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Jan Patočka on Structuralism: Connections and Relationships

Ondřej Sládek

ABSTRACT

The Czech philosopher Jan Patočka (1907–1977) knew the representatives of the Prague Linguistic Circle (e.g., Vilém Mathesius, Roman Jakobson and Jan Mukařovský) well, but they never established closer scholarly cooperation. The aims of this study are 1) to present Patočka's views on structuralism, 2) to outline Patočka's relationship to Czech structuralism, and especially with Jan Mukařovský. If Mukařovský can be considered one of the leading representatives of Czech structuralism and analytic-structural thinking about art, Patočka was a thinker who sought a synthesizing philosophical approach.

ABSTRAKT

Jan Patočka o strukturalismu: Souvislosti a vztahy

Český filozof Jan Patočka (1907–1977) se velmi dobře znal s představiteli Pražského lingvistického kroužku (např. Vilémem Mathesiem, Romanem Jakobsonem a Janem Mukařovským), avšak k užší badatelské spolupráci mezi nimi nikdy nedošlo. Záměrem studie je 1) představit Patočkovy názory na strukturalismus, 2) nastínit jeho vztah k českému strukturalismu, zvláště pak k Janu Mukařovskému. Jestliže Mukařovského můžeme považovat za jednoho z hlavních představitelů českého strukturalismu a analyticko-strukturálního uvažování o umění, Patočka byl myslitelem, který usiloval o syntetizující filozofický přístup.

KEYWORDS

Jan Patočka, Jan Mukařovský, Václav Richter, phenomenology, The Prague Linguistic Circle, structuralism, semiotics, structural poetics.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

Jan Patočka, Jan Mukařovský, Václav Richter, fenomenologie, Pražský lingvistický kroužek, strukturalismus, semiotika, strukturální poetika.

Jan Patočka (1907–1977) is a well known and still influential Czech philosopher. His relationship to structuralism was shaped by three factors. First, his thorough knowledge of linguistic and literary-theoretical structuralism that emerged in the Prague Linguistic Circle in the 1920s. Second, his personal relationship with some members of the Circle, in particular with Vilém Mathesius, Roman Jakobson, Jan Mukařovský, and several others. And finally, third, perfect acquaintance with the issues of language as formulated by the philosopher Edmund Husserl in his phenomenological examinations. Patočka himself valued most Husserl's late works, which he drew from with his conception of language structure as something that points to a certain general experience of structure (PATOČKA 2016).

1. The Prague Linguistic Circle and phenomenology

It would seem that the first encounter of structuralism and phenomenology in the Czech context dates back to 1934 when the 8th International Philosophical Congress was held in Prague (PATOČKA 2006a). Although this congress played a significant role in Czech philosophy, science, and culture, it was not the first encounter of structuralism and phenomenology in Czechoslovakia. This goes back further in time to the early 1930s when Husserl's publications (in particular his *Logical Investigation*; HUSSERL 2001) but also the philosophical texts of Gustav Shpet and Roman Ingarden were circulating among those affiliated to the Prague Linguistic Circle (see STEINER 1991; HERMAN 1997). Apart from other things, this fact is documented by the correspondence between the Czech scholars Jan Mukařovský and Bohuslav Havránek from 1931 (see HAVRÁNKOVÁ 2008: 65–66). As far as the knowledge of Husserl's phenomenology is concerned, the Russian linguist Roman Jakobson had an advantage since he had acquainted himself with his work already by the late 1910s in Moscow. In his dialogues with Krystyna Pomorska Jakobson later recalled that the first papers of Linguistic Circle of Moscow were devoted to poetic language. Jakobson claims:

This choice was influenced not only by the growing interests in poetics, but also by the fact that in the explication of new linguistic material we felt much less constrained by the received methodological models that still weighed heavily upon us. Finally, it was in poetics that the vital relations of the parts and the whole were most clearly apparent, and this stimulated us to think through and verify

the teachings of Edmund Husserl (1859–1938) and of the Gestalt psychologists by applying their principles to this fundamental cycle of questions (JAKOBSON – POMORSKA 1983: 11).

