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**ATTITUDES AND ACTIVITIES OF CZECH SOCIETY, CHURCHES AND
RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPEAN
REFUGEE CRISIS**

-Abstract-

This paper deals with the relatively small number of refugees in the Czech Republic in comparison with other European Union countries, and it points to the exaggerated fears of the immigrants from the Middle East and Northern Africa. Then, it analyzes the attitudes of the Czech society towards the refugee crisis and the presence of the migrants in the Czech Republic, and it compares them with the attitudes of churches and religious communities. It focuses its attention not only on refugee-phobia, but also on the fear of Islam. It informs about the ways churches coped with refugee-phobia and islamophobia and about the activities which churches do for the refugees and for their integration in society. The paper also presents the current activities of interfaith dialogue in the Czech Republic and it reveals how sufficient awareness contributes to reducing the negative perception of Islam among Christian believers. It introduces also the three theological ways the Czech churches deal with the phenomenon of migration and with Islam. In the end, it tries to formulate some principles for the further work of the churches in this area.

Keywords: European Migration Crisis, Czech Churches, Theology, Interfaith Dialogue.

Part I. Foreigners and Refugees in the Czech Republic—Statistics

Due to its proximity to Germany and Austria and its relative economic advancement, the Czech Republic now ranks among the countries in which immigration is prevailed over emigration. But its tradition of immigration country is not too long. The country belonged 27 years ago to the East European socialist bloc of states where emigration is generally prevailed over immigration. The number of

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immigrants is still below average in comparison with Western European region, so the current European immigration crisis has not significantly touched the Czech Republic. The main reasons for immigration presented in professional publications are economic factors, family reunions and opportunities to study the Czech language at universities without paying any tuition. Approximately 480,000 foreign citizens are currently living in the Czech Republic legally which is slightly less than 4.5% of the total, i.e. approx. 10.6 million population of the Czech Republic.

The largest immigrant group is formed by the citizens of Ukraine, and it is closely followed by citizens of Slovakia. Both groups exceed a population of one hundred thousand. The citizens of Slovakia are not usually perceived by the Czech population as immigrants, which is due to the fact that the Czech and Slovak Republic were one state until 1992 and they share language and cultural proximity. The number of Ukrainian citizens in the Czech Republic started to increase since 1990s in the context of the economic situation in Ukraine and with growing demand for cheaper labor in the Czech Republic. The third largest group of migrants are citizens of Vietnamese nationality. The Czech Republic has become a popular immigration country of this group thanks to long-term close relations of the socialist regimes of Czechoslovakia and Vietnam. Since 1960s the citizens of Vietnam gained professional education in the Czech (mainly technical) schools on the basis of bilateral agreements, and since 1980s Vietnamese workers were invited to the Czech factories. The citizens of Vietnam began to settle in the Czech Republic since the early 1990s, and their number at present is estimated a bit less than 60,000. In addition, it is also estimated that 35,000 citizens of Russia live currently in the Czech Republic. The reason for their choosing the Czech Republic as immigration country is usually similar to Ukrainians—language proximity as the Czech, Russian and Ukrainian languages belong to Slavic languages which make integration in Czech society easier. A significant share of immigrants is also formed by the citizens of the original fifteen EU (about 47,000) and the new Member States of the European Union (about 48,000). A significant group among them is composed by citizens of Poland, Romania and Bulgaria. About 24,000 people live in the Czech Republic from non-member states of the European Union. Approximately 18,000 people from the People's Republic of China, Mongolia and Kazakhstan, about 14,000 people from other Asian countries, almost 10,000 people from overseas countries: USA, Canada, Australia, Japan and Oceania, about 7,000 people from Africa and about 5,000 people from Latin America.¹

