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RADICAL DEMAND AND SPONTANEITY IN K. E. LØGSTRUP'S PHENOMENOLOGICAL ETHICS WITH CONTINUOUS REFERENCE TO S. KIERKEGAARD

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Danish philosopher and theologian Knud Ejler Løgstrup (1905–1981) was professor of ethics and philosophy at the University of Aarhus. During his lifetime he published numerous books in phenomenology. In the context of the current article we should mention here *Norm and Spontaneity*, *Art and Ethics* and, the most significant, *The Ethical Demand* and *Controverting Kierkegaard*. The purpose of the current article is research the basic notions of his ontological ethics—the ethical imperative (radical, unspoken, one-sided and unfulfillable) and the sovereign expressions of life (trust, mercy, love, forgiveness, open speech, etc.). If the first one regards the demand for unselfish actions of the individual, then the second one—spontaneity and openness towards the other. In order to disclose these notions, the article confronts Løgstrup's interpretation with Søren Kierkegaard's (1813–1855) ethical stance, since the concept of sovereign expressions of life was offered to the reader in the book *Controverting Kierkegaard*. Løgstrup criticizes Kierkegaard for not paying attention to the real life phenomena and concentrating upon the solely religious self-reflection of the nuclear abstract individual. The article consists of introduction, two parts and conclusion. The introduction sets the stage for further investigation giving the historical background, tracing influences by the leading phenomenologists of the 20th century (a special role here is assigned to Hans Lipps, Martin Heidegger and Frederic Gogarten). The first part is devoted to the explication of the ethical imperative, while the second part—to the sovereign expressions of life and human interdependence. The research is summarized in the conclusion, stressing possibility to apply Løgstrup's phenomenological approach in nursing and psychiatry.

Keywords: Knud Ejler Løgstrup, Søren Kierkegaard, ethical demand, sovereign expressions of life, spontaneity, interdependence.

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РАДИКАЛЬНОЕ ТРЕБОВАНИЕ И СПОНТАННОСТЬ В ФЕНОМЕНОЛОГИЧЕСКОЙ ЭТИКЕ К. Э. ЛЁГСТРУПА С ПОСТОЯННЫМ ОБРАЩЕНИЕМ К С. КЪЕРКЕГОРУ

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Датский философ и теолог Кнуд Эйлер Лёгstrup (1905–1981) был профессором этики и философии в Орхусском университете. За свою жизнь он опубликовал множество книг по феноменологии. В контексте настоящей статьи мы должны упомянуть «Норму и спонтанность», «Искусство и этику» и особенно «Этическое требование» и «Опровергая Кьеркегора». Целью настоящей статьи является анализ ключевых понятий его онтологической этики: этического императива (радикального, негласного, одностороннего и невыполнимого) и форм самовыражения жизни (доверия, милосердия, любви, прощения, открытой речи и др.). И если первый связан с требованием от личности действовать вне собственных интересов, последние относятся к спонтанности и открытости в отношении другого. Для того чтобы раскрыть эти понятия, прочтение Лёгstrup в статье сопоставляется с этической позицией Серена Кьеркегора (1813–1855), поскольку концепция самостоятельных проявлений жизни была предложена читателю в книге «Опровергая Кьеркегора». Лёгstrup критикует Кьеркегора за то, что тот не уделяет внимания явлениям реальной жизни и сосредотачивается лишь на религиозной саморефлексии абстрактного субъекта. Статья содержит введение, две основных части и заключение. Во введении задано основание для дальнейшего исследования и восстановлен исторический контекст: очерчено влияние ведущих феноменологов XX века (особое место отведено Хансу Липпсу, Мартину Хайдеггеру, Фридриху Гогартену). Первая часть посвящена экспликации этического императива, вторая — формам самовыражения жизни и человеческой взаимозависимости. В заключении подведены итоги исследования и обоснована применимость феноменологического подхода Лёгstrup в уходе за пациентами и в психиатрии.

Ключевые слова: Кнуд Эйлер Лёгstrup, Сёрен Кьеркегор, этическое требование, формы самовыражения жизни, спонтанность, взаимозависимость.

Although Løgstrup's work covers a range of topics and issues, at the centre of his thinking lies a series of fundamental questions in ethics: what ethical obligations do we have for others? How extensive are those obligations? What is the basis for those obligations? How do those obligations relate to other requirements, such as those of prudence, law, and social conventions? And should we see our relation to others as involving obligations at all, or is this just a poor substitute for the relation of love?