Elmar Holenstein, Peter Steiner, and others have argued persuasively that Husserlian phenomenology occupied a prominent position in Jakobson's thought and works (HOLENSTEIN 1976; STEINER 1984).

It was already in 1932 when the role and significance of phenomenology in the study of literature were discussed in the Czech environment – by the literary theoretician and aesthetician Jan Mukařovský in an interview with Bohumil Novák in the *Rozpravy Aventina* journal, where Mukařovský outlined the situation of contemporary literary theory and criticism. In his view, it was undergoing, and other sciences likewise, “a transformation caused by a shift in the philosophical basis” (MUKAŘOVSKÝ 1932: 225). Mukařovský pointed out that initial stumbling was replaced with a clear orientation that had already brought some important results. The first set of them was discarding positivism, applying phenomenology, teleology and understanding a work of art as a sign. It should be noted here that the early phenomenological explorations of Edmund Husserl were one of the sources of the Prague structuralists' contemplations about sign, meaning and signification, but also structure (MUKAŘOVSKÝ 2016; STEINER 1982).

Actual cooperation between the Prague structuralists and philosophers, i.e., the Prague Linguistic Circle and the Prague Philosophical Circle (founded in 1934; see PATOČKA 2006c), started in connection with organizing the stay and series of lectures of Edmund Husserl in Prague in November 1935 (PATOČKA 2006b; BLECHA 2003). In Prague, Husserl gave several lectures; one of them was also delivered in the Prague Linguistic Circle where he talked about the relationship between phenomenology and humanities as conceived by Wilhelm Dilthey (ČERMÁK – POETA – ČERMÁK 2012: 178–9). His lecture was introduced by Roman Jakobson, who pointed out the most significant stimuli of Husserl's phenomenology for general linguistics, modern Slavonic studies, and structural approach to linguistics and semiotics (JAKOBSON 1936).

2. Common foundations and parallels

If we compare the basic principles of Husserl's phenomenology with the principles employed by the Prague structuralists, it is evident that there are a number

of parallels as well as characteristic differences between the two concepts (TOMAN 1995; MATHAUSER 2006).

Let us stay with what they have in common: Both approaches share some theoretical and methodological foundations, principles, and basic themes which include 1. a declaration of war against positivism, as well as against psychologism and irrationalism; 2. application of strictly rational-critical procedures; 3. focus (*Einstellung*) on the things itself (i.e., *intentionality*); 4. considerations about the sign(s) and system of signs; 5. thematization of the relations of dependence between parts and wholes; 6. reflections on meaning and signification; and, finally, 7. the issue of the subject(s).

While Husserl was an advocate of the approach, “we must go back to the ‘things themselves’” (HUSSERL 2001: 168) Mukařovský approached the study of a poetic work as a *sui genesis* phenomenon. In both cases, it is the object under consideration as such that is in the centre of attention. Both phenomenological and structuralist examination should lead to objective, impartial, scientific results.

This focus on the work itself and not on its surroundings, as was the case for many scholars until that time, allowed the Prague structuralists to approach the artistic constitution of a work of art as a whole whose parts are functionally interlinked. This is fundamentally related to another principle that spread in the 1910s and 1920s in Russia, but whose roots reach much deeper in European philosophy, linguistics and poetics: the relationship between whole and part (DOLEŽEL 1990: 147–158).

Edmund Husserl presented his understanding of parts and wholes in “The Third Logical Investigation” (HUSSERL 2001; CASARI 2000). Husserl considered that “[e]very object either is or can be a part. Wholes can be parts of larger wholes, and parts can have parts. Not all parts can be wholes however. Wholes and parts stand in various relations of *dependency* (*Unselbstständigkeit*) such that one part is *founded* on another” (MORAN 2001: liv–lv).

The principle of whole and part was in the Prague Linguistic Circle always connected with the tendency to view the phenomena under examination as wholes. In this approach, a whole was never to be conceived as a sum or collection of individual parts, but as a structure whose individual parts are interrelated. Hence, these parts can be interpreted only with regard to understanding their function and role in a whole. The structure of the whole is, therefore determined by the functions of all of its parts. – It is necessary to mention here that structuralism can be characterized as a specific scientific methodology or a research procedure

that, through an analysis of mutual relationships and functions of individual parts of the subject examined (i.e., the whole), allows clarifying specific properties and principles of the whole as such.

