**Dejan Donev, Ph.D.**

Full prof. of Ethics, History of Ethics and Bioethics,

Institute for Philosophy, Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje, University »St.s Cyril and Methodius«,

Blv. „Goce Delčev“, 9A, 1000 Skopje, N.Macedonia

donevdejan@fzf.ukim.edu.mk

**THE NECESSITY OF IMPLEMENTING ETHICAL EDUCATION**

**FOR A BETTER HUMAN SOCIETY**

**Summary**

Ethical education is the latest type of philosophical education of the younger generations. The teaching of philosophy is not only the development of the spirit, but also the path to self-awareness and awareness of human duty. Ethical knowledge and feelings are the basis for human, moral and intellectual development of a person. In the encounter with ethical issues and contents, the young person fits into the reality of the world as a human work and for a better human society. Through ethics and also political philosophy, she manages to realize that personality is continuity, but also progress; that a person is a part of his small community, but also an integral part of the whole world...

Ethical education is interested in how a person becomes an ethical individual who freely judges, builds and develops morality; what is the content of the moral construction of the personality, and what are the stages through which the personality passes on that complex path of self-construction, from the unconscious being to the being who consciously builds a good world, correct ethical values ​​and moral principles. So, the task is not only to create a moral personality of the individual who "implements" morality, but it is also a task to create an ethical subject, i.e. a person who thinks and judges freely and responsibly, and who builds and develops morals and new moral norms.

**Key words:** ethical education, ethics, moral upbringing, philosophy, ethical subject.

**THE NECESSITY OF IMPLEMENTING ETHICAL EDUCATION FOR A BETTER HUMAN SOCIETY**

**Introduction**

Education is one of the primary forms of individual human life and a way in which humans grow and develop into a person, and it has existed since the existence of civilisation.[[1]](#footnote-1) Modern humanity, today more than ever, has an increased need for a broad, quality, long-lasting and developed education. That is why it is said that in the multitude of numerous characteristics of this epoch, the one, according to which it is the era of education, is especially important. So the problems with children and their upbringing are becoming one of the greatest temptations of modern civilisation. It is not a rhetorical question whether we will overcome the great difficulties in their development, which give the primary meaning to their human existence. All responsible people need to prepare future generations to face the crucial problems of their survival and the survival of future generations. That is why education today is the most important task for humanity and the secret of successful world progress.

Within the same framework, the issue of moral upbringing is especially important, not only as an associated phenomenon towards the general awakening of ethics but primarily due to the tremendous educational and axiological neglect of young people.[[2]](#footnote-2) The problems of choosing values and determining the meaning and knowledge of the code of human behaviour are not solved, which results in a terrible moral decline and irreparable loss of a modern man in one world, which he no longer considers his own. Traditional methods and forms of building moral attitudes are no longer functional. What was the basis of the moral construction of every person and the regulation of his behaviour are no longer understood or imposed. We can state that modern man suffers from „ethical confusion“ (Legrand, 2001, 10) resulting from general insecurity, urban violence, religious intolerance and fanaticism, consumer mentality, and today's rapid technological development.

That is why in recent decades, there has been an insistence on the need to reawaken the upbringing role and responsibilities of parents and families in general, and especially the need to overcome the crisis of the educational role of educational institutions, caused by abandoning classical forms of unity of education and upbringing and the domination of the "educational" against "upbringing" goals and actions.[[3]](#footnote-3) Thus, today in schools, again, great attention is paid to moral upbringing, and even a particular type of ethical education is introduced, which is advocated by UNESCO, proposing in the first place philosophical education, as a "school of freedom" (Droit, 1995, 13) and a way to achieve independent thinking and judgments. For example, in the UNESCO Program for the next period, four ethical areas are primary:

"(1) expanding and improving the teaching of philosophy at all levels of education as part of ethical education, which would enable the development of a sense of right life and individual potential for democracy;

(2) developing all kinds of research and presentations of Universal Ethics, as a necessary awareness of the unity of the world and the necessity of the existence of morality in all people;

(3) the development of bioethical research and awareness, in particular, the establishment of bioethical committees in all societies and their connection to the world wide web;

(4) the establishment of centres for the research and dissemination of ethics in scientific research and their connection around the world." (UNESCO, 1995, 35–36)

Based on this, in addition to returning to moral upbringing, the emphasis is increasingly on the introduction of ethical education as an expression of concern for the moral situation, because it is in a difficult situation: we easily miss moral inadequacies, we easily reject our morally upbringing duties (in family, school, state), we do not insist on the importance of morality and do not stand out in that field. In other words, we do not spread knowledge about morality, and we easily get rid of what we have, pretending that morality is not necessary, claiming that we do not know what is moral and what is not. We go so far as to allow a sense of confinement in a cage, alone, isolated and alienated from ourselves and others, while the world emphasises cooperation and togetherness. Nevertheless, "barbarism is the disintegration of life together" (Gaset, 1988, 80).

