

SANDU FRUNZĂ

THE ETHICAL SUBJECT AND ITS RESPONSIBILITY

Sandu Frunză

Babes-Bolyai University, Department of Communication, Public Relations, and Advertising, Faculty of Political, Administrative and Communication Sciences, Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

Email: sandu.frunza@ubbcluj.ro; sfrunza@yahoo.com

Abstract: We are setting off here on a quest for the ethical subject and the metamorphoses of its positioning in the context of subject assertion and intersubjectivity development in postmodern ethics. Our main concern is with the way in which the ethical subject (agent) may be identified and delineated in the time of lay ethics and postmodern human condition. To do so, we firstly looked at how religious traditions provided firm grounds for identity and ethical subject assertion by integrating it into a dynamic of the divine and human having a special force to transfigure the person. We have relied in this sense on the use of the Cosmic Tree symbolism as a centre organizing the symbolic universe of human being. Secondly, our analyses aimed for the ultimate support of human being, that enables our approach of the moral subject as operating within the responsibility to oneself and to the multiple forms that alterity may take. We therefore begin with the premise that understanding self-esteem mechanisms may be the starting point in a harmonious construction of the self. Finally, we identify the moral self as the fundamental structure in the ethical reconstruction of the human being, understood as subject of ethical creation and moral perfection.

Key words: ethical subject, moral agent, responsibility, self-esteem, the Tree of Life, religious symbol, postmodern ethics, lover of self, God's love.

1. Religious traditions and the ethical subject creation

From the viewpoint of Western religious tradition, a most significant structure in understanding the moral subject's operation mode in religious perspective is the symbolic structure of "God's image in man." It encompasses man's moral condition. At the same time, the history of redemption, as described by Christianity, shows man facing choices positing man under the sign of good or evil, as well as under the pressure of the freedom to choose one way or another, thus triggering the responsibility for doing good or bad in life. The fact that freedom appears as a human nature constituent in this religious tradition's interpretation of human being's salvation attributes moral factors a primordial role to attain salvation. Thus, redemption relates to a continuous confirmation of the existence of an ethical subject, with his/her actions aimed to achieve personal and other people's welfare. We permanently have this reciprocated conditioning of the personal and of the community dimensions. The way in which the two harmonize in the ethical or moral subject is obvious when bringing together love for oneself with love for the others in the Bible statement: "Jesus responded: To love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." (Matthew 22:37-40). Actually, besides the fact that a triad of human powers is invoked here, that must be set to play: heart, soul, mind, we may sense that the whole relational reality of the human being is shaped as a trinity (Biriş 2018). Consequently, in the triadic spirit of Christian thought, we have in this expression three instances: of the moral self, of the moral alterity, and of transcendence as a source of morality. All of these are under the sign of love as intersubjective unity. We have here a map of main directions in a theology allowing the development of an ontology and an ethics posited within the Christian tradition.

This onto-theology starts from the biblical Name revealed by divinity to that we find in the formula: "I am who I am" (Exodus 3:14). If we place this statement at the base of existence, we may notice that with divinity "I am who I am" is under the sign of a continuous present, of the eternity – with time and without, by which divinity shows. In the case of man, we deal with an "I am" in the time interval of a life open toward eternity. We may ask ourselves: what exactly remains from the temporal datum of the human being in terms of eternity? Which is the continuity element operating in support of a personal existence caught in the time flow and in

the development dynamics in eternity's perspective? In what way does personal history become an ethical subject's history as a history of redemption?

To venture a potential response, I would like to keep this interpretation key of the religious tradition and talk about a symbol of Jesus's genealogy that I have chosen here to show in the perspective of a morality's genealogy. It is the Tree of Jesse – a symbol known to be widespread in the Christian culture. Especially in Western art, it is represented in manuscripts, painted glass, and bas-reliefs on cathedral facade. In the East, it is represented on frescoes as well as on embroidery” (Arborele lui Iesei 2009). A most extended and impressive representation is on the southern wall of Voronet Monastery in Bucovina, Romania (Discover Romania 2019).