Mukařovský characterized structure as a dynamic, energetic whole constantly in motion, as a set of components each of which has its specific role and function that associates them with and binds them to the whole (MUKAŘOVSKÝ 1978b, 1978c). Rather than being an amorphous package, this ensemble is a structure, a whole whose character is significantly defined by its components and their interrelations. Mukařovský on structure claims: “The correlation of components, their hierarchy, their agreements and variances – all of these constitute a certain reality, but a reality immaterial in essence and only therefore capable of being dynamic” (MUKAŘOVSKÝ 1978c: 77–78).

Mukařovský elaborated the question of the relations between whole and part in several papers in the 1940s, in which he also reacted to the holism promoted by Czech scholar and biologist Jan Bělehrádek. Starting already in the late 1920s, Mukařovský’s own conception of the structure and of the whole was based on the ideas of German philosopher Wilhelm Burkamp, but the most importantly on the principles of modern linguistic concepts (see MUKAŘOVSKÝ 1978b, 1978c, 1978d).

3. Patočka’s published study on structuralism

If we have a look at works by Jan Patočka, in particular his studies dealing with structuralism, we will discover a number of short comments and notes written on a variety of occasions. However, there are only two published studies in which Patočka *explicitly* deals with structuralism. Or more specifically, these are not studies but extensive reviews. In the first one, Patočka was concerned with Elmar Holenstein’s book on Roman Jakobson and his phenomenological structuralism *Roman Jakobson phänomenologischer Strukturalismus* (HOLENSTEIN 1975; PATOČKA 2009b); the second is a review of Michel Foucault’s *Les Mots et les Choses* (FOUCAULT 1966; PATOČKA 2009a).

The review of Holenstein’s book, which Patočka regards highly, consists of a detailed evaluation of the author’s attempt to show that Jakobson was not only an outstanding linguist, but also a remarkable philosopher. Patočka held Jakobson in high esteem for his contribution and approach to phenomenology. However, Jakobson felt free from the restraints of exact phenomenological

methods and applied selected concepts as and when needed. Patočka considered the creation of a system of Russian cases one of Jakobson's most brilliant contributions. He perceives its roots in a semantic extension of the Husserlian procedure of abstracting the essence. "[A]bstraction is not based on the properties of individual cases," Patočka states and continues, "but on their distinctive functions in mutual relationships, resulting not in an individual essence, but a system" (PATOČKA 2009b: 622).

Even though Husserl's and Jakobson's scholarly work concerned apparently remote fields (philosophy and transcendental phenomenology on the one hand and, on the other hand, linguistics or, more specifically, language as a sign and functional system), a number of solutions they put forward when dealing with specific issues were strikingly similar. This can be exemplified by the conception of association (opposition), language axes, an emphasis on intersubjectivity, or the phenomenological nature of language events. Patočka argues that Holenstein managed to provide in his book strong evidence not only that Jakobson's structuralism is based on Part I, III and IV of Husserl's *Logical Investigations*, but he also drew attention to the role played in his work by eidetic abstraction and to the ways he applied it.

In his review of the book by Michal Foucault *Les Mots et les Choses* (in English: *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*), published in the Czech journal *Světová literatura* in 1967, Patočka gave an in-depth analysis of Foucault's conception of archaeology and his study of anthropological epochs of European thought. He places his approach, i.e., structural archaeology, within the framework of the sociology of knowledge. He considers it "a singularly pinned down and produced chapter in the field of 'modalities of knowledge'". However, he does not view it as a new fundamental philosophical discipline; he understands it as a "new historicizing and provocative positivism" (PATOČKA 2009a: 541).

4. Jan Patočka and Václav Richter¹

Labelling structuralism as *positivism of a new type* or simply as *neo-positivism* was not an accidental act for Patočka; there are multiple occurrences in his

1) Portions of this chapter were previously published in Czech in my study "Jan Patočka a český strukturalismus" (SLÁDEK 2007; see esp. pp. 266–8).

work. It is an opinion shared, for that matter, also by Patočka's good friend, art historian Václav Richter (1900–1970).