¹ Cf. “Tendence makroekonomického vývoje a kvality života v České republice v roce 2015 (Tendencies of macroeconomic developments and of quality of life in the Czech Republic in 2015)”, *Český statistický úřad* [online], P [cit. 2016-12-06]: <https://www.czso.cz/csu/czso/tendence-makroekonomickeho-vyvoje-a-kvality-zivota-v-ceske-republice-v-roce-2015>. For more information see also other documents of Czech Statistical Office: *Life of Foreigners in the Czech Republic–2015* (2016), *Foreigners in the Czech Republic–2015* (2016), *Czech Demographic Handbook – 2015* (2016) etc. *Czech*

A majority of foreigners are living in the Czech Republic as a long-term or permanent residents, but there are not many refugees applying for asylum. The number of asylum seekers ranged in 2015 and 2016 in the Czech Republic usually about 1,500. In comparison with western and northern states of the European Union it is a negligible percentage and it may be stated that the migratory crisis did not significantly affect the Czech Republic. And there are other differences. Half of the record number of 1.3 million asylum seekers in the European Union in 2015 was from Syria (35%) and Iraq (15%).² But most of the refugees applying for asylum in the Czech Republic were from the Ukraine, and not from these two countries. The number of applicants from Syria and Iraq was approximately 300 in the last two years.³

Part II. Attitudes of the Czech Society to Refugees and Migrants (between refugee-phobia and Islamophobia)

Attitudes of Czech society to migrants are moving somewhere from indifference to rejection. The nationality and the religion of refugees obviously has a big impact on the immigrants to take a clear stand. In 2015, the Public Opinion Research Center at Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic published the results of the survey about attitudes of the Czech society towards refugees. Whereas 53% of the Czech respondents expressed the acceptance of at least some refugees from Ukraine, less than 30% expressed the acceptance of refugees from Syria and North Africa, and more than 70% took a refusal attitude.⁴ In 2016, attitudes towards refugees from countries affected by conflict worsened. Less than 40% respondents expressed the acceptance of refugees from Ukraine and only 15% respondents the acceptance of refugees from the Middle East and North Africa.⁵

Refugee-phobia is multiplied by the phobia from Islamic religion and by the fear of possible transfer of religious conflicts to the territory of the Czech Republic.

Statistical Office [online], P [cit. 2016-12-06]: <https://www.czso.cz/csu/czso/catalogue-of-products>.

² In comparison with 2014, it was an increase of more than 50%. Cf. dates European Statistical Office: *Asylum in the EU Member States*, *Eurostat Newsrelease* [online], P [cit. 2016-12-07]: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/7203832/3-04032016-AP-EN.pdf/790eba01-381c-4163-bcd2-a54959b99ed6>.

³ Cf. Statistical Report of the Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic from the years 2015 and 2016: *Mezinárodní ochrana (International protection)*, *Ministerstvo vnitra České republiky* [online], P [cit. 2016-12-07]: <http://www.mvcr.cz/mezinarodni-ochrana.aspx>

⁴ Cf. Martin Buchtík, “Postoj české veřejnosti k přijímání imigrantů a uprchlíků červen 2015“, *Centrum pro výzkum veřejného mínění Sociologický ústav AV ČR, v.v.i.* [online], pp. 1-5 [cit. 2016-12-13]. http://cvvm.soc.cas.cz/media/com_form2content/documents/c1/a7411/f3/pm150723.pdf

⁵ Cf. “Postoj české veřejnosti k přijímání uprchlíků – říjen 2016”, *Centrum pro výzkum veřejného mínění Sociologický ústav AV ČR, v.v.i.* [online], pp. 1-10 [cit. 2016-12-13]. http://cvvm.soc.cas.cz/media/com_form2content/documents/c1/a7620/f3/pm161123.pdf

