Review of the Book

”Către o nouă expertiză etică.

Deconstruind valorile etice”

[Towards a New Ethical Expertise.

Deconstructing Ethical Values],

Author: Ana Frunză, Lumen Publishing House, 2016

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Abstract: This text is the review of the volume "Către o nouă expertiză etică. Deconstruind valorile etice" [Towards a new ethical expertise. Deconstructing ethical values] by Ana Frunză, published by Lumen Publishing House from Iași, Romania, in 2016. I came across this volume much too late, for it brings great value to the field of ethics and ethical expertise. The arguments are easy to follow, especially for those who want to step into the field of ethical expertise. The combination of familiar texts, with more technical ones and with solid and concise arguments, allows any type of reader to approach the field and deepen it.

Keywords: *Ana Frunză, applied ethics, ethical expertise, deconstruction of ethical values, book review.*

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The first part of the volume starts with the deconstruction of ethical values. In the introduction we are also told the method used to deconstruct values. First, they are equated as meta-narratives following Lyotard's model (2003, p. 11). Then, these metanarratives are deconstructed in two stages, following the Derridian model in the interpretation of Leonard Lawlor (2002, p. 92). In the first stage, the idea of the existence of two worlds in opposition, the sensitive world and the intelligible world, is criticized (Frunză, 2016, p. 22). Dualities of this type usually have an internal hierarchy, which is de-legitimized by deconstruction. The sensitive element or essence is included in the intelligible one, and thus its hierarchical importance is reduced. In the second stage, the lower term is replaced on an original position, and in the tension between essence and appearance, the indecible appears (Derrida, 1999, pp. 1-36).

What we get from the two stages is a tool with which we can find out what essences reside in a justification. These essences legitimize the metanarratives that, which once identified and deconstructed, eliminate their universalizing claims. Instead of the philosophy of social welfare, the author proposes the transition to an ethics of collective responsibility. A qualitative leap is proposed for the unifying and systematic ideas directed towards the development of society, such as totalitarian communism or the endless progress of humanity as a consequence of reason and technology (Apel, 2001, pp. 77-99). This leap involves shifting the emphasis towards collective responsibility and lasting responsibility, closing down the permissiveness of postmodernism. The transition from individual to social duty will need mediators, ethical gatekeepers, who re-interpret the metatext of organizations in operational values of social practice.

In the next chapter, "The Deconstruction of Freedom in Autonomy", the author first indicates the metanarrative of freedom, with permanent reference to Immanuel Kant and John Stuart Mill. It is opposed to the theory of moral agent, starting from the constructivist Albert Bandura, who states: "moral theories become comprehensible by the conjunction of human reason with other psycho-social factors" (Bandura, 1991, p. 46). Compared to this constructivist theory, the author (Frunză, 2016) establishes herself in the team of the moderates, in which the individual is placed outside the control of morality determined by society. In the following subchapters, the author (Frunză, 2016) develops the idea of autonomy in relational autonomy, which recommends the connection between knowledge, reason and moral conduct. Then, she shows that autonomy can be a gradual process in moral development, starting with "Moral Development: A Review of the Theory" by Kohlberg and Hersh

(2009). After establishing how the relational autonomy is gradually built, our attention is directed to the relations of the autonomous person towards the supervisor. For this, we are proposed the hypothesis of progressive self-development in personality dynamics or the updated trend described by Rogers (1951).

If we looked at the autonomy of the individual and his autonomy as opposed to society, now it is time to look at social responsibility towards the individual. For this, the ontological ethics of Emmanuel Levinas (1997) is brought to the forefront. Even if he emphasized the relationship between one self and the Other, the starting point for Levinas is the Other, in an ethical relationship. Responsibility for Otherness becomes an ethics of concern for him, which anchors the Self in the world, as opposed to Kantian autonomy, which supported only individual freedom. Between the ethicist-client relationship, through the ethics of care, a significant Third is established, resulting in a triadic client-supervised-supervisor relationship according to the self-you-otherness model.

In the next chapter, "The Deconstruction of Debt and Charity in Responsibility," we are shown the connection between the ethical duty interpreted by Kant and that of charity understood by part of the Catholic religion. The link between the two metanarratives is Kant's need to legitimize his ethics on Scriptural quotations and the need for Catholics to harmonize worship with rational arguments. Although the two are closely linked, I believe that ecumenical differences must be taken much more seriously when a deconstruction of a Christian metanarrative is desired. However, due to the close links between *fides et ratio*, each of these have supported one another in the overthrow of each by postmodernity, the emphasis now falling on consensus and democracy, rather than sacrifice. The new duty no longer relates to the welfare that is independent of human minds, but rather to private welfare, to care, to ethical responsibility, eliminating the ontological burden.