Extensive correspondence between the two scholars, with the majority of the letters preserved being those addressed to Richter, shows Patočka's deep and comprehensive knowledge of the history of art, but also his lively interest in the contemporary tendencies and theoretical questions of the aesthetics and history of art. This correspondence is important itself, besides this, it is the only evidence of Patočka's systematic thinking on structuralism.

Their epistolary discussion resulted in Patočka's commentary on Richter's *Syllabus* – notes on the planned study on space and time in the history of art (RICHTER 2001b), but also in Patočka's unpublished study "Problematika filosofie dějin umění u Václava Richtera" (Issues of Václav Richter's Philosophy of the History of Art; PATOČKA 2004) originally intended to be included in a collection of selected studies of Václav Richter (see RICHTER 2001a). In the introductory explication part of the work, Patočka outlines fundamental scholarly topics pursued by Richter (in particular the question of space and time in the study of art), but he also points out his programmatic closeness to phenomenology and structuralism, or more specifically to the structuralist identification of oppositions and their relationships, even though it would be hard to find particular applications in Richter's work (see also VOLAVKA 1961).

Patočka comments on Richter's post-war methodological orientation:

The horizon of Richter's theoretical efforts in these years can be characterized by his attempts to link phenomenological conceptions (not from the time and orientation of Husserl's *Logical Investigations*, but derived from a different orientation, namely from the notion of "natural world") with structuralist oppositions applied to the study of art and the tendency to fundamentally historicize both (PATOČKA 2004: 86).

According to Patočka, we can witness in Richter's theoretical approach to the study of art an intersection of positivist historicism and new historicism, of structural approach and a search for analogies between phenomena of various realms of the humanities, which is often rendered as a fierce internal struggle (IBID.: 88).

From the perspective of the topic of this paper, it is the second part of Patočka's work, a commentary on the excerpts from Richter's study "Obrysy filozofie dějin umění" (Outline of the Philosophy of History of Art; RICHTER 2001d) that is particularly significant. It contains a relatively extensive passage of Richter's

interpretation of the history of structuralism followed by Patočka's comments that are worth a closer examination.

Let us consider Richter's interpretation first: He argues that structuralism has the same determinants as neo-positivism. He distinguishes two types of structuralism: formalist and semantic (meaning-oriented). The connection between formalist structuralism and positivism is, in his opinion, indisputable – he links it to Sedlmayer's school of the study of art. He equates semantic structuralism with linguistic and literary-theoretical structuralism – as they both employ the notion of sign. Another characteristic of structuralism provided by Richter is based primarily on Mukařovský's structuralist aesthetics positing a work of art as a sign and meaning. Richter goes on to enumerate the basic theoretical "sources" of structuralism (his Czech version) and also mentions phenomenology as a probable influence. However, he sees a fundamental difference between phenomenology and structuralism, expressed as follows: "structuralism is empiricism; phenomenology is metaphysics" (IBID.: 60; see also RICHTER 2001c).

It is this affirmation about structuralism and empiricism being of the same substance that Patočka interprets in his comments as an overstatement. His actual words are as follows:

[Structuralism is empiricism]: it applies to structuralism only to the extent that it wants to be a methodological tool of empirical science, but the structural system is after all (a relative, conceptual) a priori in relation to the material. Even the argument that phenomenology is metaphysics needs to be interpreted with nuances; Husserl's phenomenology has a metaphysical aspect, but its primary intention is not metaphysical (PATOČKA 2004: 104).

It is regrettable that Richter did not write a more comprehensive chapter on phenomenology and that Patočka did not comment on it in greater detail. Nevertheless, although we can agree with the claim about phenomenology and the need for a more nuanced interpretation even today, Patočka's argument that structure comes to a priori before material needs to be reviewed.

If Patočka were right, the celebrated dynamic nature of the structure, which is a particular characteristic of Czech structuralism, would quickly perish. As we cannot ascribe any a priori values to individual parts of a work of art, similarly we cannot consider any apriority of structure (a work of art) because "structure is," as Mukařovský puts it, "a phenomenological reality, not an empirical one" (MUKAŘOVSKÝ 1932: 226). The structure of a work of art is completely determined by a set of functional relationships that are "realized" with-

in a particular collective. The structure itself is thus not given, existing once and for all “before” the work of art, but is constantly and in every period anew re-established and transformed again and again. It is therefore given a posteriori, not a priori.

