Rousseau and Goethe: Developing Ethical Leadership and Promoting the Right Balance Between Reason and Sentiment

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Developing ethical leadership in the organizational setting is not an easy task. The scope and depth of the challenge will largely depend on the way the ethical component of leadership is defined. Even if we could use philosophical (ethical) theories to circumscribe what's ethical leadership all about, we are facing multiple theories. Each of them is opening a very different perspective for considering ethical issues and resolving ethical conflicts and dilemmas. The development of ethical leadership could contribute to build up an ethically-based work environment (Mayer *et al*. 2010, 13). So, developing ethical leadership could have very concrete effects on the organizational life and culture. That's why organizational members should cautiously identify moral paradigms that could fit to the way they are dreaming about the future of their organization.

The Age of the Enlightenment probably extended from 1630s (Galileo and Descartes) to Hegel's death (1831). It focused on reason as the primary source of authority (reason as the power for moral autonomy), and thus reduced the social and political influence of heteronomous institutions (such as the Roman-Catholic Church). Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) was one of the leading figures of the Age of Enlightenment. Johann Wolfgang Goethe (1749-1832) was also an influential author of the Age of Enlightenment. Goethe was agreeing with Rousseau about three basic concerns. In each case, we will see how such topics could be applied in the organizational setting, particularly in the organizational life and culture: making Goodness-itself and human good interconnected (re-defining organizational ethics), unveiling the process of becoming-who-we-are (in the workplace), and describing the continuous search for human happiness (in the organizational life).

Making Goodness-Itself and Human Good Interconnected:
Re-defining Organizational Ethics

Rousseau strongly believed that human being is naturally good. It implies that kind passions should be much more influential than negative passions, at least in the natural state (Rousseau 1971a, 249). That's why the civil (social) state has to be strictly linked to the natural state: education could help us to develop kind passions and better control negative passions. However, Rousseau acknowledged that society we are living in is perverting us (Rousseau 1966a, 308). Historical records are usually focusing on social and political evils rather than the basic goodness of humankind (Rousseau 1966a, 308). Realizing good deeds is the way to become a good person (Rousseau, 1966a 325). Practicing virtue is much more important than knowing what it's all about. Practicing truth, temperance, and courage makes us virtuous persons (Rousseau 1971, 120). Being virtuous requires to be prudent at any time. Physical courage could always be enlightened by the basic virtue of prudence. Moral courage also implies to remain morally prudent. Moral courage is linked to one's moral convictions: being morally courageous is being able to safeguard our moral convictions, when facing ethical conflicts and dilemmas. Being morally prudent requires not to embrace a given moral paradigm without unveiling its advantages, challenges, and weaknesses. Ethical leaders who have moral courage (when facing ethical dilemma and conflicts) could reach a more fulfilling psychological development level. They could serve as moral role models. They could even reduce organizational deviance and strengthen organizational ethics and culture (Gok et al. 2017, 271).

When we are putting social virtues into practice, we are expressing our love towards humankind. We are loving social justice. We are then proving that we are ready to improve ourselves. Social justice is the virtue that contributes most to common good (Rousseau 1966a, 325, 328-329, 362). The sentiment of justice is innate: it is an integral part of humankind (Rousseau 1966a, 362). Justice cannot be isolated from goodness. Something that is good cannot be unjust (Rousseau 1966a, 367). Consciousness is the innate principle of justice and virtue we are using to judge our own actions as well as others' behaviors (Rousseau 1966a, 376). Every sentiment that is innate has to be strengthened and developed through educational means (Fermon 1994, 434). Educational practices as well as activities of ethical raising consciousness in the workplace could benefit from Goethe's intuitive approach of knowledge processes (Franses and Wride 2015). If the sentiment of justice is really innate, then it is necessarily involved in all aspects of our own existence. Why are there so many expressions of injustice, if the sentiment of justice is really innate? Such contradiction undermines one's capacity to put the innate sentiment of justice into reality. We naturally feel what is just or unjust. But various causes and conditioning factors could distort such sentiment, so that someone could feel comfortable (or not), when facing social, economic, political, and religious/spiritual injustice. Moral education in the workplace could unveil such discrepancy between the innate sentiment of justice and the various manifestations of injustice in the daily organizational life.