ROBERT STERN

The Radical Demand in Løgstrup's Ethics

1. INTRODUCTION

Phenomenology already from the beginning has aimed at trying to be as truthful to the field of research (things themselves) as possible and to avoid any ontological and methodological presuppositions that would not let the researched object to reveal itself as it is. It has led to a continuous critical rethinking and redefinition of phenomenology and its goals that has considerably reshaped it that has ensured that phenomenology is one of the most enduring and fruitful philosophical movements that exist today. Phenomenology is constantly at its margins pushing itself to and testing its limits. This radicalism inherent in phenomenology in its attempts to come to its margins shows itself not only in going beyond the already drawn limits of phenomenology by redefining them critically engaging with itself and other traditions in philosophy and sciences, but also in one of the most dominant trends in the contemporary phenomenology, namely, in its interest in phenomena that exceed intentional experience and the horizon of meaning. Since the focus of the current article is ethics of Danish phenomenologist K. E. Løgstrup, a special attention will be paid to certain aspects of ontological ethics, that is, to the concepts of “the highest good” and “the ethical demand”. One basic trait of the phenomenological approach is that it always takes its point of departure in lived experience and what is given in it. Phenomenology refrains from metaphysical explanations or awaits the discussion of the metaphysical issues until the world of experience has been elucidated. Neither does it dwell upon theoretical systems of ideas and their validity. Instead, the interest of phenomenology is directed towards the investigation of lived experience and its content. The phenomenologist is accordingly not concerned with worldviews but with the lived and experienced world, not with religious belief-systems but with religious experiences, not with ethical systems but with ethical experiences, etc. Consequently, the objective of the method used is not to prove but to show. The person who gave

the ethical demand a lasting place in the study of ethics was the Danish theologian and philosopher Knud Ejler Løgstrup, who placed the ethical demand at the center of ethics in his seminal monograph *The Ethical Demand* (Løgstrup, 1997). His point of departure is the reciprocal dependency of human beings in the world. Corresponding to these circumstances are certain sovereign and spontaneous life-expressions like confidence, sincerity and mercy, together with their negative modifications distrust, hypocrisy and mercilessness. For Løgstrup, it is an ontological determination of human beings that they originally and normally have confidence in other human beings. In relying upon another person, human beings are at the mercy of the other. It is, therefore, necessary to develop openness for the other person and to always be prepared to reconsider one's own understanding of life. In practice, however, human selfishness puts obstacles in the way.

Løgstrup (1905–1981) has exhibited a significant influence upon the thought in his native Denmark¹, and in Scandinavia, more generally, though his international recognition among English speaking readers has come about only within last couple decades due to the translations of his works (selected chapters mostly) and emerging secondary literature.² Though, in contrary to that, German translations of his major works appeared during Løgstrup's life time done by his wife Rosemarie Løgstrup (1914–2005) whom he met while attending Heidegger's lectures in Freiburg. This situation can be summarized in the quite ironic description "Løgstrup as world-famous in Denmark" that stresses the gap between perception of him within and outside (or the lack of perception thereof) Denmark. It is to say, that though Løgstrup was virtually unknown elsewhere he was the one that brought phenomenology to Denmark. Formally educated as a theologian in Copenhagen, he also read widely in philosophy, and used the opportunity to travel before the Second World War to

¹ The most significant K.E.Løgstrup's publications in Danish regarding the current research are: "Kunst og etik" (Løgstrup, 1961); "Norm og spontanitet" (Løgstrup, 1972); "Vidde og prægning. Sprogfilosofiske. Metafysik I" (Løgstrup, 1976); "Skabelse og tilintetgørelse. Religionsfilosofiske betragtninger. Metafysik IV" (Løgstrup, 1978); "Kunst og erkendelse: kunstfilosofiske betragtninger. Metafysik II" (Løgstrup, 1983); "Ophav og omgivelse : betragtninger over historie og natur. Metafysik III" (Løgstrup, 1998); "Den etiske fordring" (Løgstrup, 2010); "Opgør med Kierkegaard" (Løgstrup, 2013).