It is not my intention to dwell on the pictorial representation or significance of the *Tree of Jesse*, based on the interpretation of the Christic genealogy representation. I am interested in the tree symbolism as it appears not only tied into the history of Jesus but also as a symbol of passage from the human paradisiacal condition to that of the historical being, and by this, assuming the ethical subject condition. For this very reason, the association of the tree symbolism with the centre symbolism renders the whole existence reinterpretable in the perspective of this symbol. If we call on Eliade's studies on the tree symbolism, we shall notice the nuanced ways by which the tree as a centre of the world may play a part in the transfiguration of man and his world. Also, even if we do not turn to such analysis here, we must not ignore the fact that any discussion on the principle of the centre cannot avoid the ambivalence of the sacred (Eliade 1954; Eliade 1987). However, in our perspective, we should emphasize that in a paradisiacal situation, man is in the centre of the whole creation and connected to a dual representation of the tree in the middle of the garden. We find it in the Tree of Life symbolism and in the Good and Evil Knowledge Tree symbolism. Man uses freedom. Man chooses situating in the prospects of the Good and Evil Knowledge Tree and thus becomes responsible to the divinity with reference to good and evil, becomes an ethical subject (agent). Instrumenting freedom and attracting responsibility function as a way to valorize the human being's quality of moral subject. Primordial man, created in God's image, is kept in the human structure as a historical being. The image and likeness dynamics in the Christian tradition brings in the nuance that man is not only an ethical subject but also able to use ethical creativity while becoming, while transfiguring the others and the world, in a perpetual transcendence that good and love in the fullness of feeling and practice may offer. Tree symbolism is relevant in terms of associating the Tree of Life in the paradisiacal Garden with the symbolic dimension of the Cross. The Cross unites vertically and horizontally the whole creation. It recreates the unity of cosmos into Christ. With this, the Cross, an

instrument of torture in the ancient world, becomes a symbol of life and human restoration, of human participation in the divinity of Jesus and in his sacrifice through which the world regains moral substance. Considering that the Cross symbolism integrates Jesus's divine-human nature, it makes it possible for man to rejoin a transcendence dynamics in which he may continuously improve as moral subject.

This transcendence principle is visible in spiritual experiences proposed by Christian mysticism. As we are used to see in the mystical traditions of various cultures, mystical experience supposes a spiritual ascension described in three stages: purging, illuminating and man's union with divinity. In his Christian mysticism analyses, Dumitru Stăniloae describes an ascetic stage of liberation from the pressure of passions, understood as a purging stage in which body and world are spiritualized and gain a certain transparency (Stăniloae 1993). It is about, first of all, the development of all the elements essential to the moral subject. Such a practical rediscovery of the ethical subject brings along an experience of transcendence related to the surface structure of its experiences. The subject is at the juncture of the esoteric and the exoteric as part of knowing God from its own ethical experience. Moral purging opens toward a stage of illumination during which human being discovers itself in connection with the world within, with the world as such and with the ultimate reasons of things, as well as in a close communication with the transcendence of cosmos and with the transcendent God. From such an experience based on the gain of a symbolic conscience of the world, due to a direct intervention of the divine power in its life, the subject moves to the stage of experiencing God and of an ethical, gnoseological and ontological transfiguration.

The mystic experience of encountering God occurs as part of a perpetual moral improvement in the daily life and in the perspective of an eternal life to be lived in the proximity of God. This ascent of man toward God and God's descent to the human world takes place in a cosmos organized under a symbolism in which the Tree of Life plays the part of an organizing centre. It claims man because it unifies existence around the theandric principle that makes possible unity and harmonious shared living of the human and the divine as assumed personal reality. This is the highest form of ethical subject manifestation.

We find another mode of using the tree symbolism in the Kabbalah, Judaism's mystical mode. Relevant to our discussion is the fact that we find also in this context of experience and interpretation, the symbolism of the Knowledge Tree – which is at the same time the Tree of Life. This symbolic structure, significant in terms of experience and knowledge of the divinity appears in the form of the Sefirot Tree. It is represented in a series of triangles and spheres interconnected by communication channels. The Sefirot Tree is at once a symbol of the centre of the world and of the entire cosmos in its dynamics. It represents a diagram of man

and a diagnose of the world and experience of God. According to Moshe Idel's studies, the Sefirot Tree should be understood in the perspective of an existing open circuit between the divine world and the human one. In this dynamics, there is a continuous movement between the two worlds: by the ascent of some people to the divine field and by the divine intervention in the earthly world. This existentialist perspective may be completed by an intellectualist interpretation according to which the dynamics of the human and the divine may be considered as a knowledge exchange between two poles conceived as two intellects in a permanent dialogue (Idel 2008).