Justice is the highest virtue (Goethe 2011, 224, Faust II). The Just as well as the Evil cannot give birth to really just outcomes: most of the time, we are not living 'in the depths of our self' (Goethe 2010, 84-85). However, the Good is always good (Goethe 2010, 88). We are never quite sure if we are actually behaving in the right way. We are aware of our wrong conducts and words. But we do not have any certainty about right actions and words (Goethe 2010a, 608). The main motive for realizing the good should be our love for the Good (Goethe 2010, 98). Love is a great virtue, since it is eternal (Goethe 2010, 56, 59). It is a voluntary gift of our self (Goethe 2010 61).Loving someone is already preparing our mind and heart to lose him/her (Goethe 2011, 245, Faust II). Love is strengthening itself (Goethe 2010, 131). Love is life, and our spirit is the life of love (Goethe 2010, 132). We do not have an innate knowledge of good and evil. Reason could be helpful to distinguish good and evil, in given situations. But loving good is an innate sentiment (Rousseau 1966a, 378). We are undertaking our judgment before knowing the real import of good and evil (Rousseau 1966a, 382). Some actions could be wrong in themselves, while having quite good effects on the whole reality. Rousseau acknowledged that the annihilation of particular evils in some situations could raise the level of the general (common) good. In other situations, such particular (and existentially-based) evils could be useful to the whole itself, and even more useful than the good we could try to impose (Rousseau 1971a, 245-246). Everything is good (Rousseau 1966a, 35). It then means that there is no original sin (Cassirer 2012, 55). What is intrinsically good (Goodness-itself) and intrinsically beautiful (Beauty-itself) can be intuitively felt throughout internalization processes. Vanity makes us considering that the qualities we don't have are worthless (Rousseau, 1988, 32). The good is the beautiful that is put into action (Rousseau 1988, 32-33). Goodness-itself cannot be isolated from Beauty-itself. We always love Beauty, although we cannot define it (Rousseau 1966a, 374). Beauty is indivisible (Goethe 2011, 384, Faust II). The Beautiful (or Beauty-itself) is emanating from God (Goethe 2010, 84). The essence of the Beautiful comes from its self-emergence and becoming. We can enjoy beautiful things, beings, and phenomena. However, the Beautiful overcomes the power of human mind. Beauty-itself can never be an object for human mind. We are unable to ask "Why is such thing beautiful?", since we cannot compare those beautiful things with Beauty-itself (Goethe 2011a, 593-594). We can feel that some things, beings, or phenomena are beautiful. But we cannot make any rational connection between such limited beauty and the Beauty-itself. The sense of honesty and beauty can help us to overcome ourselves (Rousseau 1988, 72-73). Being honest is focusing on social utility and justice (Rousseau 1988, 452). If loving good is an innate sentiment and if we cannot naturally distinguish good and evil, then what is the real function of the innate sentiment of good? Rousseau did not explain his paradoxical assertion. However, we could certainly say that the innate sentiment of good looks like the innate sentiment of justice. What is innate is the sentiment itself, but not its object (justice, good). Moral education in the workplace and thus ethical leadership could be put into practice, insofar as organizational members keep such

distinction in their mind. The innate sentiment of good and of justice expresses the basically natural character of good and of justice. It does not guarantee that it will be optimally actualized in every situation. Ethical leaders have the capacity to bridge the gap between the innate sentiment of good and of justice, on one hand, and the hardly definable frontiers between good and evil, on the other hand.

Unveiling the Process of Becoming-Who-We-Are:
Self-Identity in the Workplace

Existing is seeing our heart and reason competing with each other:
becoming-who-we-are (Rousseau)

Being human implies that heart and reason are always competing with each other. Infinite desires are promises of future pain (Rousseau 1988, 63, 527).It is easier to be-oneself in every situation than to raise oneself beyond humankind (Rousseau 1966a, 95).Human being can only become who-he/she-can-be. Our own nature can only be improved by education (Rousseau 1988, 552). Human being could improve himself/herself. It means that everybody could also contribute to social and political evils, particularly social inequality (Cassirer 2012, 94). We are who we want to be (Rousseau 1966a, 435). We must always be who-we-are, in every situation (Rousseau, 1966a, 458). Rousseau was thus emphasizing freedom as free agency (Neuhouser 2013, 199). Freedom implies not undertaking any action we do not want to accomplish (Rousseau 1967, 114). All of us are ignoring who-we-are. Self-understanding is always quite relative (Rousseau, 1966a, 348). In order to remainourselves authentically, there must be an intrinsic connection between our words and our actions (Rousseau 1966a, 40). Our own actions in the daily life help us to understand others' actions (Rousseau 1988, 222, 471). If we remind that self-understanding is always relative (and thus fragmentary), we should presuppose that such principle could be applied to all organizational members, regardless of their hierarchical status. The relative character of organizational members' self-understanding opens the door to various sense-making activities, such as values clarification workshops. Sense-making activities in the workplace should be opened to all organizational members rather than only to managers. In doing so, there could arise a sustainable connection between self-identity and organizational identity.

