17-34.

cultural experts, but it is more ambitious: to cultivate a new way of seeing the world, an understanding of themselves and their capabilities to participate in promoting a global culture of peace and sustainable development.

Based on the results of the latest educational research, documented by international organizations, we can conclude that there is a global communicative turn in educational policies and practices of different countries, leading to the rejection of the purely cognitive focus of education and the shift on the formation of transcultural communication and transversal competencies. Proof of this is UNESCO report “*Transversal Competencies In Education Policy And Practice*”, prepared by the Director of the Bangkok office Gwang-Jo Kim based on research conducted in 2013-2014 by Educational Research Institutes Network in the Asia Pacific (ERI-Net)<sup>32</sup>.

### Conclusion

Currently, in the deployment of globalization and internationalization process the education can no longer be understood only as national. It is a part of different cultures and thus contributes to the development of cultural identity. In terms of diversity of cultures it is a difficult task, the solution of which is possible only on the basis of a new conceptual vision of cultural processes. The concept of transculturality, unlike the concept of “separate cultures”, “interculturality” and “multiculturalism” lets us see a very different picture of relations between cultures: not a picture of isolation and conflict, but of sharing and interaction. The concept of transculturality is descriptively relevant as well as normatively appro-

The report stresses the need to shift attention from the accumulation of academic knowledge and “cognitive” abilities to more intangible and difficult to measure “non-academic” skills and competencies. This is the formation of skills and competencies that are necessary for effective communication with others, for critical thinking and innovation, respect for diversity and the environment, conflict resolution, team work, problem solving and so on, which is important not only for adequate training of students to the world of work, but also of paramount importance to ensure that future generations have been prepared for meaningful, sustainable and responsible life in a changing and interdependent world. Transcultural education strategy in its many aspects is one of the most pressing specific and meaningful embodiments of global transversal education intentions.

priate for the mankind in the era of globalization. Thus the strategy of educational policy should be built through an appeal to the concept of transculturality and be formed as transcultural. In the focus of the requirements of the global transformation, education faces the goal of transcultural conversion to form communicative and responsible subjects of transcultural action with a high level of relevant expertise. In the most general sense, these are transversal competences, based on which the formation of a global civil society with orientations on values of peace, social justice and sustainable development is possible.



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32. Kim Gwang-Jo, *Regional Study on Transversal competencies in education policy and practice (Phase I) 2013*, Asia-Pacific Education Research Institutes Network (ERI-Net), UNESCO, 2015: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002319/231907E.pdf>