**The existential necessity of ethical education today**

All these and others, perhaps more paradoxical ethical situations, clearly speak about the problems in our life and ethical orientation. There must be axiological capacities for the fundamental human need to weigh all things and find the right answers to problems, challenges, dilemmas. This is because human beings cannot live without responsibility. "Today, people know that freedom is possible only if we understand performing our necessary duties. People are guided by reason. They perceive the true value of existence, from that value, they derive norms of behaviour and conduct, and they implement them with the conviction of the correctness of their lives. From ethical freedom and creativity follows a standardised mechanism of moral obligation, as a belief in the correctness of ethical awareness and the necessity of appropriate moral action" (Donev, 2020, 23).

In this context, it is quite justified to claim that the awakening of ethics and the emergence of ethical education in our time stem from real difficulties in life, caused by our carelessness in dealing with people, from the view that man can and must find a way out of many difficulties and problems that stand before him, and out of the conviction that the help of ethics and appropriate ethical education is necessary for that.

Namely, moral upbringing has been an integral part of pedagogical theory and practice from ancient times[[4]](#footnote-4). However, ethical education is one of those new types of education that have awakened with the development of the world and new phenomena in it, driven by social movements, spiritual challenges and current pedagogical requirements of the era.

As such, ethical education is a new form of ethical and pedagogical activity which aims to spread ethical spirit and knowledge. It is a flash of ethical seriousness and responsibility. It is an education in which the values ​​that humanity considers most important are realised and should be passed on to the younger generations, and through them, to the whole of human existence. In this sense, an integral part of education is moral upbringing. However, moral upbringing is about the gradual adaptation of a young person, female and male, to social goals and values and training to follow and execute the norms established by society. In a democratic society, such as the whole of humanity today, a person is expected to have his or her own views and be a builder of worldviews and norms for life. To that end, it is necessary to be educated in the spirit of knowledge provided by ethics to be a constructive member of the community and for the community to achieve positive ethical goals. The responsibility falls on the individual, and individuals must be prepared, both cognitively and mentally, for the significant challenges facing them in the field of ethics and the face of all humanity.

The idea of ​​ethical education is a kind of the most modern ethical-pedagogical activity of today, in the whole complex of this new era of the world and pedagogy, and represents a deepening of moral upbringing. The neglect of the moral upbringing of young people, domestic and school, has caused the need to renew the spirit of ethical education, not only as an ordinary and integral, but also as an essential part of youth education. Namely, the world's reality in this crisis epoch has awakened the need for moral upbringing, whose meaning today is realised not only in the transposition of existing moral values ​​and reason of young generations but above all as the realisation of young people as autonomous ethical figures.

This is the meaning of the discovery of the Swiss philosopher and psychologist Jean Piaget and the American psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg. Within the framework of researching the moral spirit of a person and his development, both determined the levels of ethical development from heteronomous to autonomous personality. This was followed by the design of ethical education in the form of a unique educational practice, which encourages and achieves the young person's imagined and necessary ethical development to the degree of its value independence and ethical creativity. So, it is not enough to have a person who will follow the normative system, which is not good anyway and does not meet the era's requirements in this twisted and confusing modern world (Peševska-Zarevska, 2003, 39). Humanity needs individuals who know how to think about the complex problems of today and the future, in which value thinking and positive decision-making are developed; personalities who know how to find the right solution and who are ready to fight for it. We live in an era of individual freedoms and responsibilities, and ethics should give everyone the knowledge, desire, and strength to do the right thing. This is necessary to survive: "ethics is the only means by which we will secure the future" (Major i Tangijan, 1997, 5).