Existing is searching for the meaning of our human existence:
remaining-who-we-are (Goethe)

Being-itself is our eternal concern: finding out Being-itself beneath the surface (Goethe 2011, 199, Faust I; 251, Faust II). The basic worth of human being is its ultimate concern: everybody is his/her own ultimate concern (Goethe 2010a, 144). Everyone is existing without really knowing the meaning of human existence itself (Goethe 2011, 28, Faust I). Being without any meaning of life is living in nothingness (Goethe 2010a, 91). Human being is wandering as long as he/she searches for something that makes him/her troubled (Goethe 2011, 33, Faust I). If the source of our philosophical questioning does not lie in our heart, then we will be unable to have any

satisfactory (and preliminary) response to such questioning (Goethe 2011, 42, Faust I). Heart is the source of faith, faithful love, and eternal fervour (Goethe 2011, 140, Faust I). Every word must imply a given set of specific meanings (Goethe 2010, 51-52). Words are used to build up systems of ideas, values, and beliefs (Goethe 2011, 89, Faust I). Every word (and action or judgment) must be understood out of its historical origin (Goethe 2011, 311, Faust II; Goethe 2011a, 193). We always remain who-we-are (Goethe 2011, 83, Faust I). But who-we-were is not exactly the same as who-we-are-now. In any present self, there is a power of self-transcendence, so that the future self is a projection made by the present self (Goethe 2010a, 44-45). However, remaining-who-we-are is safeguarding what is essential in our own self (our basic nature: Goethe 2010a, 364-365). Being unable to remain who-we-are makes us losing everything (Goethe 2010, 127). Self-confidence is a prerequisite for well-being (Goethe 2011, 91, Faust I). In every self, there is a world of desires and hunches (Goethe 2010b, 48-49). But for knowing who-we-are, we must learn to live with others. Our mind and heart should focus on others' qualities and talents rather than on our own self (Goethe 2010a, 604, 675). Living with others learns us very important things about human life, others' self and our own self (Goethe 2011a, 531). Ethical leaders are altruistic and humble. They are always caring for others' wellbeing (Mahsud et al. 2010, 565; Hassan et al. 2013, 136). Ethical leaders are favouring the wellbeing of all stakeholders. However, in doing so, there could be a discrepancy between the way ethical leaders are perceived by their subordinates and the way top managers and directors are perceiving them. Both perceptions of the ethical character of leaders do not necessarily coincide (Kalshoven et al. 2016, 510). Organizational life is always a mix of contradictory perceptions and interpretations, because of the presence of various systems of meanings and symbols. The decisive test is the extent to which such contradictions are widespread in all organizational units and departments. Every organizational member could have his/her own truth claims. The way organizational members could deepen the sense of altruism and humility depends on their capacity to adapt themselves to multiple truth claims. The most efficient way to address such challenge could be to focus on others' qualities and talents. We should be able to acknowledge others' a priori beliefs as being potentially humanizing viewpoints.

Self-love

Everybody is emphasizing his/her self-love (Goethe, 2010, 89). Self-love does not imply that we are searching our own self-image everywhere (Goethe, 2010, 148). When our natural needs have been satisfactorily met, then our opinions are determining our decisions, words, and behaviors (Rousseau 1967, 54). Self-love is focusing on our natural needs and on self-preservation, while self-esteem implies that we are favouring ourselves and expecting that others will prioritize our own well-being. Self-esteem is born from the way we are comparing our own self to others' self. Kindness, generosity, and love follow from self-love. Hatred and jealousy come from self-esteem (Rousseau 1966a, 276-277). Self-love could be changed into self-esteem (Rousseau 1966a, 306).

