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"Self-Transcendence and Prosociality", Martin Dojčár, Frankfurt am Main: 2017 : [recenzja]

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Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej bazhum.muzhp.pl, gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

Martin Dojčár, *Self-Transcendence
and Prosociality*, 178 pp.
Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2017

Self-transcendence and Prosociality is a comprehensive study in self-transcendence and prosocial behavior from the perspective of philosophy of religion. The main aim of the study is to propose a model of self-transcendence as a tool of understanding of the phenomenon of self-transcendence, and to theoretically examine the relation between self-transcendence and prosociality.

There are three questions I am going to address in this review, namely: (1) What is it about? (2) How is it designed? And (3) How it contributes to our knowledge? The first question addresses the topic of the book, the second its methodology, and the third one its contribution.

(1) The book covers the whole range of issues such as self-transcendence, its structure, modalities, aspects, morphology, and principle, together with prosociality and its structure, morphology, as well as motivation of prosocial behavior. Even though the Author goes much into detail in dealing with his topic, particularly in his analysis of textual sources attributed to an anonymous author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*, an Indian saint Ramana Maharshi, and a contemporary writer Eckhart Tolle, he always keeps in mind his main theme, which remains self-transcendence and prosociality, as well as the relation that links the two notions. The Author's decision to approach the issue of prosociality through self-transcendence is innovative and deserves my appreciation.

(2) In order to accomplish his aim, that is, "to propose a model of self-transcendence as a tool of understanding of the phenomenon of self-transcendence, and to theoretically examine the relation between self-transcendence and prosociality," the Author builds his methodology on the combination of methods.

He applies biographical and phenomenological methods in order to construct the phenomenology of self-transcendence on three examples he takes from the history of spirituality. In this regard, the Author makes a fundamental methodological decision to take his spiritual sources seriously, which is not always the case in the humanities and social sciences. The “recognition grounding,” as he calls this approach, is supposed to allow him to search for elements of the invariant structure of self-transcendence. This phase of his research is further complemented by purely philosophical work, which is aiming at philosophical understanding of self-transcendence on the basis of consciousness. Again, the Author’s decision to methodologically combine empirical and philosophical approaches is innovative and methodologically justified.

(3) The main outcome of the book is a proposal of a theoretical model of self-transcendence, which the Author formulates as follows: “By self-transcendence we understand a process of inversion and singularity of consciousness that culminates in the state of non-intentional consciousness and manifests itself in prosocial behavior.” As an outcome of his examination of the relation between self-transcendence and prosociality, the Author further proposes to reexamine our understanding of prosociality, regarding his inversion model of self-transcendence, and take self-transcendence into consideration also as a moral concept relevant to human behavior. The author provides readers with arguments in favor of his conclusions and supports his claims by multiple references to the textual sources he relies on.

Let me conclude my review with the following evaluation: *Self-transcendence and Prosociality* is an in-depth study in self-transcendence and its relation to prosociality from the perspective of philosophy of religion. The study provides us with several innovative insights on the two notions presented above.

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