**Ethical education, but not as a synonym for moral upbringing, but ...**

Modern ethical education has a similar dimension and task as moral upbringing, but also, at the same time, different dimensions and tasks. Ethical education also deals with the process of moral personality building. However, this education's idea, goals, and tasks aim primarily to create a *free and responsible personality from a young educated subject, with its ethical capacity and creative ethical habitus*. The goal is not to build a person adapted to a specific moral, but a person who knows how to evaluate and create values, that is, who independently judges morally and creates morals. Such ethical education, in his essence, represents a dialectical upgrade and an upgrade of classical moral upbringing: moral upbringing is preserved within the framework of ethical education, but its tasks are not primary. Instead, they "transcend" in the broader and more serious task of a new type of ethical education. So, the task is to create a moral personality of the individual who "implements" morality and creates an ethical subject, i.e. a person who thinks and judges freely and responsibly and builds and develops morals and new moral norms.

This expresses a broader anthropological and social vision and a particular pedagogical task. At the same time, the problems of the *content* of moral construction of personality and pedagogical *forms* for that goal are significantly developed. The basis for this is laid in the knowledge of the *stages* that a person goes through on the path of construction and self-construction. In such an educational realisation, an unconscious being builds a being capable of reasoning, choosing and building a good one, i.e. a better world, for proper evaluation and personal and creative representation of ethical values ​​and moral principles. In this approach, ethical education becomes a process of individual moral development. It is an educational process in which a young person, from immature, unconscious and non-autonomous, is gradually built into a mature, conscious and autonomous person.

Such innovation and revolution in ethical education were brought by the research of Jean Piaget and Lawrence Kolberg. Namely, until today's era, the study of ethics, except for scientific purposes, has mainly been necessary for the moral upbringing and "instruction" in professional ethics (deontology). However, after the research of Piaget and Kolberg, ethical education became an integral part of the nomenclature of the most important educational areas. After these essential psychologists and philosophers of education, this teaching activity began to be called *Ethical Education*.

In other words, the goal of moral upbringing is the specific construction of personality. "Moral upbringing means the process of moral shaping of a person, the process of forming an individual into a social person, harmonised with accepted moral and ethical attitudes" (Vukasović, 1974, 19). This means "the process of shaping the moral qualities of man, shaping his moral consciousness, views and attitudes, developing moral feelings, positive qualities of will and character, shaping skills and habits of moral behaviour and behaviour in a society following accepted moral and ethical understandings. Moral upbringing is an organised, conscious, intentional, purposeful, intentional act of a certain community to accept and realise the basic ethical principles and principles of that community" (Vukasović, 1974, 84). In this sense, according to Ante Vukasović, the components of ethical education relate to their various tasks: *moral* regulates relations between people, *ethics* studies morality and improves it, and *moral upbringing* supports and realises it.

So, the essence of moral upbringing is in the person's socialisation, in preparation for him to accept and learn moral principles, and uses his moral consciousness to adapt to a specific environment and for the most adequate "accommodation" in the system of relations in society. "The content and, therefore, the goal of moral upbringing, is determined by the moral norms that govern or are just emerging in society" (Krneta i Potkonjak, 1969, 375). An essential reference of this part of general education, which is already considered one of the important parts and tasks of the educational process in general, is a kind of *passive reception* of the prevailing ethical principles and existing moral values. Therefore, despite insisting on the multiplicity of intellectual, psychological and moral dimensions of the human personality, which should be developed through this pedagogical process, the ultimate and most valuable essence of moral upbringing becomes unavoidable *etiquette*, as a kind in a series of desirable and recommended actions of a person who knows what is morally right and doing it.

However, ethical education, for its part, grows based on similar views of the moral construction of personality, but its idea is primarily directed towards the essential and authentic self-construction of all ethical dimensions of personality. Ethical education is interested in *how* a person becomes an *ethical individual* who freely judges, builds and develops morality; *what is* the content of the moral construction of the personality, and what are the stages through which the personality passes on that complex path of self-construction, from the unconscious being to the being who consciously builds a good world, correct ethical values ​​and moral principles.

In this context, ethical education complements moral upbringing, which is the adaptation of young people to social norms and tendencies, the gradual adaptation of young people to social goals and values, and their ability to follow and implement the norms that society has and sets. However, instead of moral upbringing imposed on moral knowledge and indicating the will to achieve already determined goals and paths, ethical education builds the capacity for free-thinking, ethical "scepticism", and action. Ethical education is an educational form through which the personality of a young man is built into a free, mature and responsible moral subject. This "should be applied at the earliest age, in the first encounters with the school system, and extended throughout education, so that the results can provide the necessary human reserve of consciousness and free will of the responsible person, which is necessary to improve life and solve serious problems" (Crisp i Slote, 1997, 26). This is especially important because the cognitive and material development of the modern world should be monitored, permeated and harmonised with ethical development, which is not a mere addition to the first two, but an equal condition for their good and fruitful development.