It is particularly the case when the good is perverted: it then opens the door to jealousy, envy, vanity, cruelty, and (social) inequality (Cladis 1995, 196). Rousseau believed that any socially-based inequality in the civilized society could never be justified (Niimura 2016, 893). Self-esteem is a social construct (Thomas 1991, 207). Self-esteem could be changed into virtuous behavior, insofar as it is extended to others (Rousseau 1966a, 329). A very high level of self-esteem makes impossible to be hurt by others' contempt. Whoever is good and honest is not adversely affected by others' judgment (Rousseau 1988, 132). Human being is characterized by self-love. Self-love does not depend on circumstances, customs, and laws. It is always determining the way the individual thoughts, speaks, and behaves (Rousseau 1988, 475). Natural social identity does not exist at all. That's why a social contract could arise (Inston 2010, 402). Knowing the best way to distinguish self-love and self-esteem is an important issue for every organizational member, since it could improve his/her existential possibilities to be altruistic, regardless of his/her social, economic, political, and even religious/spiritual status. So, ethical training sessions could define self-esteem as a distortion of self-love. Acknowledging the worth of self-love does not mean that self-esteem is morally justified. Criticizing the way self-esteem is arising and deploying itself in the organizational life and culture could help organizational member to look at self-love in a more realistic way.

Freedom

Freedom has to be acquired everyday (Goethe 2011, 479, Faust II). Freedom lies in our heart (Goethe 2010b, 49). People who strongly believe to be free are much less free than others who do not have such belief (Goethe 2011a, 218). We are the masters of our own life (Rousseau 1988, 168). The laws of one's heart are those laws that the individual has imposed to himself/herself (Rousseau 1988, 188, 304).When the excellent and the worst are mixed together in a given situation we are confronted with, we are facing a really difficult and important choice (Rousseau 1988, 281). The real origin of moral evil lies in human freedom (Rousseau 1988, 582; Rousseau 1966a, 366). Evil is actualized and built up by human beings. There is no other evil than the evil we are creating through our actions. The Universe is characterized by a unified order, so that there cannot be any holistic evil (Rousseau 1966a, 366; Cladis 1995, 187). Denying the existence of evil would justify anybody who undertakes wrong and harmful actions (Rousseau 1971a, 245). Being free is choosing actions that could favour our self-interest. Every action depends on the will of a free being. Our actions make us free beings (Rousseau 1966a, 365). Freedom is not something we hold forever. Freedom is rather always acquired through actions that are rooted in given (existentially-based) situations. Understanding existentially-based freedom could help organizational members to better circumscribe the required conditions for exercising their freedom in the organizational setting.

There is no action (effect) without will (cause): acting requires the will to act. The (Divine) will is moving the whole Universe. We can only observe the will (to do something) through given actions (Rousseau 1966a, 355, 360). Being free implies the

will to do what we can really do (principle of reality) as well as the fact that we are doing what is pleasant for us (principle of pleasure) (Rousseau 1966a, 99). Being free implies acting, comparing (and judging), and choosing (the good or the evil) (Rousseau 1966a, 357, 364-365). Being free is choosing actions that are not dependent on God's Providence (Rousseau 1966a, 365). We only love what is pleasant for us (Rousseau 1966a, 304). Doing what we want to do does not necessarily make us happier: if we are self-sufficient, it could produce happiness. But if we depend on others, then actualizing our wills would not necessarily make us happier, since our needs exceed our powers and skills (Rousseau 1966a, 100). We could be dependent on things (Nature), or on people (Society). Being dependent on things does not have any moral dimension (vices or virtues), so that it does not impact our own freedom. Being dependent on people has a deep moral dimension, since it could open the door to vices or virtues. Such dependence could radically influence our own freedom. Morality then favours virtues rather than vices. Rousseau asserted that national laws and international treaties/conventions could transform Society (dependence on people) into Nature (dependence on things) (Rousseau 1966a, 100-101). But the only way to realize such paradigmatic change is to raise morality to the ultimate level of unconditional virtue. Ethical leaders should be able to modify their leadership style in order to increase mutual trust in the organizational setting (Tuan 2012, 143). Rousseau strongly believed that the wisest do not need any law and regulation (Rousseau 1966a, 109). Ethical leaders do not need laws and regulations. They know how they should behave, in every situation. But such wise people seem to be quite rare. That's why Rousseau believed that morality is basically involved in the social contract (Vauléon 2014, 101). Thus, there is an interconnectedness between politics and ethics (Pignol 2010, 47).Our money we actually own could be used to exercise our freedom, while the money we would like to get is the way for self-subjection (Rousseau 1963, 70).Giving up our own freedom is renouncing our own duties as well as the rights of humankind (Rousseau 1966, 46). A will which is not basically free does not have any moral dimension. Then, every action that is grounded on such will is expressing moral indifferentism (Rousseau 1966, 46). Power and freedom are the first tools for ensuring our self-preservation, and thus self-love (Rousseau 1966, 50).