The Tree symbolism goes beyond the differences contributed by various religious traditions. Considering the graphic representation model of the Sefirot Tree, perhaps not accidentally, Stephen R. Covey, a motivational thinker for whom ethics is the foundation of the personal development process, proposes a series of triangles within circles for a graphic representation of the personal development map (Covey 2004). Perhaps this association becomes more visible if we consider the representation submitted by Sean Covey, son of Stephen R. Covey, who envisages the same process in the shape of a tree (Covey 1998).

I have called in these hypotheses of the Tree symbolism for being significant to the way in which the divine dynamics, that integrate human being, explain how religious traditions conceive moral subject. Human being becomes an ethical subject as it is included in a plan of the divine to which man has access precisely because he is part of a discourse of the divine. It is not about a circular movement here, but rather a moral improvement that human being has as an ethical subject, benefitting from transformational power, transfiguring energy generated by the dialogue with God.

2. Aspects of the postmodern ethical subject (agent) and its responsibility

Who is the ethical subject (agent) and what is the continuity element making it the constant support of personal responsibility? It is an issue that comes up while reflecting on ethics when no longer within the frameworks of religious tradition.

To identify it in the mode we find today in ethics' explanation – no longer in the religious sphere – I shall try to indicate what exactly we mean by ethical subject (agent) and in principle, how it may be called to respond. In the general discourse of ethics we note that the ethical or moral subject (agent) is an individual or entity whom we attribute the capacity to distinguish between good and bad, to make choices and be responsible for the choices made for good or for bad. I am using in this text the terms ethical and moral as being similar, even if I prefer the ethical reference. The ethical subject (agent) is conceived as an

autonomous individual who assumes ethical obligations and meets them consistently. The quality of ethical subject is closely connected to the idea of being morally responsible. It is attributed only to individuals or entities who have the capacity to respond or to be held responsible.

The ethical subject is an individual whom we expect to have an assumed unambiguous ethical behavior. For this very reason, we operate a hierarchy of responsibility and responsiveness when we try to sketch the general profile of the ethical subject. This way, we have beings, entities or even persons whom we do not place within the ethical subject concept.

One example we may provide is that it is difficult to decide whether pets may be deemed moral subjects, even if we are always ready to attribute our dog or cat the capacity to love us. The difficulty lies not only with the fact that we have to solve the dilemma whether animals do have souls, in the perspective of the religious tradition's explanation, but also because their proximity humanizes them to such extent that we tend to attribute them feelings, affection and even typical human actions. Ethics theorists talk about a similar difficulty with animals whom we assign a high intelligence level and a good ability to connect. Who do we hold responsible when an intelligent animal like the dolphin causes an accident whose victim is a human being? It is hard for us to bring up a dolphins' show during which such an accident might occur involving these intelligent and well-trained animals. However we may read on a site militating for dolphin protection warnings such as: "do not attempt to swim with dolphins. There are people's reports of having been attacked by dolphins while swimming with them. Do not forget that dolphins are wild animals, with unpredictable behavior, that may attack man" (Protejarea delfinilor 2020). Even from the viewpoint of wild animal rights promotion it is hard to decide to what extent we can hold responsible (morally and legally) the intelligent animal we protect. Even in terms of animal protection it is difficult to say to what extent, if we attribute rights to animals, whether this means they also have responsibilities, which makes it debatable whether they can be considered moral subjects (agents).

A series of even greater challenges and difficulties seem to appear with technological development as regards the singularity and trans-humanism of robots. To what extent, we wonder, may robots or certain artificial intelligence creations be considered moral agents

I would first mention here Roman V. Yampolskiy's view according to which it is inappropriate to think of the possibility to enable robots and creations generically tagged as artificial intelligence to make ethical decisions, as much as it is a mistake to talk about instituting rights that robots might have. Such entities must not be taken outside the instrumental sphere and it would be unethical to allow them so much autonomy of decision in general and of ethical decision in particular that they may use these capacities against human beings. Yampolskiy takes a clear stand in this respect, as to the necessity to develop intelligent

systems only up to the level that we control them and they do not endanger human safety: “Humanity should not put its future in the hands of the machines since it will not be able to take the power back. In general a machine should never be in a position to terminate human life or to make any other non-trivial ethical or moral judgment concerning people. A world run by machines will lead to unpredictable consequences for human culture, lifestyle and overall probability of survival for the humankind” (Yampolskiy 2013, 393).