In summary, ethical education is broadly conceived and is essentially directed towards educating a person capable of facing the problems of life, who knows how to ethically solve problems in crucial situations of his life and the life of all humanity. Furthermore, an ethically educated person can shape, choose, follow, and defend appropriate axiological attitudes and values to create appropriate moral norms of behaviour. This is necessary for the personality to cope with the complex processes of the modern world and democracy and the expected difficulties of the future life of humankind. In essence, ethical education, as shown by many modern studies, especially in the United States, Spain and Slovakia, does not coincide with moral upbringing, but, in addition to moral upbringing tasks, has particular tasks in building a modern ethical personality, which knows ethical solutions in the past and present world, and has its own visions and clear goals for its intentions and directions, as well as ways to achieve it, while preserving its dignity, but also improving its society and the world as a whole.

**The meaning and essence of ethical education**

Ethical education is nothing new in pedagogical activity since moral upbringing is one of the essential dimensions of education, and pedagogy is, in essence, applied ethics. However, in modern times, after significant research by psychologists, pedagogues and ethicists, the specifics of ethical education are increasingly being pointed out. As a result, it acquires its authenticity, being treated not only as an applied social moral or as an extended moral upbringing. This can be attributed to the researches of Jean Piaget and Lawrence Kolberg.

In Piaget, among many of his researches, especially those on the birth of children's consciousness and children's behaviour, one of the most original and important for ethics is the research from 1932, focused on building a *moral judgment in a child* (Piaget, 1978). This is the first systematic undertaking in the field of moral thinking (Мирић, 2001, 97). Piaget found that moral consciousness develops towards greater acceptance and understanding of moral attitudes and towards building the *ethical capacity of a person*, who becomes a moral subject, who judges independently and has his own moral attitudes.

Realistically, young children do not have their own moral judgments: "the child is oriented towards authority, and with that begins his socialisation, upbringing and moral development" (Težak i Čudina, 1996, 17). In other words, children are ethically heteronomous, and they carry out tasks given to them by the elderly, i.e. those who have a superior ethical function in their community. Vuko Pavičević points to two aspects of this *heteronomous phase* in the development of moral consciousness and personality in general: it is a phase "in which there is no real understanding of the meaning and significance of the demands placed on children and which they need to meet", and in which various measures, "must mobilise motives of satisfaction and dissatisfaction as a psychological basis for the adoption of norms" (Pavičević, 1974, 61).

Through his research, Jean Piaget showed that there are other aspects of this ethical situation, that children themselves, when asked why something should not be done, for example, lie, answer that this procedure is punishable and forbidden by the elderly, i.e. of authority. That respect and fear of the moral commander, according to Piaget, is the basis on which one builds and can understand adherence to commandments and imposed regulations (Piaget, 1997, 4). In such a position, there is no actual penetration into the meaning of moral norms, and even less in the values ​​ they originate, i.e. based on which they are built. Moral consciousness is only on the surface of ethics and is satisfied with external forms of behaviour. The criterion for Good (more precisely, for Correct) is based on whether an action agrees or disagrees with the rules prescribed by the authorities. Motives do not affect the ethical evaluation of actions.[[5]](#footnote-5)

With this, the children remain on the outside of the procedure. They are measured and judged based on whether an action has been taken or not and the magnitude of the real consequences. In the case of children, responsibility depends on the consequences (so-called "objective responsibility"), as well as on compliance with the requirements of the authority, and whether the action causes punishment or reward (Мирић, 2001, 101). This "moral realism", as Piaget calls it, is an expression of an essentially heteronomous phase in the individual's moral development. That realism enables action and living together, but the person does not have the quality of a free and authentically responsible moral subject. Hence, morality is understood as authoritarian.