Reason, sentiments, and passions

Rousseau was enhancing the right balance between reason and sentiments. Reason is the basic characteristic of human being. In the daily life, our thoughts, words, and actions are rather impregnated with sentiments (Rousseau 1988, 299). Reason is deceitful. Only consciousness (and thus sentiments) could be a reliable ground for our way of thinking, speaking, and acting (Rousseau 1966a, 372). Human beings are acting and thinking, but they also are loving and sentient beings. Sentiments and emotions are the means to perfect human reason (Rousseau 1966a, 264). We need both reason and consciousness (and thus sentiments) (Rousseau 1971, 119). Sentiments depend on ideas (Rousseau 1988, 628-629). Philosophizing is using our consciousness (Rousseau 1966a,

535). Consciousness is acting through sentiments rather than through judgments (Rousseau 1966a, 377). The moral character of our actions lies in our judgments. If moral goodness is complying to our own nature, then any form of wickedness is distorting such goodness. But if moral goodness is not complying to human nature, then we are naturally wicked people, so that any expression of goodness would deny our own nature (Rousseau 1966a, 373). Ethical consciousness-raising activities in the organizational setting cannot avoid the search for the right balance between reason and sentiments, since both reason and sentiment are basic components of human life. Excluding sentiments may be as harmful as denying the worth of rationality. Sentiments are not totally subjected to the judgment of reason. Reason is not a simple tool for highlighting good sentiments. Rather, the balance of reason and sentiments could depend on the particularities of the situation. That's the way Rousseau was addressing the issue.

Existing is being sensitive. Sentiments precede ideas and opinions: self-love, fear (to suffer and to die), desire (for better well-being) are basic sentiments of human life (Rousseau 1966a, 377-378). The primary component of human reason is built up by sensitive perceptions. Intellectual reason follows the way sense organs are perceiving reality (Rousseau 1966a, 157). Sense organs are the primary tools of knowledge (Rousseau 1966a, 333). We can learn to exercise our sense organs so that our sensations could rightly orientate our judgment (Rousseau 1966a, 167). Sensations are not deceitful. Only the way we are judging our sensations could be deceitful. Our mistakes and errors come from our judgments, and not from our sensations (Rousseau 1966a, 265-266). Evils come from errors and mistakes (about our acquired knowledge: 'what we think we know') rather than from our ignorance ('what we actually do not know') (Rousseau 1971a, 242). However, leaders could fall into the trap of moral mistakes, because of their wrong beliefs either about what is morally right, or about the so-called 'members of the moral community' (Price 2000, 180). Personal judgments are primarily 'fore-judgments', that is, judgments which are undertaken before having all required and relevant information. Being aware of our sensations implies to judge them (Rousseau 1966a, 269). In his/her 'fore-judgments', human being could change given sensations into appearances. Sensations do not express anything else than what is perceived by sense organs. But when we are changing sensations into appearances, we are falling into an illusory interpretation (Rousseau 1966a, 267). Sense organs are naturally producing sensations that have to be '*a priori* true'. Truth is in the (material) things, beings, and phenomena which are perceived by our sense organs. It is never expressed in our own judgments. However, we could (*a posteriori*) criticize the import of such sensations (Rousseau 1966a, 352). Appearances are sensations that have been subjected to fore-understanding. They open the door to prejudices. As long as fore-judgments are taken, they are justifying any prejudice to deploy itself in our mind and heart. Appearances do not provide us any knowledge about others' happiness/unhappiness (Rousseau 1966a, 315). Other beings are the objects of our own sensations, and thus cannot be identified to our own self (Rousseau 1966a, 350). Sensations could produce prejudices (or fore-judgments). In the organizational setting, ethical leaders

could enhance the best way to check the truthfulness of given fore-judgments. Organizational members could learn to make such assessment so that they could avoid the trap of stereotypes.