² English translations of Løgstrup's works: *Ethical Demand* (Løgstrup, 1997); *Beyond Ethical Demand* (Løgstrup, 2007); *Metaphysics (vol.1, vol.2)* (Løgstrup, 1995); *Ethical Concepts and Problems* (Løgstrup, 2020a); *Kierkegaard's and Heidegger's Analysis of Existence and its Relation to Proclamation* (Løgstrup, 2020b). Besides that, there are books in English devoted to the author: *The Radical Demand in Løgstrup's Ethics* (Stern, 2019); *What is Ethically Demanded? K. E. Løgstrup's Philosophy of Moral Life* (Fink & Stern, 2017); *Concern for the Other* (Andersen & Van Kooten Niekerk, 2007).

study with Martin Heidegger, Henri Bergson, Hans Lipps, Friedrich Gogarten and other philosophers. Of these, Heidegger, Lipps, and Gogarten had the most influence, and drew him further into the post-Husserlian tradition of phenomenology, more specifically, into the phenomenological studies of everyday phenomena (Stern, 2019). In 1942 he defended his doctoral thesis entitled *The Epistemological Conflict Between Transcendental Idealism and Theology*. After a few years serving as a pastor in the Danish state church, he became professor of ethics and philosophy of religion in the theology faculty at the University of Aarhus in 1943, where he spent the rest of his academic career. He published his first major work *The Ethical Demand* in 1956, followed by books and articles in ethics, theology, metaphysics and philosophy of art. Still, even today most of the works apart from *The Ethical Demand* are translated only fragmentary, but apparently the interest of the world philosophers' community is rising. Partly it is due to that fact that the Løgstrup's approach is used in the practical medicine, in treating psychiatric patients, for example. "Ethical reasoning involves professional decision-making and attentive listening to the patient's need to express themselves. However, patients are often unable to express what is needed, it is the responsibility of the physiotherapist to sense, hear, clarify and interpret what is called for. There is a foundational vulnerability for the patient and therapist in the therapeutic situation, where physical touch is embedded in sensuous intertwining. Such situations offer significant opportunities for a practice tuned into what is at stake for the patient" (Sviland et al., 2020, 7). The above mentioned authors stress that Løgstrup's significance lies in four main areas: (1) attentiveness to tuned sensation of the patient's situation and the therapeutic context; (2) suspension of judgement or readiness to perceive meaning during patients' utterances; (3) these new embodied experiences during physiotherapy leads to self-cognition and new existential meaning; (4) ethical claims during complex therapy. All these factors account for the actuality of Løgstrup's phenomenological ethics, each of them is worth of further pursuit, but this lies outside the scope of the present investigation. Rather, our intention is to concentrate upon the relation between the concepts of ethical demand and sovereign expressions of life by juxta positioning Løgstrup's and Kierkegaard's views. It is of no surprise since Kierkegaard plays a special role in articulating Løgstrup's position; the concept of sovereign expressions of life for the first time was presented in his book *Controverting Kierkegaard*, parts of which have been translated in English and included in Løgstrup's text collection *Beyond the Ethical Demand* (Løgstrup, 2007). Thus, the current article proceeds in the following way: the ethical imperative—spontaneity of the sovereign expressions of life and intersubjectivity.

2. ETHICAL IMPERATIVE

When thinking of Løgstrup's ethical demand, especially its radical or imperative character, it seems logical to ask a question about Kant's ethics influence on the author. However, we have to say that this connection is rather indirect, namely, Løgstrup represents the post-Kantian approach to ethics, centered around the so-called "ordinances" or, in other words, everyday phenomena and human interactions. Løgstrup criticizes Kant's epistemological logics as early as in 1942 in his doctoral dissertation, but the summarized view can be found in his article *The Anthropology of Kant's Ethics* (Løgstrup, 2017), a predecessor of this opus magnum *The Ethical Demand*. In his view, the determining factor in ethics is the one of the human relations, while Kant reflects on the insulated (isolated) individual regardless his social interactions and real life situations. He writes: "Kant has nothing else and nothing more to say about human nature. He neglects the ethically decisive fact that human life is a life in certain ordinances" (Løgstrup, 2017). Løgstrup's imperative, in contrary, emphasizes the categorical ethical demand made upon us by the spontaneous meeting with the other person. Løgstrup's analysis of the ethical demand provides four characteristics that needs more detailed exploration, namely, the ethical demand is silent, one-sided, radical, and unfulfillable. Let us dwell on each of these points in brief.