The second phase is the *phase of moral autonomy*, in which the person expresses self-understanding as a moral subject and consciously directs himself towards moral action as an expression of the implementation of *his* ethical values ​​and principles. Morality is understood as a free action (Piaget, 1997, 110-112). In assessing moral personality and action, the meaning and significance of intention dominate, and responsibility is an expression of subjective understanding, and there is no need to reward or punish as an incentive for moral action or something else. Heteronomy and autonomy are the basic categories for distinguishing these important developmental and ethical phases of personality:[[6]](#footnote-6) "For smaller children, the rules are sacred, and they have the property of tradition, and for older children, the rules depend on the agreement. Heteronomy and autonomy are two poles of this evolution" (Piaget, 1997, 84-100). Piaget even calls them special morals: the morality of heteronomy is characterised by respect for external, usually parental (and similar) authority. *The morality of autonomy* is characterised by mutual respect for individuals and their cooperation (especially among peers and neighbours). From this, Piaget draws consistent knowledge about two morals, with appropriate consequences for looking at life stages, for ethical content and form, and the educational, especially ethical-educational process.[[7]](#footnote-7)

According to Piaget, who is one of the most outstanding researchers of the intellectual development of man[[8]](#footnote-8), there is a significant correlation between the cognitive and the affective. It also establishes the parallelism of moral and intellectual development, that is, the development of the ethics of the personality with its development in the cognitive sphere.

At the same time, he builds a theory of the stages of moral development. In childhood, according to Piaget, there are four such stages, according to the way of adopting the rules of morality: motor (between 1-2 years), egocentric (between 2-8 years), the stage of the beginnings of cooperation (between 8-11 years), the stage of codification of rules (starting at 12 years of age). Researchers after him, like William Kay, based on his findings, divided into *four stages of moral development*: egocentric, authoritarian, reciprocal and equal (Kay, 1970, 158-168).

Thus, researching concrete moral judgment in children, Jean Piaget gave significant explanations about the nature of morality and ethical development of personality. There are two types of moral structures in the world, as there are two types of social and cognitive structures. For some, assimilation prevails over accommodation, while for others, equality of intra-individual and inter-individual operating structures is expressed. The transition from moral heteronomy to ethical autonomy is essential for a truly creative human world. This transition is *a process* in which the manifestations and manifestations of heteronomy gradually lose their strength, and manifestations of autonomy begin to appear and prevail, which, by the way, were not noticed in earlier childhood. In personality development, "autonomization" becomes its essential characteristic. Thus, it is not a stage of individual development but a *unique path* by which a person reaches the stage of maturity and ethical development. That is why we can and should talk about Ethical education of personality.

In the case of Lawrence Kohlberg, he provided a critical theory about the stages of moral development, with which he expanded, detailed and further explained the basic positions of Piaget. In his book "Philosophy of Moral Development" (Kohlberg, 1981), he points to the reality of ethical development as a process that leads a person from the norms of authority to the norms immanent to the action and knowledge of the person (for example, those about reciprocity and sympathy). Thus, Kohlberg establishes *six stages* in the development of moral judgment[[9]](#footnote-9), which are manifested at *three levels* of moral consciousness: pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional; each level has two stages.[[10]](#footnote-10) At the first level, social, moral consciousness manifests itself as *subordination* to moral principles, i.e., the difference between the moral consciousness of the individual and the prevailing moral principles. This is typical for children under the age of nine, some young people, and most people with deviant behaviour. A general agreement on moral principles characterises the second level. This is the status of morality in most young people and adults in all human societies. Finally, the third level is the state of *high moral principles* of personality (that is why it is also called "level of principles" or "level of self-acceptance of moral principles"). This level has been reached only in some adults and only after the age of twenty, and it refers to the true ethical dimensions of human existence, when high and new moral values, directions and principles are created.

Kohlberg believes that these three levels of morality are manifested through three types of personality relations according to social norms and requirements "between the self and social rules and expectations" (Kohlberg*,* 1976, 33). "For the pre-conventional personality, rules and social expectations remain external; for the conventional person I identify with the rules, or internalise the rules of others, especially those emanating from authority; the post-conventional (i.e. autonomous) person distinguishes his Self from social rules, and determines his values ​​through individually chosen principles" (Миочиновиќ, 1988, 50).

All three moral levels represent *three types of moral orientation*. The first level is characterised by "concrete individual orientation"; at the second level, the person is "part of society"; the most crucial feature of the third level is the priority of "social orientation". In this social sense, at the first level, the person is concerned with social approval; at the second level are her efforts to be loyal to individuals, social groups and authorities; at the third level, it cares about the well-being of other people and society.