We may also note that we are already in the midst of worries about artificial intelligence development, both as regards the autonomy and sophistication level and the specific ethics of research in this field. Additionally, there are concerns about a series of ethical effects upon human beings as regards their status, issues of vulnerability, employment, job loss, etc. Thus, philosopher Paula Boddington has written a book on how a *Code of Ethics for Artificial Intelligence* (Boddington 2017) might work. We do not want to dwell too much on the ethical ambiguity generated by technology development (Odorčák 2019; Asăvoaie 2018; Graur et al. 2010). But we should keep in mind the fact that beside the beneficial aspects, performance, lifestyle and comfort brought about by the artificial intelligence development, the latter is also a powerful source of stress at multiple levels, including the ethical one. It is still predictable that as long as man claims control over these creations and their operation mode, it will be difficult to deem them an ethical subject (agent).

On the other hand, in the human category as such we may debate whether it is legitimate to consider children morally responsible. Over a significant period of their life, children are not considered moral subjects (agents) because they lack or they have a diminished capacity to distinguish between good and bad. We should take a look at the responsibility table proposed by Roger A. Shiner. He differentiates among: 1) role responsibility, 2) causal responsibility, 3) liability responsibility, 4) capacity responsibility. According to the latter, the person is or is not in full possession of faculties; whether it has or does not have the mental and intellectual capacity to be held responsible and to be summoned to respond (Shiner 1999). Children are perceived as vulnerable, which posits them beyond the quality of moral subject. For a long time period, their ethical and legal responsibility is diminished. Only when they come of age, they fully become a moral and legal subject, with all the power of responsibility we render to human beings in general.

We are speaking here about a generic responsibility that we assign to human beings because we can see even among mature people situations in which some persons may be deemed irresponsible in the hard sense of the term and consequently their quality of moral and legal subject may be diminished. For example, we may mention states and situations in which some people may lose discernment, have temporary or permanent mental illness, or may go through extreme situations in which some individuals

may make decisions opposite of ethical norms. We should always keep in mind at least two dimensions as references in the moral evaluation of personal actions, on the one hand the ethical action with reference to one's own person, and on the other hand the action affecting the others. Ethics always supposes relations, either an intrasubjective relation or an intersubjective one. Although the ethical subject involves an intersubjective development, he/she cannot be accomplished without the participation of an intrasubjective dimension, without adequately shaping the actions of the ethical subject with reference to his/her own person inner reality and its continuous transfiguration.

However, we should consider the issue of the quality of ethical subject as also connected with moral action. Our expectations about the capacity to react morally add a series of exigencies of the ethical action. When we talk about an ethical subject, we are aware of exigencies for the moral decisions he/she may make:

1. First of all, we mean the principle of the good and the commitment to achieve it in the personal life and in other people's lives.
2. We also mean the choice of actions leading to diminished consequences of the negative elements or of causing evil or even removing any unjustified actions capable of causing evil.
3. We consider possibilities to act so as to prevent evil or any damages we might cause as moral agents.
4. We take into account also the fact that the subject may be held responsible not only for what he/she did, but also for he/she did not do.

All these may be complemented with a series of other expectations that may originate in the ethical principles of bioethics as part of the general discourse of ethics, according to Tom L. Beauchamp and James F. Childress: Respect for Autonomy; Non maleficence; Beneficence; Justice. Elaborating on each in each chapter of their study on the principles of bioethics, they show a kind of germinating structure of the discourse on "the common morality as universal morality", which may provide a general framework of moral evaluation, reflection, decision and ethical construction (Beauchamp, Childress 2012). Therefore, they may be also used as a pattern to interpret the actions of the ethical subject.

An important aspect we should view when we talk about action and moral responsibility, is that we need an ego to constitute a continuity element in the personal self. It should assert itself beyond contingencies we may associate it with – such as wishes, preferences, contextual orientations. We should also make sure it does not go beyond his/her own experiences, because it could turn into an abstract ego that cannot be considered a moral subject. We should position this ego somewhere at the border of subject autonomy and its construction during the ethical choices

made. These choices may fall under the sign of ethical creativity or freedom of decision for assumed ethical action. For this reason I believe that essential in understanding the coherence and unity of the moral subject is the life philosophy that the subject adopts intentionally.

These continuity elements should be correlated with the ones aiming for personal identity. The ethical subject should be perceived in terms of the whole represented by the personal self that makes the individual be what it is. Ethical problems should be discussed in a wider framework in which we may ask questions such as: who am I? what is the meaning of my life? What is my value system? How can I choose what is important for me in connection with the others? How do I stand in connection with good and evil? Which interpretation grid should I employ to make the best choices? How can I obtain the recipe for a successful life and a good life? and many similar ones.