The silence of demand. Although at a first glance it seems that the silent demand might mean the tacit obedience of the majority, Løgstrup's interpretation is much more complicated and far from the obvious. That the demand is unspoken, first of all, signifies that it cannot be captured in any fixed form in language or culture. Any cultural understanding of the ethical demand and any verbal attempt to formulate it in a concrete action-guiding norm are bound to fail. Any formulation of a cultural moral norm or set of cultural moral norms will always have to answer to and are conditioned by a pre-cultural ethical standard, namely the unspoken ethical demand. It is an eparchy of each particular individual to interpret this commandment. And the essence of this demand lies precisely in that it tells what a person's reaction should be, not what a person should do. "It is of the essence of the demand that with such insight, imagination, and understanding as he or she possesses a person must figure out for him or herself that the demand requires." (Løgstrup, 1997) Moreover, the demand is always other-focused—"...everything which an individual has opportunity to do and say in his relation to the other person is to be done and said not for his or her own sake but for the sake of him or her whose life is in his hand" (Løgstrup, 1997, 44). This entails that ethical responsibility is determined by the very fact of the presence of the other, but, at the same time our freedom consists

of the fact that we can choose to act or not act according to the demand. Thus, the source of this demand is the very fact of the existence of other, rather than the commands of God, or abstract principles governing practical reason, or social norms, or considerations of rights and justice. But what about demand's practical implications? Here we can speak about care ethics. Care ethics' is a very important approach in medical ethics and nursing, focusing on the needs of individual patients in their particular situation.

The one-sidedness of the ethical demand implies a certain understanding of life as given to us as a gift, whether this implies a giver or not, whether this valuation and high praise of life is accurate or not. He writes:

The demand receives its one-sidedness from the understanding that a person's life is an ongoing gift, so that we will never be in a position to demand something in return for what we do. That life has been given to us is something that cannot be demonstrated empirically; it can only be accepted in faith—or else denied. (Løgstrup, 1997, 123)

In other words, the one-sidedness means that that there could not be any bargaining, discussions, negotiations; the ethical responsibility is grounded in the individual's ability to be responsible. Besides that, the one-sidedness of demand implies that human beings are not in a position to control their existence. Hans Fink summarizes this in the following way: "The ethical demand has its source in the fact of our mutual dependency, but ethically speaking the demand isolates you; the responsibility is yours. Our lives cannot help being, to some extent, symbiotic; the ethical demand forces our individuality upon us" (Fink, 2007, 18).

The ethical demand is radical in that it is unconditional, or absolute, not conditioned by our prior relations to others, it is principally neutral starting position or, more precisely, phenomenological *epoché*. The radical character of the demand is visible also in its one-sidedness, mentioned above in the article. "The radicality of the demand consists, further, in the fact that it asks me to take care of the other person's life not only when to do so strengthens me but also when it is very unpleasant, because it intrudes disturbingly into my own existence" (Løgstrup, 1997, 44). The radicality also is proved by the fact that other persons have no right to impose it upon us or any other living being, it is rather to place their destiny in our hands knowingly or not knowingly. At the same time Løgstrup concludes, that the demand gives no instructions how it has to be followed, the choice of the course of actions towards the other in being placed in the hands of the doer alone.

What is demanded of us *cannot be fulfilled*—exactly because it is demanded of us. Writing about this aspect of the ethical demand, Løgstrup was fully aware of pos-

sible difficulties that can arise in its interpretation: is there any sense of the demand if it is unfulfillable by definition? Do not these conditions annul the demand? He writes:

On the one hand, it is impossible to escape the demand, inasmuch as we cannot dismiss the fact out of which the demand arises, namely, that one person has been delivered over into the hands of another person. On the other hand, we distort the demand through that unnaturalness in which alone we are able—only apparently—to fulfill it. The demand is impossible of fulfillment. (Løgstrup, 1997, 165)

How, then, we as human beings can act within limits of these constraints? In this sense Løgstrup's ontological ethics can be viewed as an analysis concerned not with what we should do in the world, but rather with what can happen to us in our interdependent life. In other words, a person cannot will himself to do good for other, applying one or another normative stance, he should act not knowing if his actions are ethically right or wrong. The concern is foremost for the other, not for oneself.

A one-sided and unfulfillable demand, if it is to be accepted, must be true—and in fact insists that it is true. It not only says what a person *ought* to do; is also says *who* a human being is. (Løgstrup, 1997, 170)

Kierkegaard understands human existence as basically defined by the infinite demand, though different from the one described by Løgstrup. According to Løgstrup, Kierkegaard construes the infinite demand on the basis of the absolute difference between God and humanity. Therefore, Kierkegaard's demand seems to be the one the solely religious nature. Kierkegaard's ethical consciousness presupposes, first, the reflective overcoming of the initial aesthetic immediacy, and, second, the act of individual's choice of himself via the act of resignation. In contrast to these premises, Løgstrup defines it as ethical demand and objects to Kierkegaard's opposition of religious to immediacy. Kierkegaard never formulated his ethical imperative (it would be hardly possible in a view of his elusive authorship, striving to be "without authority"), thus this construct "ethical imperative" comes by proxy, namely, on the basis of his ethical position as a whole. The starting point could be two negative propositions regarding Kierkegaard's ethics: (1) there is no ethics in Kierkegaard in the sense of the western rationalistic tradition; (2) the teleological suspension of the ethical in the "Fear and trembling" could be interpreted as the direct refutation of the Kantian ethics. Whereas, the positive proposition centers around what I call the "Kierkegaard's categorical imperative," and that is "to become oneself, to become subjective." Tracing the ethical themes in Kierkegaard could be as easy, as it is difficult since he writes about it a great deal, discerning rather different aspects of the ethical.