From all this comes Kolberg's very significant knowledge about the dominant motives in the development of personality arises, which he summarises in 6 moral and social stages:

"- in the first stage, the person tries to be obedient and avoid punishment;

- in the second stage, she tries to deserve a reward and to protect her personal interest, and slowly discovers the importance of relationships with other people;

- in the third stage, the individual seeks to achieve agreement among individuals and to avoid resentment and disapproval of others because of her behaviour;

- in the fourth stage, the motive of the person is oriented towards law and order, which means that he tries to avoid disapproval by legitimate authorities, as well as the feeling of guilt that would arise from it;

- in the fifth stage, the motive of the person is a social agreement, i.e. the desire to win the approval of impartial friends, who seek to ensure the welfare of society;

- in the sixth stage, with an orientation towards universal ethical principles, and through an intimate relationship with morality, a high sense of self-dignity is formed in a person" (Сотирова, 1995, 76–78).

Creating such a personality is the task of today's education, especially ethical education as a specific type of personal education. Through ethical education, new anthropological and psychological knowledge is gained about the structure of the personality and its development from a heteronomous to an autonomous being, which only brings its own ethical values ​​and moral norms. With this, philosophers, psychologists and pedagogues have found a new way and aspect of personality building.

New scientific knowledge examines the essence of the ethical development of a person from the youngest years to maturity. It is not enough for a person to adapt to real or imagined moral values, he needs to be able to design life, to reveal real problems and to solve them in a human way, which leads to progress. This is the essence of ethical education as new content in raising young generations, and through which the need for the existence of a new pedagogical field, which we call ethical education, is justified and proven.

It is a new teaching material and subject by which the content and methods of autonomous ethical thinking are introduced into the overall educational process, and the necessary level of moral upbringing of young generations is expanded and strengthened. This also refers to the broader framework of human design of life and the world as the first basis and conditions of its overall survival and action and as the basis of its evaluation and action. That is why the ethical "doctrine" must contain modern society's ethical orientations and values​​, especially in Europe. This is followed by knowledge, ethical requirements and norms of current and future highly developed human civilisation, and the system of moral and legal norms of modern society, given its announced plans and desired life goals, human relations, and visions of building individual human resources, human personality, and its actions and relationships in a society with others.

In a narrower context, at the beginning of this long-term and important ethical education, there are certainly lessons for the youngest about the ethical importance of proper conduct; lessons on the necessity of understanding oneself and others; lessons about the fundamental importance of a sense of personal responsibility for one's own good and the good of others. What follows is the development of their ethical awareness of problems, the need to make the right decisions, and the value of their actions. Over the years, as social and political awareness develops, so does the educational activity of improving knowledge about people and their interpersonal relationships. For example, during puberty, the consciousness of young people must focus on sexual love and the importance of correct and cooperative sexual relations with the other, "opposite" sex. In all periods of education, health ethics should be supported and encouraged, as well as work habits and ethics of action and the moral system of proper spending, saving and investing. At the end of adolescence, all these questions are repeated at a higher level of self-knowledge and self-awareness of the most important problems, dilemmas and solutions.[[11]](#footnote-11)

Presented following the levels of education, the goal of ethical education in primary schools is to contribute to the personal and moral awareness of young people and their self-awareness in the network of social relations in which they find themselves; in getting acquainted with the basic moral norms in the most significant areas of their practical life (in work, emotional relations, health and other social relations). In secondary education, the primary intention is for young people at this age to get acquainted with the value aspects of ethics, the mechanism of ethical decision-making, significant global solutions to ethical dilemmas, as well as values ​​and norms in some important areas of life (health, family, work, politics, etc.). As for higher education, students should "study the most important ideas of moral life and action, to get acquainted with the views of the most famous ethical thinkers and the basics of professional morality" (Лозановски, 1999, 14-15).

