

ȘTEFAN MARIȘ¹, ROMÂNIA

Cuvinte cheie: comunicarea, lumea valorilor, ființa umană, comunitate, moralitate, etică.

Comunicarea: Reper antropologic al ființei umane

Rezumat

Ființa umană nu este nimic altceva decât evoluția devenită conștientă de ea însăși. Problema esențială a omului este înțelegerea rolului și locului său în comunitate, în lumea înconjurătoare, în lumea valorilor. Intercondiționarea dintre aceste lumi este posibilă datorită comunicării ca trăsătură generală a vieții. Această intercondiționare își dezvăluie adevăratele potențialități dacă se pliază pe o etică a comunicării.

Statuarea propriu-zisă a eticii comunicării necesită, înainte de orice, o clarificare de ordin conceptual și anume disocierea dintre moralitate, morală și etică. Această clarificare de ordin conceptual este și tema studiului de față.

¹ Centrul Județean pentru Conservarea și Promovarea Culturii Tradiționale Maramureș, România.

Keywords: communication, world of values, human being, community, morals, ethics.

Communication: The Human Being's Anthropological Reference Points

Summary

The human being is nothing else than evolution become self-conscious. The essential problem of man is the understanding of his role in the community, in the surrounding world, in the world of values. The inter-conditioning of these worlds is possible due to communication as a general trait of life. This inter-conditioning reveals its true potentials if it relies on an ethics of communication.

The actual establishment of the ethics of communication needs, before anything else, a conceptual clarification, namely the dissociation between morality, morals and ethics. This clarification of a conceptual order constitutes the topic of the present study.

Communication: The Human Being's Anthropological Reference Points

For a long time, the persistence of the confusions between morals and ethics has been connected to their etymological origin. Ethics is a term coming from the ancient Greek word „ethos”, that circumscribes the value nucleus of behavior; while morals comes from the Latin word „mores” whose meaning is morality, customs and traditions (of a community). Ethics has at its basis the principle of trial and error, namely the correction of the errors resulting from education. It takes into consideration the human being's anthropological basis, his intrinsic, constitutive and extrinsic qualities, of its being constituted through objectivization. In the absence of a well structured conceptual system one cannot speak of ethics. Communication, debate, dialogue, communion, trust and solidarity are, no doubt, the essential characteristics of any ethics, whether it applies to the sphere of business, the field of media, or other zones of human activity.

Kant's well-known words „What ought I do?” is the fundamental question that includes the entire dubitative perspective of ethics as a discipline that aims to delimitate and clarify rationality in the quite large and varied (but at times uncertain) sphere of human actions and moral judgments. Going further, we could say that the questions „Ought I say?” and „How much am I allowed to correct the images about reality?” are interrogations delimiting the boundaries of the possible reflections of the ethics of communication.

In a time when „to be” tends to be an exclusive privilege of those who have the capacity to „communicate”, exactly this huge potential seems to be the problem by the fact that it makes almost impossible the stating of self-limitations regarding the degree up to which the manipulation with words and images can go.

Morality, communication, and argumentation are the basic concepts in constituting the ethics of communication. Morality comes from our deep self and cannot legitimate itself only through the intentionality of the act of conscience, it is intra-subjectivity. It is justified through the inter-subjectivity and the inter-communication of interpersonal and not ultimately institutionalized relationships. This presupposes that the dynamics of interrelations is the source of some complex implications in the ethics of communication. Nevertheless, the problem of interrelationships is not reduced only to the manifestation of morality and communications, whether it is the case of an interlocutionary interrelation, or it is the case of inter-subjectivity and inter-communication. The process of communication represents the very matrix in which the entire complex of human activities is contained, mediating at a large scale the socio-cultural reproduction of the society. This process sustains the structuring of morality as a distinct phenomenon of human life and allows the plenary affirmation of the human being's meaning in the world.

As concerns the stages or phases that structure and sketch the interrelations form a rather diverse typology, some could start from zero, while others from a significant contact. They should be considered in their dynamics, without taking into consideration a precise or ordered succession of the phases. Along these, communication stimulates and sustains

the interrelation, it can develop it or, in other instances, can end it. Taking into consideration the basic components of human behavior we have the possibility to delineate some distinct phases of the interrelations under the sign of communication:

a) the initiation, or the selection, would constitute the first phase, called frequently also the contact. This is the starting point of explorations, approximations regarding whether the respective person is in our horizon of expectancy, of the norms, rules and values we cherish. Now, in this contact phase, one establishes whether the interlocutor is interested and of interest. The beginning is usually an informal dialogue, because it is possible that this dialogue could unveil different facets of the other's personality without reaching to too personal confessions.

b) the second phase is that of evaluation, in which there is a balancing of the positive and negative parts of the interrelations. Now, in this moment when one decides whether to invest in this relationship and to what point. That is why this phase is called the "exploration" or "trial" phase. Once this phase is reached it does not mean that the contact has been exhausted, but new data and points of interest or attitudes that sustain the evaluation of the relationship could appear.

c) in the third phase, that of engagement, the interrelations are developed, deepened, either a contract that stipulates major sales and acquisitions can be reached or a stable exchange that presupposes and implies intimacy, friendship and, at times, even more than that. In this phase negative judgments are absent and the partner's errors can be easily forgiven, the stress being laid upon association and unity.

d) the fourth phase, called that of doubt, is characterized by the identification of the less important and interesting aspects. Specialists call this phase „differentiation”, „deterioration”, and „intolerance”. The attitudes and behaviors considered till now acceptable, fall under the other's disapproval.

e) the fifth phase is that of disappointment. Now the interrelation is set under discussion and it will head towards either a slow or rapid end. The business and work media are recognized to be the places where interrelations at several levels (personal, professional etc) are developed but also where emotional and professional connections are less accepted. In an oppressive climate, in which people are cross with each other, do not communicate openly, social and political distances are taken into consideration, non-verbal communication is more used.