Thus, in the second part of the *Either/Or* (Kierkegaard, 1987b) two significant ethical themes are the following: first, relation between immediacy and reflection (immediacy of the aesthetic stage characterized by inability to reflect upon the personal situation—to flow with the current where does it takes), whereas the ethical stage signifies advance of the reflective activity, marked by the personal responsibility; second, the theme of choice; it seems that he develops it on rather rationalistic basis in contrary to the interpretation of choice as an act of passion, related to the notion of leap. Now the quote from *Either/Or*: “The first form of the choice takes is a complete isolation. For in choosing myself I sever myself from my relationship from the whole world until, in this separation, I end in an abstract identity. When the individual has chosen himself in respect of his freedom, he is by that very fact active. Yet his action has no relation to the surrounding world, for the individual has completely done away with the latter and is only for himself. The life-view here presented is, however, an ethical view” (Kierkegaard, 1987b, 534). As some of Kierkegaard’s commentators, for example, Ronald Green (1992) admit, position taken by the Judge William is in a sense embodiment of some aspects of Kant’s practical philosophy. But, still, in no way this can be called an attempt to write something like metaphysics of morals. In the *Philosophical Fragments* (Kierkegaard, 1985) the matter of the ethical is viewed through the lens of the absolute paradox. The paradox here signifies several things vital for a man in his process of individuation—first of all, the paradox signifies the paradoxical existence, namely, that choosing the ethical (the universal), a man, nevertheless, has to live it in the particular that, in itself, could be the endless source of despair. Moreover, the other use of the paradox is the one that makes it possible to doubt the validity of the ethical for Kierkegaard. It is to speak about the religious paradox, the overcoming the ethical and surrendering to the unknown, unspeakable (hence, the theme of silence), the Absolutely other. This seems to lead to conclusion that there is only one, the religious ethics, or even some kind of inexplicit religious thinking (though it may be doubted on the good ground). In the *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* (Kierkegaard, 1992) the theme of the ethical receives a fair treatment in the discussion the ethical stage of existence, as the first stage of reflection or moving away from the immediacy of senses. This involves the concept of the ethical as *interesse* as being in between, between the universal and particular, eternal and temporal, aesthetic and religious, as a movement away from the empirical sensual data. If this sounds in a sense Kantian, then in sharp contrast to that stands the metaphor of leap, as the act of the personal passionate existential choice. In *Fear and Trembling* the whole story of the Abraham, Isak and their trip to the Mount Moriah seems to be the teleological suspension of the ethical in the view of the religious de-

mand. It is in the sharp contrast to the claim of the universality of morals as it is a demand of absolute surrender. But still, according to Kierkegaard, even this is a realm of the individual choice to leap or not to leap into the unknown. In the view of this, we can conclude that Kierkegaard's ethical demand (imperative) revolves around the individual's choice to choose oneself, to become subjective. Kierkegaard understands that "one has to do his duty" but not for the duty sake, but in order to interpret himself into an existence *in concreto*. In order to live in the ethical sphere of existence, the individual must to appropriate the ethical "universal" in his own existence and thereby bring about the transformation of the self in actuality. This is the so-called intensification of the subjectivity. One's ethical possibility is not subject to doubt: it must be chosen or not chosen. This, in turn, entails the person's responsibility for his choice. The demand to become subjective is a counterpart of the saying that the truth is subjectivity, it does not mean that all truth is subjective or that the true thing is only the one man knows to be subjective. Rather it is a more radical notion, that in the intensification of the subjectivity in an authentic ethical existence, he believes that truth is being revealed in temporality, and it acts as a corrective to the empirical situation of the man in the world. Still, in Løgstrup's view, Kierkegaard through his ethical demand performs extraction of the individual out of societal relations, this can be defined as self-obsessive, self-centered existence. "Kierkegaard is mistaken in thinking that only through religious reflection can the human person accomplish the task of becoming a self, as though we were not equipped with the sovereign expressions of life that accomplish it for us" (Løgstrup, 2007, 54).