The basic weakness of human being comes from the imbalance between his/her strengths and his/her desires and passions. Our desires and passions require a huge amount of energy that our own strengths cannot provide. That's why Rousseau recommended to reduce our desires in order to increase our own strengths (Rousseau 1966a, 211). Our natural passions are the main tools for our self-preservation, since they are contributing to make us free beings. That's why we must never try to get rid of them (Rousseau 1966a, 274-275). Self-love is the real basis of our natural passions, and is thus intrinsically good (Rousseau 1966a, 275).All passions are grounded on sensitiveness. Our imagination can change some passions into vices (Rousseau 1966a, 284). Morality is at stake only when our passions involve others. As long as our sensitiveness is focusing on our own self, it does not have any moral dimension (Rousseau 1966a, 285). Morality begins when we reach the realm that is beyond our self. Morality is linked to interpersonal relationships, social relationships, relations with Nature (and its ecosystems and natural beings), and even relations with the Infinite/Unconditional (or God). Everything personal that does not affect our relationships with others, social groups and the whole society, Nature and natural beings, or even the Infinite/Unconditional (or even God) does not have any moral dimension. The main ethical challenge is identifying the most efficient ways to assess such an impact. It is particularly important for ethical leaders, since in the organizational life every decision or action could adversely affect those types of relationships.

Goethe believed that reason should lead our goodwill and that goodness is the real ground of every heart. Human being uses his/her reason so poorly that he/she is acting as an animal (Goethe 2011, 32, Faust I). Reason leads our good will (Goethe 2011, 227, Faust II). Perfecting the use of our reason implies having made errors and mistakes in the past (Goethe, 2011, 339, Faust II). When our passions are too strong and powerful, they could make us losing our rational reflection (Goethe 2010b, 98). Passions could destroy what reason has built up for a more or less long period of time (Goethe 2010a, 428). Sentiments are everything (Goethe 2011, 160, Faust I).Goodness is the ground of every heart (Goethe 2011, 225, Faust II). Searching for the good requires to have good thoughts, attitudes, words, and behaviors (Goethe 2011, 232, Faust II).We should always be able to rationally explain the basic motives of our actions and decisions (Goethe 2010a, 695). What can affect others' heart comes from one's heart. Ethical leaders make their subordinates more satisfied with their job. In doing so, they are increasing subordinates' performance and good citizenship behaviors (Sharif and Scandura 2014, 191; Yang 2014, 521). Our heart replaces what the universe cannot produce (Goethe 2011, 404-405, Faust II). Goethe has unveiled the fact that goodness is the dynamic center of our heart. It means that anything that arises from our heart must cross the prism pointing towards goodness. Over the years, organizational ethics is built up on a narrative basis. Organizational members could

'read' it as a quasi-text, that is, as a construct that shares some components with written texts. Insofar as goodness remains at the midst of organizational ethics, it will determine the real contents of main organizational values and norms of behavior.

Knowledge

We can know nothing at all. Our ignorance is unavoidable (Goethe 2011, 35, Faust I). We should clearly know our unavoidable ignorance. Even part of our knowledge remains useless in our own life (Goethe 2011, 57, Faust I). Human being could believe he/she is a whole, while he/she is only a small part of reality (Goethe 2011, 67, Faust I). It is a way to confuse human being with Divine being (Goethe, 2011, 82, Faust I). It is a phenomenon of self-idolatry (Goethe 2011, 377, Faust II). In our existentially-based situation, we are learning what we can actually learn (Goethe 2011, 90, Faust I). Situations should never determine who-we-are. We should rather control the way various situations are influencing who-we-are-becoming (Goethe 2010a, 501). The attachment to our cultural knowledge produces an attitude of pride that implies a very high level of egocentrism and a strong certainty to hold ultimate truths (Goethe 2010a, 531, 535; Goethe 2011, 113, Faust I). The patterns for acquiring and enhancing cultural knowledge vary from a societal culture to another, and even from a religion/spirituality to another. Ethical leaders should address the issue of cultural (and religious/spiritual) knowledge in unveiling the plurality of worldviews and systems of meanings and symbols. Ethical leaders do not necessarily embrace moral relativism, because of the contents of their cultural identity (Hrenyk et al. 2016, 71). People could jointly search for the Unknown as soon as they agree about objects, beings, phenomena, and events that are clearly known (Goethe 2010a, 608; Goethe 2011a, 59). It is particularly the case if the Unknown is the Infinite/Unconditional. We should know the world as it really is (Goethe 2010a, 669). Goethe was concerned with phenomena, since phenomena are expressing life as it is. Zemplén (2003) explained how Goethe was looking at the whole universe of phenomena as implying the interconnectedness between all phenomena. Our intuition could help us know the reality of such interconnectedness, while being ignorant of its intrinsic meaning (if it has any intrinsic meaning).