Mukařovský comments on this problem in his study “On Structuralism” from the 1940s:

According to our conception, we can consider as a structure only such a set of elements, the internal equilibrium of which is constantly disturbed and restored anew and the unity of which thus appears to us as a set of dialectic contradictions. That which endures is only the identity of a structure in the course of time, whereas its internal composition – the correlation of its components – changes continuously (MUKAŘOVSKÝ 1978b: 4).

As for Mukařovský and other members of the Prague School, relationships between components of the structure are hierarchized, i.e., some are placed in the foreground, while others are in the background. They are subject to the superiority-subordination principle. Nevertheless, there is one component that occupies the highest position. Mukařovský (but also Jakobson) refers to it as a dominant. And it is precisely the dominant that sets the relationships between all the components of a work of art into motion and directs them. The dynamic nature of the structure of the work of art Mukařovský often explained in his studies by using the concepts of actualization and automatization (MUKAŘOVSKÝ 1978b, 1978c).

In connection with Patočka’s claim that a structural system is in an a priori position in relation to material, we may consider the possibility that what he means by the term “structural system” is in fact form, the formal composition of a work. However, this is again an idea that the Prague structuralists could not agree with. It was them and before them the Russian formalists, who argued that there is a dialectical relationship between structure and material. A poem’s structure is, according to them, substantially influenced by the material. Material is understood as the topic and language that an artist works with. It follows that the structure of a poem is not and cannot be something given a priori, unless the artist consciously employs a static conception of structure, certain stereotypes, templates and structural schemes.

It needs to be said that, unlike the Prague structuralists, the French structuralists (Claude Lévi-Strauss, Algirdas Julien Greimas, Claude Bremond and others) indeed considered an a priori conception of the structure of a work of

art before material (see DOSSE 1997, 1998). Hence, Patočka's note would be perfectly legitimate in the context of French structuralism.

5. Jan Patočka and Jan Mukařovský

I mentioned above that Patočka was on good and friendly terms with a number of the Prague structuralists. Let us have a closer look at the relationship with one of them, the renowned Czech aesthetician and literary theoretician Jan Mukařovský. They knew each other well. Like Ludwig Landgrebe, Mukařovský was also a member of both the linguistic and the philosophical circle. Even though Patočka and Mukařovský did not reference each other's work often, they were well acquainted with it and capable to discussing it.

Mukařovský became interested in phenomenology already in the early 1930s when he studied in detail, in particular Husserl's *Logical Investigation* (SLÁDEK 2015: 183–184). Mukařovský owes a great deal to phenomenology: Thanks to it, he realized that an artistic work as a sign is a structure with both a material (factual) and a non-material aspect. He claims: "A structure is [...] a *reality* which is immaterial but manifests itself materially and affects the material world" (MUKAŘOVSKÝ 1978c: 81; see also MUKAŘOVSKÝ 2016). While Mukařovský designated the material aspect that can be perceived through the senses as *work-thing*, for the non-material aspect, he chose the term *aesthetic object*. He borrowed this term from the work of a German philosopher and linguist, Broder Christiansen *Philosophie der Kunst* (Philosophy of Art; CHRISTIANSEN 1912). According to Mukařovský, an aesthetic object is fully *intentional*; it is "lodged in the social consciousness and functioning as 'meaning'" (MUKAŘOVSKÝ 1978d: 88). The concept mentioned above has been widely debated.

Mukařovský (unlike Patočka) is perhaps a systematic, but not a systemic thinker. The fact is that Mukařovský used – quite abundantly and with a particular purpose in mind – a wide range of inspirational sources: linguistics, philosophy, poetics, semiotics, aesthetics, etc. Nevertheless, he never made an attempt to bring them under one, systemic and theoretical roof (see VELTRUSKÝ 1980/1981).