Of course, when I ask myself: who am I that I am, as an individual living in a Western culture, I cannot dissociate this statement from the biblical answer “I am who I am” (Exodus 3:14). The biblical expression comes to mind at least as a quick intellectual experience, even if I don’t provide a consistence related to my way of defining the ultimate structure of moral values. As we have seen so far, useful to understand how the idea of the ultimate presence of the ethical ego operate in the present world is a discussion on the moral subject representation in religious context. It might provide a solution for the constant element in the moral subject becoming. While leaving the religious tradition and with the relative traditional value system, it is legitimate to ask about the moral subject condition.

3. The self as an ethical self and its development as a moral subject

If we accept that an instance such as that of the personal self may be considered the ultimate instance of the personal being configuration, I believe a good solution to understand the self is to analyze it in the context of a discussion on self-esteem.

The self-esteem is a concept coined by philosopher William James in a work on the principles of psychology, published in 1890, and became one of the most important terms in psychology (James 2007). It is unavoidable in the motivational, personal development and success cultivation discourse, as well as in the one claiming the need to attain a good happy life. As a matter of fact, speaking about the fundamental needs of a human being, Abraham H. Maslow said: “All people in our society (with a few pathological exceptions) have a need or desire for a stable, firmly based, usually high evaluation of themselves, for self-respect, or self-esteem, and for the esteem of others” (Maslow 1987, 45). We have to note that ever

since its launch by William James, the self-esteem concept is about the ambivalence that supposes both the satisfaction and the dissatisfaction with oneself. We have here a duality of the positive and negative deemed to be an interference zone of the human being's self-evaluation. As a free being, he/she may privilege the bright side of satisfaction or it may give in to the dark side of dissatisfaction – with all the negative consequences of the suitability to oneself, the world or the professional milieu, of the feeling that one is useful and necessary in the relationships construed with the inner reality, fellow people and the world, or of the power of creation, confidence and action. Assuming the positive or the negative is relevant to ethically also. It is significant in view of taking responsibility to oneself, alterity, cosmos or spiritual entities. Even if postmodern man is no longer under the pressure of the duty principle, we may mention that responsibility for the quality of one's own life was posited by Immanuel Kant when he said: "To secure one's own happiness is one's duty... for lack of contentment with one's condition, in the trouble of many worries and amidst unsatisfied needs, could easily become a great *temptation to transgress one's duties*", and regarding responsibility to do good to others, he believed that "To be beneficent where one can is a duty, and besides, many souls are so compassionately disposed that, without any further motive of vanity or self-interest, they find an inner pleasure in spreading joy around them and can delight in others' content as it is their work" (Kant 1972, 210).

I would like this paragraph to draw our attention to the relational nature of ethics. The ethical self is a relational self that is under the sign of intersubjectivity. The emphasis on the importance of the relational dimension must also be understood in relation to one of the observations made by Charles Taylor - probably the most refined researcher in the philosophy of the self. He reveals that with modernity we give a new meaning to the inner power of moral transformation, a power that in previous epochs we related to divinity. Freed from his religious context, modern man tends to construct and transfigure the whole reality, including the moral one, starting from the resources offered by this internalization of power, which appears to us as an inner power of the individual. Through this, the resources of morality are no longer related to a transcendence, they are internalized and used as a source of creativity and ethical action (Taylor 1989). This does not mean that all forms of transcending and transcendence disappear. Their traces are visible in philosophies of the ethical subject such as those developed by Emmanuel Levinas (Levinas 1987) or Paul Ricoeur.

Such a quest to harmonize the self and alterity we find with Paul Ricoeur who explored the self in a philosophical manner and said: "*Oneself as another* suggests that the ipseity of self implies alterity to such deep degree that one cannot be thought without the other, that one rather passes into the other, as in the Hegelian terminology" (Ricoeur 2016, 20).