For Goethe a single phenomenon, a single experiment can prove nothing; it is a member of a great chain, and is significant only within this context. In modern science the experiment is used to test or extend a theory or a theoretical proposition. The phenomena are merely given, the theory is that makes sense of them, gives them order. For Goethe, however, phenomena have intrinsic importance, and they bear certain affinities and relationships to other phenomena (Zemplén 2003, 269).

Our own knowledge is as much limited as human intellect actually is. All our knowledge could be either false, or useless, or even used to maximize our pride. There is little knowledge that nurtures our well-being (Rousseau 1966a, 213). Bewilderment comes from what-we-believe-to-know (Rousseau 1966a, 213). Indeed, the most important thing we should know is our huge ignorance. Rousseau thus endorsed the basic Socratic principle (Rousseau 1966a, 270, 348). The more we know, the more we

should know the extent of our ignorance, and the more we should be humble. Rousseau asserted that the less people know, the more they want to share their knowledge with others. The more we know, the less we want to share our knowledge. We then know the scope of our ignorance (Rousseau 1966a, 440; Rousseau 1971, 81). Rousseau (1971, 93) defined four types of ignorance: (1) blunt ignorance: it arises from a bad heart and mind; (2) criminal ignorance: it neglects our duties towards humankind and develops multiple vices. Reason is impaired. Those criminally ignorant people are like beasts; (3) reasonable ignorance: it is limiting our curiosity to our natural faculties and capacities; (4) modest ignorance: it requires to love virtues and focuses on everything that could improve human heart and mind. It is not concerned with other issues, such as others' opinions (Rousseau 1971, 93). Ignorance could favour either the good, or the evil. It is only the natural state of human being. Acquiring more knowledge could make us losing our moral norms and virtues (such as honesty, integrity, and authenticity). Integrity is linked to the continuity between leader's words and behaviors (Crews 2015, 44). Integrity, honesty, fairness, caring and authenticity are usually considered as basic virtues of ethical leadership (Engelbrecht *et al*. 2017, 369; Lawton and Páez 2015, 641). If acquiring knowledge opens the way for criticizing the ultimate worth of virtues, then it is building up a corrupt state of things (Rousseau 1971, 103-104). The passion for acquiring more knowledge could be nurtured either by a high level of pride (and thus by the desire to get public renown), or by a naturally-based curiosity which provokes an innate desire for well-being, although such desire is never totally satisfied (Rousseau 1966a, 214). Signs are representing given objects. They absolutely require a fragmentary idea about the represented objects. Otherwise, they would be empty and meaningless (Rousseau 1966a, 135). What is meaningless can only provoke the reflex of revolt (Rousseau 1988, 129). So, organizational ethics should favor meaningful experiences in the daily life. If not, organizational members could conclude that their organizational leaders are morally impotent, when designing and applying organizational ethics.

Describing the Continuous Search for Human Happiness in the Organizational Life

Human Happiness is Always Relative (Rousseau)

Being deeply wise would make virtues useless. We need to develop virtues, because we are not alreadywise people (Rousseau 1963, 108-109).Wisdom without sensitiveness is useless. Sensitiveness without wisdom could be self-destructive. We should develop as much wisdom as sensitiveness (Rousseau 1966a, 450). Pleasures should be sacrificed to the profit of our collective duties towards humankind. That's the only way to be happy (Rousseau 1988, 94). Hope is the real expression of happiness. When we actually get the object of our desires, we are much less happy than when we were still trying to get it (Rousseau 1988, 681). We do not know what is happiness, or unhappiness. In human life, pure sentiments do not exist. Every sentiment or emotion is mixed with other sentiments and emotions. Being happy is bearing a very low quantity of pains, while being unhappy implies a very low quantity of pleasures. Suffering provokes the

desire to be released from it, while pleasure is creating the desire to maximize it (Rousseau 1966a, 93). The happiness of 'natural man' is to avoid suffering. Being happy is then being healthy and free. Our basic needs are then being met. The happiness of the 'moral man' cannot be identified to that of the 'natural man' (Rousseau 1966a, 229). Their needs are not similar (Rousseau 1966a, 267). Human happiness is always relative. Only God is absolutely happy (Rousseau 1966a, 287). God cannot search for happiness. God is infinitely, and thus unconditionally happy. Searching for happiness at every moment of our life makes us unhappy (Rousseau 1966a, 344). We feel something pleasant when we want to feel it in that way (Rousseau 1966a, 463). Human being is searching for happiness, since he/she is finite and conditioned being. Existential finitude makes the quest for happiness possible. Human being is always relative and thus fragmentary and conditionally-oriented being. In the organizational setting, any search for happiness could be strengthened by ethical leaders. However, ethical leaders cannot consider such quest as a tool to improve employees' performance. The search for happiness is an existentially-based quest. It should never be used as a tool for another (organizational) end.