The contact with phenomenology did not appear in the thought and scholarly work of Mukařovský as a sudden and radical turn that we can date precisely. It was rather a gradual and non-violent inclination, preceded by the testing of selected concepts and principles of Husserl's and Ingarden's phenomenology in

particular. In fact, this inclination was never absolute, because despite a good deal of interconnectedness between their theoretical conceptions there were many substantial differences that led Mukařovský to declare in his reminiscences that “the period of my fascination with Husserlian phenomenology actually brought me to the brink of self-denial” (MUKAŘOVSKÝ–A).

This does not mean that he completely abandoned phenomenology; in fact, he continued to use certain procedures and terms that he adopted from phenomenology (especially the concepts of *intention*, *intentional object*, *aesthetic object*, etc.). But as soon as he realized its limits, his attention, like in the case of Russian formalism, gradually began to focus elsewhere. In fact, his attention was often drawn towards the concepts that he could use to solve the new problems he was dealing with.

From Mukařovský’s and Patočka’s mutual references, it is worth mentioning those authored by Jan Patočka. One of the first ones was his text on the paper presented by Jan Mukařovský at the 8th International Philosophical Congress in Prague in 1934. Mukařovský presented his paper “Art as a Semiotic Fact” (MUKAŘOVSKÝ 1978d) in which he outlined a semiotic approach to art. The year 1934 is usually thought of as a turning point in Mukařovský’s scholarly work, in particular in view of the fact that it was time when his methodological foundations changed: the stimuli provided by Russian formalism and the Czech tradition of aesthetics and poetics were transformed in his work into a semiotic orientation.

Commenting on this paper, in which Mukařovský attempted to merge Saussure’s sign-based concept of language with Husserl’s terminology and adapt it to art, Patočka wrote:

Mukařovský shows the ontological relationship between a linguistic fact and artistic fact in general; he shows art as a noematic fact, not a noetic one (in the terminology of Husserl), as a fact of meaning, hence residing in that sphere of individuality that constitutes our co-existence with others. Mukařovský’s notion of autonomous sign that he introduces to characterize a work of art is rather dark (PATOČKA 2006a: 492).

Although Patočka had certain reservations about this paper that Mukařovský presented in French, he undertook to translate it in the 1960s for Mukařovský’s book *Studie z estetiky* (Studies from Aesthetics; MUKAŘOVSKÝ 1966).

Much more uncompromising was Patočka’s view of another Mukařovský work from 1936 *Estetická funkce, norma a hodnota jako sociální fakty* (Aesthetic

Function, Norm and Value as Social Facts; MUKAŘOVSKÝ 1970). Mukařovský presents in this study the most systematic interpretation of the three fundamental aspects of the aesthetic (i.e., aesthetic function, norms and values), which he examines from the standpoint of the sociology of literature. In his view, these three aspects are central to understanding the dynamic and changing nature of the aesthetic approach to reality. In his personal letter to Walter Biemel of 10 February 1975, Patočka expressed his opinion about this work by saying that it was “prattle”. The truth is that discussions about this book continued on in the Czech environment long after its publication.

Mukařovský’s approach to phenomenological analysis is often interpreted as instrumental (GALAN 1985: 174–193). But the most influential and inspirational are his uses phenomenology and phenomenological terms (e.g., *object relation*, *intentional object*, *transcendent reality*) in the context of his semiotics (or semiology, the term he uses exclusively, following on from Ferdinand de Saussure). Mukařovský presents the work of art as a sign, but it is a sign *sui generis*; in his view, art as such is a complex system of signs. For a basic definition of the sign, Mukařovský explicitly uses the sign theories of Saussure and Karl Bühler, but he also works with the phenomenological research of Edmund Husserl and Roman Ingarden. He often considered and developed their conceptions in his earlier university lectures (from 1936–7), particularly “The Semiology of Art” (MUKAŘOVSKÝ 2016). This lecture is unique in its clear focus and overall interpretation. In the introduction Mukařovský expounds on the status of the semiotics of art in aesthetics and defines his basic concepts.