3. SOVEREIGNTY, SPONTANEITY AND INTERSUBJECTIVITY

Although Kierkegaardian themes and ideas permeate Løgstrup's works, his relation to Kierkegaard was fraught and often polemical. Rather, Løgstrup develops his theory of the sovereign expressions of life expressly in contrast with certain dimensions of Kierkegaard's thought. He begins to elucidate his theory of the sovereign expressions of life in terms of a contrast with Kierkegaard's understanding of the individual's self-cognition through the sovereign expression of life. As it was noted earlier, presence of the other person has an effect on us, because our attention is drawn away from our own imagery and fabrications towards the other person (this is implied in the one-sidedness and radicality of the ethical demand). "The sovereign expression of life draws its content from the specific situation and the relation to the other, of their actual circumstances and history" (Løgstrup, 2007, 52). Løgstrup states that in the sovereign expression of life man is immediate and free, since he open speech his

self-obsessive status and reflects for the good of the other person, rather than for the good of one's own ego. At the same time, the sovereign character of these manifestations precisely lies in recognition, that they cannot be applied from outside. He concludes:

The expression of life cannot be applied, but can only be realized, as I realize myself in it. This is due to its sovereign character. It does not rigidify the situation but frees it up, transforms it, which is why the individual must involve himself in it throughout. (Løgstrup, 2007, 53)

The fact that they are ontological means that they are rooted in interdependence, i.e. that they are rooted in the other person. The other person is the immediate origin of the sovereign expressions of life. This is exactly what *sovereignty* means. The sovereignty of the sovereign expressions of life lies in their power to penetrate man's self-confinement. Speaking of Kierkegaard, Løgstrup claims that the Dane has never paid attention to the phenomenon of sovereignty, since his interest lies with the atomic individual. He writes: "Kierkegaard never spared the sovereign expressions of life so much as a thought. And this is no accident. He is forced to leave them out of account in order to preserve the role of self-reflection" (Løgstrup, 2007). In our opinion, it is not exactly so, since Kierkegaard in his existence-communication performs a double movement—the first stage is the self-reflection, whereas the second one—turning towards the other. Still, we have to keep in mind that some exaggeration of Kierkegaard's position is necessary for Løgstrup to articulate his own position. To do that he goes from the opposite—phenomena characterized as "obsessive" or "encircling" (this is how he understands to be the Kierkegaardian individual), contrasting them with the sovereign expressions: distrust (instead of trust), hate (instead of love), reserve (instead of openness), despair (instead of hope). The most important sovereign expression of life for Løgstrup is trust. He first introduces the notion of trust in his work on ethical demand, saying that to "is to lay oneself open" (Løgstrup, 1997, 9). It is, in other words, to surrender oneself to the other, to let oneself be exposed and vulnerable to that other. This means that trust is not caused or constituted by the individual, but rather it is an influence or impression caused by the fellow men in which he is temporarily relieved of his reservations, self-centeredness and self-reflection, thus enabling him to be immediately captured by the fellow men instead of being captured by the own ego. Here the crucial role is played by passivity. This is to say, that the cause of trust is to be found in other being. Thus, the concern for the other is the individual's status of being concerned by others. He writes: "We would simply not be able to live; our life would be impaired and wither away if we were in advance

to distrust one another, if we were to suspect the other of thievery and falsehood from the very outset” (Løgstrup, 1997, 8–9). The further elaboration of the theme of the sovereign expressions of life can be found in Løgstrup’s later works, mainly in the *Controverting Kierkegaard, Norm and Spontaneity, System and Symbol*. If the ethical demand belongs within the sphere of morality, then sovereign expressions of life are pre-reflexive and spontaneous in the sense that they are our intuitive reactions, unless we choose some other model of behavior, as well as they are pre-moral in the sense that they are pre-judgmental, motivated by a spontaneous preoccupation with the needs of the other without reflecting on oneself as a moral person. Kierkegaard writes: “The sovereign expressions of life, being spontaneous, are pre-moral. Our attitude of mind is inseparable from what we seek to bring about through our agency since the motivational state consists in purposing the result of our agency” (Løgstrup, 2007, 77). Apart from trust there are other manifestations of sovereignty, such as love, openness of speech, mercy, sincerity, hope, frankness, sympathy, compassion, fidelity and forgiveness (still trust being the most important one). It has to be noted that these expressions are related to emotions or attitudes aroused in us by the presence of others, and on others—by presence of us. In other words, this is encounter with other persons as living beings with a fundamental openness and dependency on them that accounts for meaningfulness of our world, as well as our existence accounts for meaning of the world of others. “The sovereign expression of life preempts us; we are seized by it. Therein lies its spontaneity” (Løgstrup, 2007, 84). Let us take a deeper look into two examples—mercy as sovereign expression and conversation as exposition of sovereignty.