Not only a massive wave of immigration to the EU in the last two years but also a series of terrorist attacks in Western Europe formed attitudes towards refugees in the Czech society. Although the growth in the number of Muslims in the Czech Republic has been almost negligible in the last years, negative attitudes toward Islam are deepening. Social networks have been hit in the past five years by a wave of speeches of hatred to refugees, migrants and Islam. These attitudes go hand in hand with the rejection of the European Union and its multicultural values, with the growth of distrust toward intellectual elites and pro-European-oriented political parties and with the rise of right-wing extremism.⁶ Because of the European refugee crisis, decision on the redistribution refugees within the EU and a series of terrorist attacks increased the influence of political parties that seek to leave the EU. So was born the citizens' initiative *Czexit* which imitates the British exodus from the EU. At least 90% of the reports of its website refer to refugees from the Middle East and Africa, Islam and terrorism.⁷ Rhetoric of some politicians and parties is built on the same principles.⁸ Anti-immigrant attitudes and some civic initiatives⁹ are also supported by a number of titles that have appeared on the Czech book market recently.¹⁰

Refugee defenders and consistent opponents of xenophobia also organized a variety of activities. For example, more than 10,000 people supported the challenge of *Czech Academics against Fear and Indifference*, which openly criticizes xenophobic and Islamophobic attitudes in the Czech society, the attitudes of the

⁶ It is notable that despite the relatively small numbers of immigrants from Muslim countries expressions about migrant and Muslim are almost overlapping by many citizens of the Czech Republic. Cf. Matouš Hrdina, "Identity, Activism and Hatred: Hate Speech against Migrants on Facebook in the Czech Republic in 2015", *Czech Society / Naše Společnost* [online], 2016, (1), pp. 38-47 [cit. 2016-11-25], http://cvvm.soc.cas.cz/media/com_form2content/documents/c3/a7586/f11/NS16-1_Identity,%20Activism%20and%20Hatred-Hate%20Speech%20against%20Migrants.pdf, pp. 38-39.

⁷ Cf. *CZEXIT* [online], P [cit. 2016-12-14]: <http://www.czexit.cz/>.

⁸ The biggest opponents of acceptance of asylum seekers and critics of Islam are Freedom and Direct Democracy, National Democracy and Dawn - National Coalition.

⁹ Great attention was given, for example, by the private initiative of Martin Konvička at the Old Town Square in Prague in the Summer. He and his men were dressed as representatives of IS and arrived to the center of Prague in a jeep and on a camel. Then, these group responded on the words of the keynote speaker by waving replicas of machine guns and by shouting Allah Akbar. Some people especially tourists did not understand that it was black humor and fled in panic from the square. Cf. "Hra konvičkovců na IS zažehla v Praze paniku, policie akci stopla", *Idnes.cz* [online], P [cit. 2016-12-14]: http://zpravy.idnes.cz/staromestske-namesti-konvicka-islamsky-stat-divadlo-p0y-/krimi.aspx?c=A160821_160228_krimi_bse.

¹⁰ For example: Z. Müller, M. Janeček, K. Samková etc. These publications can be complemented by a series of translations of foreign titles that have emerged in bookstores in recent years.

media and some politicians, towards the refugee crisis in Europe.¹¹ The greatest refugee defenders among the Czech parties is probably the Green Party. The government parties hold a rather neutral stance to the refugee crisis. Xenophobic attitudes in connection with refugee crises are also criticized by many personalities of the former dissidents, by supporters of the policy of former president Vaclav Havel, by various initiatives of university students and, last but not least, also by churches.

Part III. Attitudes of Czech Churches to Refugees and Migrants

If we are answering the question “what stands on refugees and migrants are taken by the Czech churches”, in the beginning we have to make a fundamental distinction between their humanitarian, social and charity activities and the influence of their opinions on the Czech society. Their attitudes are in the first aspect almost unequivocal—refugees need specific material and immaterial helps and society is expected to create good conditions for their integration. Churches organize a number of activities to help refugees abroad and in the Czech Republic. The most important humanitarian organizations working on the initiative of churches are: Catholic *Caritas Czech Republic*, Protestant *Diakonia of Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren* and *Adventist Development and Relief Agency*.