As for the phenomenological terms that Mukařovský uses in the lectures: the most important are *object relation* (*Sachbezug*) and *intentional object*. They help him to explain the relationships between a literary work of art to reality. According to Mukařovský, the term *object relation* designates the relation of the literary work (the sign) to reality. The term *intentional object* he presents as the meaning that is placed between the linguistic sign and reality (which he calls *transcendent reality*). Following on from phenomenology, Mukařovský states that one can talk about transcendent reality or affect it only by means of signs. A literary work of art has only an indirect relation to transcendent reality, because reality appears in the literary work only by means of the subject matter. The literary work of art itself, however, depicts and represents the reality that has the nature of a set of depicted objects (but also, for example, of characters, settings, actions). It is an intentional reality; it is a “world” that is only “as if” (see MUKAŘOVSKÝ 2016; SLÁDEK 2016).

Phenomenology has another important purpose in Mukařovský's view, which makes it just as inspirational: He saw it as a tool for emphasizing the *subject*, an instrument for perceiving the subject as such. What exactly Mukařovský was referring to with the term subject is a somewhat complicated question. On one occasion it is the point from which the composition of a work of art can be observed in its entire complexity, the next time it is the poet, a personality, an individual who has a dual function: on the one hand it is a creator and on the other hand a perceiver (MUKAŘOVSKÝ 1977b). Phenomenological analysis of these forms of an individual allows Mukařovský to distinguish their specific function – also in connection with the abstract subject of the work, which is contained in the very structure of the work. Another example of Mukařovský's "phenomenologization" of structuralism is the elaboration of the issue of *intentionality* in the study from 1943 "Záměrnost a nezáměrnost v umění" (Intentionality and Unintentionality in Art; MUKAŘOVSKÝ 1978e).

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Although during the 1930s and 1940s Mukařovský and Patočka knew about each other and occasionally cooperated together, a considerable cooling of relations took place after 1948. At that time Mukařovský publicly declared his commitment to Marxism-Leninism, became rector of Charles University and started to engage in the struggle for the so-called new socialist culture and literary criticism. Patočka mentioned this new political activity of Mukařovský and some other colleagues from the university in a letter to Václav Richter dated 11 January 1949. He tells him that the Communists have already won several personalities, describing it as a "victory march, in which several trophies are being carried." And then he adds: "The structuralist scalp of Mukařovský leads it" (PATOČKA 2001: 13).

When Mukařovský published a public self-criticism under the increasing pressure of the Stalinists in 1951 and revoked his existing structuralist views and described them as bourgeois and wrong, it was something that high-principled Patočka could not understand. The fact that a scholar could deny himself, his direction and his own work was probably the main reason why Patočka evaluated Mukařovský and his work only in a reserved way. This view can be supported by another passage from the above cited letter to Walter Biemel from February 1975, in which Patočka informs the German philosopher of the death of Jan Mukařovský. He wrote: "Yesterday, Jan Mukařovský died at the age of 84. In

his work, he was a shadow of Jakobson, and in his old age, a shadow of himself, having repeatedly recanted himself out of fear. In spite of that, he is the one the Prague structuralist that was most talked about in the world” (VOJTĚCH – CHVATÍK 2004: 375).

It is evident that Patočka was interested in Mukařovský’s scholarly work only in connection with his flirting with phenomenology and the activities of the Prague Linguistic Circle.

6. Conclusion

As far as Patočka’s relationship to structuralism is concerned, he by no means perceived it as a fashionable trend. Moreover, he considered it to be a temporary conception that will end with the work of its main proponents. He was well aware that structuralism – as a methodology, as a useful tool of empirical science – has a much deeper thought background whose sources can be found in ancient teachings on form and content, on the relationship of whole and part. Accordingly, the insufficient development of the theoretical foundations and the philosophical grounding of the whole structural research project (and of the entire structural methodology) was the most frequent subject of his objections and criticism. On the other hand, he appreciated specific structural analyses and the establishment of structural poetics and aesthetics.

If Mukařovský can be considered one of the main representatives of Czech structuralism and analytic-structural thinking about art, Patočka was a thinker who sought a synthesizing philosophical approach. His work holds, therefore, rightly the founding position in the Czech modern philosophy of art (BLECHA 1997; CHVATÍK 1992). Mukařovský and Patočka thus represent two dominant lines of Czech thinking of the 20th century. These are lines that support each other, yet diverge.

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