Happiness lies in the present moment (Goethe)

Wise people are unable to face novelties, since every phenomenon or event seems to be identical to what they have lived in the past (Goethe 2011, 301, Faust II).Wise people do not have any propensity to favour novelties rather than traditions (Goethe 2010a, 357). How could we become wise persons without knowing how to be wise 'in God'? How could we show universal and unconditional love without feeling the presence of the 'God of Love' (Goethe 2010, 69)? The Good and the Beautiful are emanating from God (Goethe 2010, 84).Goodness-itself and Beauty-itself are then grounded on the Infinite/Unconditional. Goethe believed that God is the ultimate ground of life: every living being is thus inherently connected to God (Goethe 2010a, 483). The connection between human being and God is unveiling the gap between the finite/conditioned and the Infinite/Unconditional. Divine happiness arises from eternity (as the absence of the flow of time), while human happiness lies in the present moment (Goethe 2011, 394, Faust II; Goethe 2010b, 40). Everybody could build up his/her own happiness, out of the present moment. There is no innate capacity for happiness. There are various roads to happiness. We have to learn how to reach happiness in our own daily life (Goethe 2010a, 110). Being happy is behaving in a just and good way. It also requires to relativize our desires, goals, and expectations (Goethe 2010a, 557, 674). Goodness and justice are not enough. We must never absolutize our own desires, goals, and expectations. Otherwise, we would look at us as if we were absolute beings, that is, gods. The present moment is so powerful and magnificent that any hope is useless (Goethe 2010, 161, 201, 203).The present moment is impregnated with so many possibilities-to-be that any absolute focus on the future could be useless. The present moment could nurture any process of change, internally and externally. The Peace of God makes every soul full of (religiously-/spiritually-based) happiness. Our

reason cannot provide us such deep happiness. This is not an absolute happiness, but rather a finite happiness that is connected to the Infinite/Unconditional. The meaning of the Unnamed/Unlimited lies in our heart (Goethe 2008, 51, 53, 99). Every being who want to be united with the Infinite Being (God) has to dissolve himself/herself into nothingness (Goethe 2008, 103). That's the only way to extend our finite happiness beyond its existential frontiers. In cross-cultural and inter-religious dialogue between business partners, such possibility to extend human happiness beyond its intrinsic limitations could be quite helpful. It could favour mutual understanding and make us opening our mind to other systems of meanings and symbols.

Conclusion

Organizational ethics does not necessarily make Goodness-itself and human good interconnected. Indeed, it is rarely the case. However, such interconnectedness could be realized through a religious/spiritual paradigm (Good-itself is then identified to God), or through philosophical lenses (Good-itself as the infinite ground for every human goodness). Human beings have an innate sentiment of justice and goodness (Rousseau). However, they can hardly define the frontiers between the just and the unjust, between good and evil. Rousseau made us quite aware that the sentiment is innate, while its object is continuously moving: justice and goodness do not have fixed meaning and import. So, the most important ethical challenge is to distinguish justice and injustice, good and evil. We can never be sure that we have actually identified the right meaning and import of justice and goodness. Rousseau emphasized our huge ignorance about reality. Being finite and conditioned means being ignorant about the various components of reality. It implies the impossibility to grasp the whole reality as well as its meaning. Everything that is existentially-based expresses our deep ignorance about beings, things, events, and phenomena.

Rousseau and Goethe made two apparently opposite components of self-identity coexisting: becoming-who-we-are is as much important as remaining-who-we-are. It means that becoming-who-we-are cannot imply to deny essential aspects of our self-identity. The essential self is the self that should always remain the same over the years. However, there is room for continuous becoming at the midst of the self, but around the realm of the essential self. The realm of the self-in-becoming requires self-love (but not self-esteem), freedom, and the balance between reason and sentiments. Organizational identity should never shake the foundations of the essential self. It could only favour the development of the self-in-becoming. Living-in-the-organization is searching for (finite and conditioned) happiness. Every organizational member could only find out the present moment as the relative source of his/her happiness. Every present moment is a possibility of self-transcendence. Although human happiness is quite relative, it could be a real opportunity to be connected to the Infinite/Unconditional (Goethe).

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