But there is not such a clear view of the churches on acceptance of refugees in the Czech Republic, especially from the Middle East and Africa and on the Islamic religion. The range of opinions is much wider moving from dialogue efforts, through the mere acceptance of otherness and the cautious demeanor to rejecting refugees and their religion. The churches are divided in a similar way as the majority of society, but aversion against refugees is not so big. After all, the solidarity with foreigners who need help is one of the paradigms of Christian faith. And finally, the shared experiences and practical activities of charities and humanitarian organizations dispel different kinds of phobias associated with the refugee crisis. This is the second also very important work for society.

I think we can see in the Czech churches something that a quarter century ago Hans Küng called “asynchronism of consciousness”. This phenomenon manifests itself by refusing interfaith dialogue, warning against syncretism, scattering faith and betrayal of the Christian mission.¹² This situation could be characterized briefly as the fear of losing national and religious identity. And the question of identity is one of the major topics of theological discussions in the Czech religious communities for several decades. This question was recently linked with the rapid decrease of believers in all large traditional churches. The number of

¹¹ Cf. *Vědci proti strachu a lhostejnosti* [online], P [cit. 2016-12-14]: <http://www.vyzvavedcu.cz/>.

¹² Cf. Hans Küng, *Světový étos – projekt. (Projekt Weltethos)*, Archa, Olomouc, 1992, pp. 76-77.

believers shrank in the last two censuses which take place after ten years approximately by three quarters and there is no indication that the process of secularization has significantly mitigated. If this process continues in the coming years as before, then less than 5% of the Czech population will be in churches in twenty years. And the immigrants will also significantly contribute to this number. Only Orthodoxy and Eastern Rite of Catholic Church record stronger growth because of immigration. Both churches are strengthened by immigrants from Russia, Ukraine and other eastern countries.¹³

This identity crisis is more intensified in connection with rising refugee-phobia and Islamophobia. It seems that a kind of boundary is formed across the Czech churches. On the one side stand those who believe that it is necessary to provide an assistance to immigrants and refugees with integration of their cultural and religious communities, with developing their ecumenical and interreligious relations, and that it is also necessary to form awareness in own ecclesial communities and to point out especially in relation to Islam that it is not a violent religion, that the vast majority of Muslims are tolerant, and that they reject religious violence as well as terrorism. On the other side are those who have serious fears about the degradation of their identity and disintegration of religious fundamentals of society. They point out the expansion of Islam in Western Europe, the presence of terrorism and radical Islam in all Western European countries, that even a relatively small community of Muslims in the Czech Republic has its radical personalities and that culturally and religiously tolerant majority of Muslims can be radicalized at any time, because Islam and violence constitute an indissoluble pair.

One of these conflicts has been going on for a long time in the Catholic Church, which is the largest religious organization in the Czech Republic. (It has more than 80% believers of all churches in the Czech Republic). This conflict can be symbolized by several notable personalities of the Czech Catholic Church. The person who talks about solidarity with other EU countries with respect to accepting, redistribution and integration of refugees into society, who is critical to the negative attitudes of the Czech society, especially to its xenophobia, refugee-phobia, and Islamophobia, who talks about the necessity of building interfaith dialogue is Tomáš Halík, professor at the Faculty of social Sciences, chairman of the Czech Christian Academy, a popular priest and Templeton Prize holder. He is not alone, whose similar attitudes hold quite a number of Catholic intellectuals. This group of people can also be characterized by sharp criticism of Czech President Miloš Zeman, whose negative statements about the expansion of Islam became known throughout Europe. The other side can be characterized by the Prague Archbishop and Cardinal Dominik Duka, who holds rather reserved attitude in relation to migrants and refugees. Several conservative clerics who stand against Islam, or even critical can be

¹³ Cf. Jiri Vogel, "The Decline of Churches in the Czech Republic and the Question of Social Identity", *International Symposium Proceedings 2016*, University of California Santa Barbara Publishing House, 2016, pp. 127-139.