The roles are behavioral patterns or schemes acquired in different situations and contexts. They cannot be analyzed if human beings are taken into consideration in isolation, outside their institutionalized association relationships. Communication is conditioned by circumstances of the places and time in which one lives and moves. In nowadays society dominated by the technosphere the reference to it is unavoidable. In this respect Edgar Morin was right in observing that a machine is different from a living system that does not disintegrate when it stops to function because the energy is somewhere else and not in it. If in comparison with a machine the human being is an open system that cannot function without homeostasis and self-organization because it is the very inside of significances.

Communication and morality are the essential and specific traits of the human being making the difference from the rest of existence.

These emblems of the human beings' destiny, its morality and communication have lately suffered a constant and strong pressure of the mass-media culture. Television tackles and imposes assiduously an artificial world, a world of useless illusions, a world separated from any social, economic or political reality.

The TV spectator absorbed by and obsessed with this illusionary world is tempted to consider it real and thus any attempt to think by means of a systematic reflection appears as a renunciation to the originality of sensibility and thinking, the opportunity being thus prepared for manipulation. The insertion in many programs of scenes with maximum



La o poveste...; foto: Felician Săteanu

violence induces anxiety, uncertainty and (frequently) even incites to violence, producing a downward slide towards the inferior values of society. The only „weapons” that could fight such strong means of manipulation are common sense and interpretation.

„Mediated communication” affects the normal and natural evolution of interrelations, the exact distinguishing of the differences existing among people. The situations or, in other words, the context of transformations, become very important in establishing the role one

has to play in a certain moment. Our behavior is conditioned by the landmarks of experience and this establishes the horizon of knowledge. The sex and age differences induce a certain way of relating to communication as well as the register of the means used to define communication styles. It is important to observe that the roles played put their marks upon the content of communication, so that the way the images about ourselves and of the others should not be in dissonance. The differences of perception and evaluation are the result of one's behavior as well as of the action limits one adopts versus the others.

Taking into consideration the distinct configuration of the classes of needs, starting from the elementary to those of a spiritual nature, the complexity and diversity of interrelations and their dynamics, of the various roles one has to perform, we could ask in which way trust (the most important value of ethics) is linked to interpersonal communication. Whom can we trust and when? How could we, at our turn, show the others that they can confide in us? The experience of trust has to be tested. The exchange of options and convictions results in the formation of the genuine trust. In the situation in which one of the basic components is absent, we cannot speak of the presence and action of trust.

The result of convictions and options is the crystallization of a moral creed, either of a preponderantly laic character, or having an indirect religious source. A suggestive example is the case of Ferdinand Gonseth. He refuses the absurdity of human existence through faith: without faith, he underlines, everything could be absurd; without it man cannot hope to understand his role and penetrate the meaning of the world. There is no doubt that the option, choice or conviction (a result of the intimate combination of knowledge, ideals, and aims) are never something reflex or instinctual.

We confide in someone whom we evaluate as being capable of respecting us. Good intentions are necessary but by no means sufficient, the way competence is not enough, the logic of life shows that trust has to be tested. Exactly therefore, or even more than that, it is in the social relations that the political class has specialized in almost always betraying expectancies and hopes. Someone's trust cannot be obtained by force. Trust can be reached only climbing up the risks step by step, progressively, through interrelations. The establishing of a trusting relationship can be reached only when there are at least three factors present:

- a) when we trust each other (even if we have not the conviction that trust is reciprocal)
- b) when two persons are willing to trust each other
- c) when two persons want to negotiate the realization of a project even if the risks increase correspondingly.

Trust has to be tested obligatorily, but it cannot be acquired according to a manual of instructions. The partners in a relationship have to make sustained efforts in developing a favorable climate in which trust can be born. This moral quality solicits the disponibility of all those who make up a team, a collectivity, a human community etc.

The assuming of risks is a condition and their growth makes us more vulnerable. Therefore we have to evaluate the degree of endurance of pains in relation to the exposure

to risks. This does not mean that we should be deterred from the real state of empathy that is so necessary in any important human relationship. Not depending on the type of communication, from aesthetic to group communication, empathy is needed from the beginning. The way of penetration, of intuition, in a word, apprehension assures the framework necessary for understanding, that at its turn opens the way to persuasion.

In nowadays society, we not only assist to the exacerbation of an acute relativity as regards morality, but moreover, this becomes more problematic. Having often trusted you when they should not have, some would consider you an open, gentle and affectionate person, while others would consider you naive, stupid and credulous. Following the line of how distrust acts, when one should trust, some would consider you a firm and perspicacious person, while others a distant and mischievous one. To expose ourselves to risks does not mean to give in to compromises that deteriorate and disarticulate our moral being.

The ethics of communication allows a repeated appeal to interiority, its fortification, courage, and resistance, and in the situation when it is necessary, to oppose and revolt. Kant's question whether „the one who has become a worm and is trodden under feet has the right to complain” constitutes an essential point of reference as concerns the human being's verticality, an impulse of great force, a point of support to any dignified human being. The real danger is not the confused communication, mainly stimulated by the media but the accelerated rhythm of changes.

The diversification and multiplication of interactions induced by the complex network of information has multi-polarized the state of morality so that its understanding from a totalizing perspective is not possible without the ethics of communication.

Bibliography:

Gonseth, Ferdinand, *Filosofia deschisă*, vol. I-II, Ed. Științifică, București, 1995

Kant, Immanuel, *Antropologia din perspectivă pragmatică*, Ed. Antet, 2013

Morin, Edgar, *Paradigma pierdută: natura umană*, Ed. Universității Al. Cuza, Iași, 1999