

Self-development, philosophy, communication and leadership

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Sandu Frunză, *Ești o ființă autentică. Despre tine, filosofie, comunicare, dezvoltare personală și leadership* [You are an authentic human being. About you, philosophy, personal development and leadership], București: Editura Eikon, 2018, 192 p.

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Sandu Frunza is already known in the scientific space through his interdisciplinary approaches on philosophy and theology (see, for example: *O Antropologie mistică. Introducere în gândirea părintelui Stăniloae [A Mystical Anthropology. Introduction into the thought of Father Dumitru Stăniloae]*, 2nd edition. București: Editura Eikon, 2016; *Experiența religioasă în gândirea lui Dumitru Stăniloae. O etică relațională [The religious experience in the thinking thought of Dumitru Stăniloae. A relational ethics]*, Cluj-Napoca: Dacia Press, 2001; *O antropologie mistică. Introducere în gândirea Părintelui Stăniloae [A Mystical Anthropology. Introduction into the thinking thought of Father Dumitru Stăniloae]*, Craiova: Omniscope Press, 1996). Now, in his latest work, he offers to the reader an interesting and interdisciplinary approach which speaks both about communication, leadership, philosophy, personal development and spirituality.

Although is rather an anthology that brings together studies and articles previously published in journals like: *META: Research in Hermeneutics Phenomenology and Practical Philosophy*, *Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences*,

Revista de Cercetare și Intervenție Socială or *Journal for the Studies of Religions and Ideologies*, his approach has a clear structure, continuity, and a deep message, that shows to the reader how can improve his personal skills on communication, marketing and leadership, using philosophy and ethics as a main tool. As the author shows in the introductory part, the book was not conceived as a recipe or as a solution to the problems of the reader, but as a challenge to the reader to develop his way of thinking and to go deeper inside himself for finding solutions. Therefore, he says there:

“I did not intend to offer you there recipes or solutions. But I count on the fact that, reading this book that speaks about you, philosophy, communication and leadership, you will adopt a reflexive attitude, which will constitute the basis of your action of seeking for answers that you had no time to offer you up to now. These answers should offer you a better relationship with you, with the ones from your neighbourhood, with the community that you belong to... In this way you will became an informal leader, who has with him the important decision on his own life.” (p. 7).

Then, in the first chapter (p. 17-38), Sandu Frunză investigates the relationship between ethics, religion and personal development in the context of contemporary global crises, speaking about how the leadership problems, both in politics and religious space have contributed to the development of religious violence which can be seen clearly in the “myth of the saviour” (p. 19). Using information from his philosophical background, he speaks there about the post-modernism and its defining elements (p. 25), its moral challenges (developing some aspects already presented in: Sandu Frunză: “Secular bioethics and Euthanasia in a Democratic Public Space”, *European Journal of Science and Theology*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (2013): 1-9, but also from other articles and books published before), or about the elements that that should define the relationships between ethics and leadership (p. 27-35).

In the second one, entitled “Axiology, leadership and managerial ethics” (p. 39-58), he develops the aforementioned topic, and in the third one, he speaks about the way how a good combination between seduction, communication and leadership (p. 59-79), can contribute to the welfare of the society.

The last three chapters are then richer in philosophical information and contain a huge amount of philosophical approaches. In the 4th one, Sandu Frunza speaks about the way how the seeking for the sense of life can be used to improve the living of authenticity and leadership skills in public space (p. 80-106), in the 5th one, he focuses on the positive thinking as main tool of personal developing (p. 107-127). Here, although he uses references from philosophers like Patrick J. Sheeran (*Ethics in Public Administration. A philosophical Approach*, (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1993), or Hannah Arendt (*Între trecut și viitor. Opt exerciții de gândire politică [Between past and future. Eight exercises of political thinking]*, translated into Romanian by Louis Rinaldo Ulich, (București: Antet, 1997), but also from classical ones, he goes very close to the Christian Spirituality and its theological principles in his approach, demonstrating once again his love for Father Dumitru Stăniloae, the most important Romanian Theologian, and his ideas, but also for the theological investigation.

The last chapter, dedicated to the positive thinking seen as a moral and existential virtue (p. 128-256), comes even closer than the previous one, to the theological space, despite of its rich philosophical references. Developing ideas already expressed in some articles published before (like: Sandu Frunză, "Positive thinking as an experience of personal development", *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, Vol. 16, Issue 47 (Summer 2017): 19-31) and Sandu Frunză, "Axiology, Leadership and Management Ethics," *META: Research in Hermeneutics, Phenomenology and Practical Philosophy* Vol. IX, no. 1 (2017): 284-299), he uses philosophers like Descartes (p. 130) to define the human being and to present positive thinking as a defining element of his evolution.

The scientific dimension of the work, proved by the huge amount of quotations, infrapaginal notes and the bibliographical list (p. 157-178), is completed also by the index of names (p. 179-191) which ends the book. There must be also emphasized the fact that, although he uses specifically information from philosophical area, because of the way how they are underlined, is easy for each reader, even for a non-philosopher, to understand the message and content of the book.

Written in an interesting way, with a pleasant style, coherence and message, the book of Sandu Frunză: *You are an authentic human being. About you, philosophy, personal development and leadership*, published at Eikon Press from Bucharest in 2018, is, as we have tried to show, a very important research, useful both for theologians, philosophers and other people interested in leadership and personal development.

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