To explain phenomenon of mercy Løgstrup contrasts it with the one of duty. According to him, duty is a motive that demands to be realized, internalized and acted upon it. Mercy, on the other hand, is grounded in real life phenomena (neglected by Kierkegaard, in Løgstrup’s view), where the intended outcome of the act constitutes its motivation. “Duty is not a phenomenon that can subsist on its own, it is merely a motive which demands to be realized in some action which the agent remains reluctant to perform until the motive is strong enough. Mercy exists only as realization, an act that is motivated by what it seeks to bring about” (Løgstrup, 2007, 77). Mercy, in contrast to duty, is spontaneous by its very nature since least calculation would destroy it entirely, and this applies to all sovereign manifestations.

Spontaneity is not something of which there can be more or less, it must be all in all if the sovereign expressions of life is to prevail at all. Its radicalness consists not in any masterly feat but simply in the fact that the least ulterior motive is excluded. (Løgstrup, 2007, 85)

But then how can we notice these phenomena in the real life situations? For Løgstrup, the clear cut exposition of sovereign phenomena is conversation, since in the very moment we address someone we place a demand upon him. It is not to demand for immediate response or reaction, rather—we immerse ourselves in conversation and do not belong solely to ourselves anymore.

What happens is that simply in addressing the other, irrespective of the content of what we say, a certain note is struck through which we, as it were, step out of ourselves in order to exist in the speech relationship. For this reason, the point of the demand—though unarticulated—is that the speaker is accepted. (Løgstrup, 1997, 15)

This requirement spring from the speech itself not in the sense of persuasion, but rather in the sense of openness of the field and giving ourselves up in the conversation. The sovereign expressions of life as spontaneous phenomena belong to the sphere of immediacy. As such they constitute, for Løgstrup, a positive way of living—fulfillment of the sovereign expressions of life already involve a true relationship with God and does not require giving up self-reflectivity. In this context, Løgstrup's sovereign expression of life is a counterpart to Kierkegaard's notion of the authentic self. According to him, instead of being corned about becoming his true-self, a man has only to realize himself in the sovereign expression of life, and it is that expression of life—rather than reflection—that secures for a person his being himself. Thus, the sovereign expressions of life assume the function of conveying authentic existence which Kierkegaard attributed to the religious reflection. Still, in our opinion, Løgstrup's interpretation of Kierkegaard is somewhat centered around Kierkegaard's religious reflections only (though not without reason, of course). We would like to propose the concept of crop rotation as philosophical counterpart to Løgstrup's expressions of life.

The concept of crop rotation designates the loosening process not of soil, but of soul, in order new and fresh sprouts of spirituality can break out to be cultivated. This process, for Kierkegaard, is vitally important for becoming the authentic individuality. It is always the process of creative nature, since it requires abrogation of the standard-type thinking and self-perception, as well as courage to be in the world. The crop rotation can, in Kierkegaard, means two things: (1) the constant change of the land and (2) the change of crop and the mode of cultivation. Thus, the cultivation for him means not looking for ever new modes of self-expressions and ways of living, but rather—for the inward deepening. For Kierkegaard, it is of the utmost importance to acknowledge man's situatedness in the world, and this is the beginning of cultivation of one's spirit. The world is being experienced as having certain claims on us—by other people, by the society, by our own body, and only rarely we ask ourselves—are these

claims meaningful to us as individuals. The bored individual detaches himself from his life situation. Therefore, the source of such detachment is reflection that creates contradiction between the man and the world and puts out the claim that the world should reveal its meaning or reason. Increasingly, the individual confronts the world as totality of equally significant mute facts. In the essay “Crop rotation” from *Either/Or* (Kierkegaard, 1987a) the aesthete A suggests the answer to this boredom—that is, cultivation of the interesting. This, in A’s opinion, is a process of crop rotation—the external enjoyment that bring with this the deepening of despair and self-defeating race for novelty. But what about cultivation of the spirit? The answer Kierkegaard gives is the following:

The method I propose does not consist in changing the soil but, like proper crop rotation, consists in changing the method of cultivation and the kinds of crop. Here at once is the principle of limitation, the sole saving principle in the world. The more a person limits himself, the more resourceful he becomes. (Kierkegaard, 1987a, 264)