From the way he describes oneself as another, Ricoeur ascribes the self the role of alterity's indicator as well as its carrier. The presence of the self supposes the existence of the ego, of inner life. It may express itself as a subject instituting a world. The self indicates that man is par excellence a relational subject. If we believe that intersubjective world cannot avoid ethics, then we can see the self play the part of the moral subject. Indeed, Ricoeur places subjectivity in the proximity of the entity that we used to express through the presence of the soul. The reflexive subject, described by Ricoeur with reference to Descartes, is thus the ethical subject metamorphosed as result of successive secularization processes involving the soul doctrine. The fact that we resort to the subject to establish it as base of morality does not take it away from its logic of being a privileged creation. Nevertheless, in line with Ricoeur, we have to accept that the continuity element we seek to define ethical subject is difficult to separate from the fact that there is a clear relation between the idea of God and the idea personal self. Ricoeur states that "God gives the certainty of the ego a permanence that is not from the self ... The idea of God is present in me like a footprint that the author leaves on his work" (Ricoeur 2016, 27).

The metamorphoses undergone by the ethical subject with postmodernity are visible if we keep the footprint of a Theistic definition of human being, the subject being central in creation and ethical action, as they appear in view of minimal ethics. Theodor W. Adorno describes *minima moralia* as an ethical vision and practice starting off from the elements of a common philosophy privileging subjective experience. A process is supposed here in which the individual has the power to become the organizing centre of the whole existence, moral creativity included, while it is also emptied of the transcendent substance once used to shape moral values (Adorno 1999). This position of the ethical construction should be viewed as an effect of horizontal transcendence, a phenomenon typical of modern thought (Veress 2018; Moniz 2019). It can be lucrative to postmodern man, without any problems, on condition that the axis around which all transcending occurs should be linked to the individual understood as moral subject. This involves its recognition as ultimate moral authority, as centre to the whole cosmos and all types of experience, including spiritual ones.

4. In lieu of conclusions: Experience of the self and moral subject development

We have seen that in time, religious visions would provide symbolic structures, based on tradition narratives that would give substance to the ethical self. With the postmodern world, we witness a value relativization and a pluralism of multiplied instances that become moral subject in the

context of minimal ethics assertion. Despite the camouflage or loss of symbolic consciousness brought about by postmodernity, with personal stories pushing the great narratives to a secondary stage (Frunză 2019; Aupers, Houtman 2010), I could notice in Ricoeur's philosophical notes that tradition's footsteps are obvious at the deep level of the ethical subject action and construction. In the context of the ethical subject instituting itself and developing as a moral ideal, I believe that one way to tackle the importance of the personal self as moral subject is Roger Bergman's statement according to which: "The best answer to the question, Why be moral?, may thus be, because that is who I am, or, because I can do no other and remain (or become) the person I am committed to being" (Bergman 2004, 37). This showcases the postmodern man's ethical ideal as the personal development under authenticity.

In the context of a lay moral subject, we started off the premise that attaining a certain level of self-esteem may be the starting point in a harmonious construction of the self. This self-esteem development should occur within parameters of a sense of balance which appears as an evaluation and ethical enrichment instrument. When we talk about the ethical relevance of self-esteem development, we should consider F. Clark Power's idea of the self-esteem source. He indicates authors who came to conclude "that the most delinquent youth report the highest self-esteem" (Power 2004, 57). His significant contribution is the need for the self and self-esteem discourse to include reference to moral self-approval or integrity. Given this background, he states that: "The teachers who told me to pay attention to the role of self-esteem in moral education were right. Not only children but all of us need the affirmation that ultimately comes from love. We must understand, however, that love does not confer or manufacture self-worth; it acknowledges the worth that is there. This original worth is given in our very existence; it comes with our very being. Some would say it is a gift of creative love" (Power 2004, 61).

We may say that one mode of symbolic construction for the moral subject may be that which brings self-esteem as self-concern. We have two openings in this context. One is toward classic philosophy. Michel Foucault emphasizes that the well-known urge by Socrates "Know yourself" could be revised to signify an ethical and existential assertion in which self-knowledge should be recovered as self-concern (Foucault 2004). Thus, we may secure the moral subject a starting point for self-responsibility and relation to the others. A second opening is toward the context of Western morality about love for oneself. Whether in Aristotle's terms "a man should be a lover of self" (Aristotle 1998, 199), or the love of self and love of other should belong to a register close to God's love, we have to understand that "being a lover of self means that a person is involved in a continuous self-creative activity" (Chazan 1998, 122). We are thus provided with a base to reconstruct personal self in the perspective of love of self, self-esteem, self-confidence and self-respect. Each of these

instances brought to light by the two dimensions are a good starting point for a moral action to extrapolate good at personal level by sharing it with the others. Both give us the possibility to develop authenticity instruments that Foucault terms technologies of the self, relevant in the disclosure, construction and development of moral subject.

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