mentioned from his surroundings. One of them is the Director of the External Relations Department of the Prague Archdiocese Milan Badal, who in the media openly refuses to distinguish between Islam and radical Islamism, warns against the power demands of Islam, points out that the churches should not only help refugees, but also protect the people of their country, declares that churches should help refugees mainly in their countries and prefer not to accept Muslim migrants and refugees, because their chances of integration in society are minimal.¹⁴ This tension in the Catholic Church overgrows its boundaries and it became the subject of vivid discussions throughout society. Similar tensions can be found also in other churches, but these conflicts are not so medially visible.

In some churches of Reformation we can also meet a particular disorientation. The identity of these churches was formed in the spirit of differentiations in relation to the Catholic Church, to religious indifference, to individualism and later also to atheism. For example, the Catholic conception of Christianity was often a sort of criterion for the reduction of faith of these churches. Today, these traditional competitors—Catholics, agnostics, atheists and religious individualists—appear in comparison with Islam rather as an integral part of their identity. It is still a marginal (or exotic) phenomenon in the Czech Republic about what position should be taken to Islam, but thanks to neighboring European countries its presence is increasingly perceived. What position should be taken to the religion, which is closer to Christianity than other religions, but which raises fundamental objections against Christianity? Islam has here a better position, because it was formed in connection with delimitation of certain basic elements of Christianity. Because Islam was not significantly reflected in churches, a numerous of attempts to differentiate itself from Islam arise. It creates a strange situation in which the churches have essentially nothing serious against each other or against Judaism, but they somehow feel the necessity to differentiate themselves from Islam.¹⁵

¹⁴ Cf. “Discussion between Tomáš Halík and Milan Badal”, *Český rozhlas* [online], P [cit. 2016-12-07]: <http://www.rozhlas.cz/plus/dnesniplus/zprava/halik-s-ceskymi-muslimy-nikdy-problemy-nebyly-ale-sproste-provokace-konvicky-je-mohou-zradikalizovat--1640092>

Cf. “Dialog with Milan Badal”, *DVTV* [online], P [cit. 2016-12-07]: <https://video.aktualne.cz/dvtv/badal-islam-ma-svetovladne-tendence-rozdelovat-islamismus-a/r~adaa3346580c11e6a3e5002590604f2e/>

¹⁵ As an example, I can cite a document of the VIII-th Assembly of the Czechoslovak Hussite Church, which condemns the interfaith intolerance, positively assesses the contribution of all major religions including Islam. But it leads to a theological controversy with Islam about the concept of God and Jesus Christ. I think that the condemnation of some religious views belongs to the interfaith encounters. The authors of the document didn't engage in any controversy with other churches or religions, but only with Islam. Cf. “Církev československá husitská ve vztahu k ekuméně“, *VIII. sněm Církve československé husitské – Průběh, dokumenty, poselství*, CČSH, Praha, 2014, pp. 86-89.

Part IV. Theological Directions Caused by Refugee Crisis and by the Presence of Islam

I'm not going to cover all forms of new theological directions which were formed under the influence of migration or Islam. But I will try to mention at least three examples which I consider in this regard as essential. Although these theological directions enter an opinion conflict, I believe that all of them are important for overcoming different kinds of phobias.