The intensive rotation requires ever new inventions. Something quite ordinary provides the point of departure, which then is endowed by the individual with an extraordinary significance. This then is something the man himself brings to the situation. Only during an idle year can the field recover, regain its strength. Only during an idle year can thinking restore itself to its original occupation: to think the in-between, think existence. This is the time when mental weeds take over. This is the time when “the accidental outside a person corresponds to the arbitrariness within” (Kierkegaard, 1987a, 300). Discovering this is the self-disclosure, and this, in its turn is the act of the creative spontaneity. Despite the common interest of both authors in the theme of spontaneity and obvious similarities, there persists a great divide—if Løgstrup is interested in the ordinances or real life occurrences and men’s partaking in them, then Kierkegaard—in the authenticity of the individual *per se*. Then what about possibility of intersubjectivity in Løgstrup and Kierkegaard?

Løgstrup’s conception of intersubjectivity rests upon the ontological fact that the human existence is originally dependent on the existence of others and deeply intertwined with the lives of others. This involvement is by no means accidental, it is not something that is happening to us, since it may or may not happen at all. Thus, this network of relations is ontologically primary, whereas human individuality is secondary. In the ontological sense, according to Løgstrup, we are not sovereign beings. If thus, then—under condition of the ethical demand—are not we losing our freedom of will and sovereignty? Trying to solve this dilemma Løgstrup introduces the concept of interrelatedness or mutual dependence. All human relations involve

the aspect of power—we as objects of ethical demand are in the mercy of others, at the same time others are in our power. The ethical demand accentuates the negative, restrictive aspect of our interdependence, whereas the spontaneous manifestations of life are the positive sides of interdependence. But what about social norms we have to live by every day? What comes first—the norm or the spontaneous expression of life? In Løgstrup's opinion, the expressions are primary. He admits:

An ethical norm does not become fundamental because it is general or abstract, but because it is founded in a spontaneous expression of life—which applies no less to a concrete and specific norm than it does to an abstract and general norm. (Løgstrup, 2007, 129)

To sum up, the human interrelation is the basic precondition of being ethical.

In Kierkegaard's philosophy the concept of interrelation plays an important role as well, still in a different key. It is to say that togetherness for Kierkegaard takes a form of inter-existentiality, since each and every self must turn towards oneself, must establish oneself prior to reaching out to others, there is always something left behind that cannot be communicated fully. Still, by apprehending his or her actuality on the ethical level, the individual becomes involved in a social life albeit sometimes in a little limited manner.

4. CONCLUSION

In the times of the contemporary social turmoil, the question of ethical responsibility, authentic individual existence, spontaneity of expressions and confirmation to certain norms of cohabitation become of the special importance. This is why the works by the two great Danish thinkers (philosophers, theologians) Knud Eljer Løgstrup (1905–1981) and Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855) do not lose their actuality. Løgstrup's writings on ethics for long time have been in the disposal only of the Scandinavian reading public; this accounts for the metaphor “the world famous in Denmark,” meaning the author's theoretical impact and rootedness in the European phenomenological tradition (his personal relation to the great phenomenologists of the 20th century), as well as the significance of his findings for nursing and psychiatry practitioners. We believe that it is a ripe time to return to his works when reflecting on the impact of ethics in different realms of human activities or, in other words, ethics reaching outside its traditional scope of questions. Løgstrup's ontological ethics is grounded in the human interrelatedness, in the social network that we are being born into, and, the most important, the radical ethical demand imposed upon us. Still, it

does not mean that human beings are regarded as helpless marionettes in the hands of some higher power, be it called fate or God; it is because, according Løgstrup, human beings are capable of the spontaneous sovereign expressions of life, such as trust, mercy, forgiveness, open speech, etc., that demonstrate their essential openness to others, dependency on these relations. The ethical reflections of Kierkegaard, for Løgstrup, are of the high importance as the texts by criticizing which he formulates his own ethical maxims. This is the case when criticism is more telling than the praise, or, rather we can characterize this discussion as praiseful criticism. Løgstrup admits that the main misgivings of Kierkegaard's approach are the following: first, Kierkegaard stresses the insurmountable abyss between the immediate and the eternal, not paying attention to the real life occurrences or ordinances; second, the Kierkegaardian individual gains his actuality by the religious self-reflection, thus losing, according to Løgstrup, spontaneity of feeling and reaction (in our opinion, though, Kierkegaard's concept of crop rotation could be regarded as manifestation of spontaneity); third, Kierkegaard views individuals as nuclear entities, rather than mutually dependent and intertwined beings, thus his position can be described not as intersubjectivity, but as inter-existentiality.

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