In chapter three, "Deconstruction of justice", we follow at first the evolution of the applications of the concept of justice. To the idea of social and legal construct through the rule of the law from Antiquity, the justice of God's acts and power is opposed, through the transmission of beliefs via traditions. In postmodernity, justice is beginning to be defined by referring to sets of rules. And the concept of justice itself is passed through the three instances of representation of power, depending on the involvement of the body, these being: monarchical, contractual and general supervision. By appealing to Foucault's (2005) theories, a discursive strategy can be established, in which consensus can emerge, while the technology of power

is communicated and recognized between the ethical expert and the supervised. Justice is deconstructed in equity, by using the concept of social justice, replacing interpretations of justice with those focused on agreement, consensus, procedural justice. Possible forms of social justice are discussed in the following subchapters: justice as justification proposed by Nozick (1997, p. 9), procedural justice proposed by Hayek (1989), egalitarianism and equal opportunities starting from Walzer's (2010, p. 29) and Arneson's (1989) works.

The fourth chapter, "Ethical Values in the Practice of Social Services," deals with Rawlsian liberal philosophy as the basis for the ideas of legitimacy and stability in a state governed by the rule of law. By assuming the rationality of the actors involved in the ethical decision, of a Kantian type, a social contract can be established. The contract starts from a primordial equality of the individuals who are placed behind a veil of ignorance. As the social contract can be undermined by people with disabilities, the standard for functionality becomes the equitable distribution of justice. But as this distribution may promote society's apathy, it is important that individual responsibility be enhanced. The social universe can be represented as a communicative paradigm.

The second part of the study, entitled "Ethical expertise", popularizes and details the context of the ethical expertise infrastructure in Romania and in the North-Transatlantic area.

In the first chapter, "Ethical expertise and social communication. Theoretical foundations", we find out that the issue of ethics within organizations is a topical issue, contextualized in specific areas of organizations. Research is generally done either in identifying the values to be put into practice, or in outlining the ethical principles on the basis of which the ethical decision-making process can be developed. The author (Frunz[, 2016) briefly offers an insight on the most important value systems and ethical theories underlying the development of ethical decision models as a guideline for ethical judgment.

In the second chapter, "Models of ethical decision", we learn about the staged process, stage models and behavioral studies that underline the establishment of methods. Comparing the two great methods for making ethical decision proposed by Thomas Jones (1991) with the one proposed by Valentin Mureșan (2009), the author favors the latter, as it is not so much based on problems that arise, as on objectives at the social, economic and political level. Also, in this chapter we are offered an ethical matrix developed by the Center for Applied Bioethics at the University of

Nottingham, very useful in addition to the "boxes of ethical tools" such as principlism, Christian ethics etc.

In the third chapter, "Instruments of ethical decision making", we learn about the context of approaching the ethics audit from the perspective of the only relevant specialized papers, developed by Frederic Reamer (2000) and Donna McAuliffe (2002). We also learn about the Romanian context, in which inequity and communitarianism are preferred to the principles of justice promoted by liberalism. At the same time, we are presented with the main organizational frameworks constructed on the basis the model offered by North America and the European Union, with arguments in favor of the American model, due to its postmoral character.

The last chapter, "Ethical supervision", analyzes the intervention tools and strategies in the context of the ethical expertise. The starting point is the threshold below which a practice cannot be accepted from a moral point of view. By delimiting ethical supervision from the ethics of supervision, the first aiming at the ethical practices, and the second consisting of the practice of philosophizing in various fields of activity, the aims and perspectives of both concepts are highlighted.

Even if the basis of this paper is Ana Frunză's doctoral thesis, reading the book is closer to the experience of reading a treatise than a thesis. Each paragraph advances to a conclusion, there are no derisory bibliographical references or purely theoretical subchapters, with no stake.

One of the proposals of this treaty is to replace "postmodern permissiveness" with an ethics of collective responsibility and sustainable development. Since I lived in postmodernity all my life, Ana Frunză's arguments left me with a bitter-sweet taste. My concern is related to the calcification of moral endeavours in a single direction, but I am also convinced of the need to deconstruct ethical values, even if only as a simple exercise in overcoming the paradox of analysis (Fisher, 2011, pp. 16-18). However, I felt the need for a much extended theoretical chapter, where an attempt would be made to respond to possible objections. I would also have liked a more robust metaethical argument. Those who believe that there are truths independent of human minds could interpret differently or completely reject the idea of collective responsibility, and thus stop the exit from postmodernity.

I will certainly return to this treaty many times. It is a rich and precise resource of ethical arguments and infrastructures, to which you can only add new analyzes.

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