The first of these directions could be characterized as a “theology of interfaith dialogue”. It is developing across the spectrum of the churches and it is reflected especially in a series of church documents that express their positive attitude not only towards thinking and spiritual life of other churches, but also of other religions. This theology is supported by real ongoing interfaith dialogue, which is attended by a relatively small group of people mainly from the academic community, nevertheless it evoked certain response in churches and in society. I can name especially a platform for interfaith dialogue *Common Voice—Forum of Jews, Christians and Muslims* which organize irregular meetings mainly about current social issues. In recent years it reacted especially to the negative medial view of Islam, to the expression of cultural racism, and to insensitive speeches of some Czech politicians.¹⁶ It must also be named *Society of Christians and Jews* which supports the dialogue, especially between Christians and Jews, but its dialogical character leads it to comment on social problems in the same way as the *Common Voice*.¹⁷ One of the fundamental elements of this theology is the reference to the dialogical nature of religion, to the need of openness, to the art of listening, to accepting non-conform challenges, to transcending cultural and religious boundaries. The problem of this theological reflection lies in the fact that it can develop into a “pluralistic religious theology” which postulates the realization of redemption and the knowledge of God equally in all religions. Such positions may actually lead to a real syncretism, which underestimates the importance of the Christian tradition.

This pluralistic theology and its perspective, from which looks down on different religious thoughts and practices, is the focus of criticism of the second

¹⁶ Cf. *Mezikulturní dialog* [online], P [cit. 2016-12-07]: <http://www.mezikulturnidialog.cz/kalendar/spolecny-hlas-forum-zidu-krestanu-a-muslimu.html>.

¹⁷ Cf. *Společnost židů a křesťanů* [online], P [cit. 2016-12-07]: <http://krestane-zide.info/index.php/cz/>. Among other interfaith activities it can be mentioned for example *Charta Ecumenica*, which was signed during the meeting of Christians and Muslims by Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox Christians in the spring 2014. The document declared that Christians should treat Muslims with respect, and whoever would be exhibited hatred against Muslims acts contrary to church teaching. Mikuláš Vymětal, “Setkání za pokojné soužití mezi křesťany a muslimy”, *Český bratr* [online], 90 (6), 2014, p.17 [cit. 2016-11-16]. <http://www.e-cirkev.cz/data/att/%C4%8Cesk%C3%BD%20bratr%206-2014.pdf>

theological direction for which I named as a “revitalized apologetics”. This apologetic position accepts also the necessity of interfaith dialogue and studies, it admits also more overall perspectives on divine reality and it refuses unequivocal exclusivist models which reduce the question of truth in religion from the view of an ecclesiology or Christology. However, this theology is also aware that the question of truth or redemption can be answered only from the inside perspective of a specific religion. There are not any perspectives from which we could decide that a concrete religion is truthful or false. This new apologetic theology refers often to the biblical continuity with other religions in the context of the doctrine of creation or pneumatology but also to discontinuity in the context of Christology.¹⁸ This position can be represented by a small brochure published under the title *Christian and Islam*. The authors appreciate a range of theological and spiritual characteristic of Islam, but also put forward the question if it is possible to identify God of Muslims with God of Trinitarian Christianity, how believers should correctly approach the person and work of Jesus Christ and where the borders of possible common prayer with Muslims are.¹⁹ Such position can lead on the one hand to widening the gap between religions, but clear religious attitudes can also lead on the other hand to deepening this dialogue.

For the third direction I chose the title “theology of otherness”. This theology is also related to theology of interfaith dialogue. This theological concept points out that believers in the churches were always confronted and will be confronted with strangeness and otherness, and they have to decide whether the otherness will be perceived as a threat or as an opportunity to deepening their spiritual life. The theology of otherness finds its inspiration in philosophy of Emmanuel Lévinas, especially in his concepts of otherness, face, infinity, responsibility, freedom, etc. This theology sees the absolute otherness as one of the basic characteristics of God's being and personal relationship with the other person as one of the basic forms of the epiphany of God's otherness.²⁰ It seems that this theology is close to theological reflections of Rudolf Otto or Karl Barth, who talks about God as about “Wholly Other” (das ganze Andere, totaliter Aliter).²¹ This position can also be represented by a small brochure published under the title *Who is*

¹⁸ Cf. Thomas Kothmann, “Křesťanství mezi náboženstvími, agresivním ateismem a náboženským analfabetismem. Výzvy pro teologickou apologetiku a pastorální praxi”, *Theological Review*, Vol. 86, No.3, 2015, pp. 331-347.

¹⁹ This publication was written by a team of authors mainly from the Catholic Church. Cf. C. V. Pospisil et col., *Křesťan a islám*, Hesperion, Olomouc, 2016.

²⁰ Cf. Jirí Vogel, “Naděje i ohrožení plynoucí z formování křesťanské identity”, *Theological Review*, 2016.

²¹ Cf. Rudolf Otto, *Das Heilige. Über das Irrationale in der Idee des Göttlichen und sein Verhältnis zum Rationalen*, C. H. Beck, München, 2004, pp. 28-37; Karl Barth, *Der Römerbrief*, TVZ, Zürich, 2010, pp. 372-374.

*my neighbor? Churches—Refugees—Migrants.*²² This concept helps to form a new identity of the Christian churches in the context of growing religious diversity. Keeping its identity despite growing religious and cultural diversity is important. And it is also necessary to positively assess good intentions, which stand in the background. It is a positive self-understanding with respect to others. It expresses reverence for the other human being, who carries a reflection of transcendent otherness. But this theological concept is also criticized. Are we really so distant and alien from each other? Does the emphasis on otherness really lead one to another or to widening gaps between religions or cultures? For example, Jamal Malik warns against excessive emphasis on otherness, because it can lead to "culturalization and exotization" of Muslims by mainstream society. The more natural form of dialog appears to him modest cooperation which is based on practical help.²³

Part V. What can Churches do?

It can be stated that the attitudes of churches to refugees are more positive than in the rest of Czech society. It is also possible to meet skepticism, rejection, different types of phobia or indifference, but it is not in so high level as it is in the mainstream society. There are more reasons for this difference. First of them is connected with charities and humanitarian organizations, which return to Czech churches their generosity in the form of better knowledge about the situation and the real needs in refugee camps abroad and similar facilities in the Czech Republic. And it is a good way for breaking social myths about refugees, about their situation and real motives of their arrival in Europe. So they can create space for empathy and involvement in solving problems associated with migration. The second reason is vivid discussion about migrants, their cultures and religions. It is also important because it leads the people in the churches to their own identity at the end. I do not want to idealize this situation as tensions and conflicts in churches that I have outlined in my paper reveal the real state of affairs.

What can churches do? It is important to see that the question of migration, asylum seekers, interfaith dialog and also disagreement with virtues of alien cultures or religions are in the focus of theological reflections of churches. It is actually all

²² Cf. Tim Noble et col., *Kdo je můj bližní? Církev uprchlíci a migrant*, Institut ekumenických studií, Praha, 2016. Srov. též projekt *Vstřícný postoj církví vůči uprchlíkům a migrantům (The Churches' Response of Welcome to the Migrant Other)*, který jeho tvůrci v ČR, Tim Noble a Ivan Noble, doplňují následujícími slovy: "Thus the influx of people from other cultures and faiths is to be regarded not as a chance to buy conversion for help, but to reach out to and grow through the encounter with the other. Christian mission then will be seen in terms of the practice of hospitality, with all the risks and benefits such a practice involves".

²³ Jamal Malik, "Integration of Muslim Migrants and the Politics of Dialogue: The Case of Modern Germany", *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* [online], 33(4), 2013, pp. 495-506 [cit. 2016-11-25].

about positive looking for a way out of the crisis of identity. Therefore these reflections are so important, because people radicalize very quickly when their identity finds itself in crisis. The entire globalization process is actually about crisis of identity and this crisis is perceived more intensively under the influence of migration processes. The cultural and religious revival, which extends around the world, is only one of epiphanies of this identity-crisis. I think that both of the above-mentioned activities of the churches are very important as their practical help and their thinking are closely linked with subject of refugees and migration regardless of whether it will result into a theology interfaith dialogue, apologetic theology, migration theology or theology of otherness. Because these things at least partially help to dissipate the fear of losing oneself and they find themselves as an important player in this process.