Since young people are idealists and have not yet been "corrupted" by the reality of a bad life, it is ethical education, especially during primary and secondary school, that can directly positively impact their moral attitudes and commitments. Therefore, they are the most susceptible demographic population for moral education (Гоцевски & Панзова & Темков, 1998, 4). In doing so, special attention should be paid to a specific historical situation in our region: given the dissatisfaction of our youth with the development of events in our societies, and given the relative uncertainty of their perspective, which creates confusion, it is essential that ethical education strengthens their beliefs in the value of life and life obligations, as well as to provide them with knowledge about the importance and convenience of morality for the overall life and value of the human person. "People need new contents, new challenges, new goals, and all these aims to achieve the highest virtue: to be and to remain a Man" (Letter from a group of philosophy students at the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje, 1998, 7). In essence, such ethical education at this age would be a moral upbringing and prerequisite for the developed ethical life of future adults and mature individuals in a healthy ethical environment and the value system of a mature society. "Without ethical education, generations of children and young people are doomed in advance to complete disorientation, which in the period of transition has disrupted the traditional values ​​of their parents. The irresponsible attitude towards ourselves and the world is only a consequence of our present disorder and chaotic moral situation. That is why ethical education and ethics should start in education (...) until they become an integral part of the culture of life, in which good will be the imperative and the meaning of existence" (Франговска, 1998, 54-55).

**We and the world in relation to ethical education**

Such ethical education is necessary for modern society and humanity, and it has found and is still trying to find somewhere its place in the system of overall education and various types of education: health, political, environmental, economic, etc. (Kung, 1996, 281-283). Moreover, ethical education is basic for all forms of practical education today (such as mathematics for all-natural sciences) (Ibid.). All these educational areas complement the education map, in which the classic educational areas are supplemented with new types of educational enrichment and raising of young personalities.

In *Italy*, religious education or an alternative subject (usually ethics) is taught in all (six) years of a classical or real grammar school for 1 hour per week, as well as in all years of all other forms of secondary education (2 or 1 hour per week) (Pedrini, 1996, 39-49).

In *Finland*, ethics or religious education (according to the student's choice) is taught in all three years of secondary school, 2 hours per week in the first and second year, and 1 hour per week in the third year (Kartovaara, 1996, 21).

Ethical education is also part of the education system in *Australia*. Emphasis is placed on enabling young people to make moral choices in a democratic society: "Children and young people as human beings have the potential to make their own choices and choices, and ethics should enable them to make the right choices" (Hill, 1995, 162-163).

In *Slovenia*, the subject of Moral Education is taught in the last two years of primary education in the seventh and eighth grade with 2 hours per week (Piciga, 1995, 30).

In *Croatia*, ethics classes are taught in all four grades of secondary schools, as an elective subject parallel with religious education. The explanation for this ethical-pedagogical endeavour says that "Croatian education accepts the practice of most European countries". The course Ethics aims to "introduce the pluralism of worldview in our era, introduce students to the world of values, to acquaint them with the richness of European and national culture and to help them find their own identity. With this subject, students will be confronted with the contents of ethical and religious science, which will enable them to grow, develop and mature into responsible, aware and tolerant individuals" (*Nastavni programi za srednje škole*, 1996, 177). This program has been implemented since 1996 with 2 hours per week, or 70 hours per year. The course is taught by graduate professors of philosophy and graduate theologians.

In *Slovakia*, this subject is called "Ethical Education" (Etickávýchova), and it is taught for five years in the upper grades of primary school and the first two years in secondary schools.[[12]](#footnote-12) This subject is set in parallel with religious education, of which students choose one and follow it (and religious education is included in the teaching of ethical issues). Ethical education in primary schools extends the presentation of basic moral lessons in the first four grades of primary school, which the teacher transmits. This subject is taught in higher grades (grades 5-9 of primary school) for one hour a week, and it is taught by specialised teachers of ethics and civic education or teachers of other subjects (with additional pedagogical qualification).

Teaching is continuous and applies elaborate methodological principles, so in high schools in Slovakia, ethics is taught under the same name, "Ethical Education", in the first two years, with one hour per week. The goals of this course are "to develop the personality and its personal identity and value orientation, especially in relation to man's nature, work, social forms and national values" (*Etická výchova*, 1997, 2). Graduate students of philosophy must teach the subject of Ethics Education in all secondary schools at the Faculty of Philosophy in Bratislava and two other cities in Slovakia or in the group Ethics and Civic Education at Teachers' Faculties in Bratislava and Nitra. Also, ethics can be taken at the matriculation exams as one of the elective subjects. In Slovakia, two high school ethics textbooks are used, which express different orientations and dilemmas when designing the teaching contents of this subject. This is Dr Ján Vajda's book "Ethics" (Vajda, 1995), and the second textbook in use in Ethical Education, Dr Jana Miedzgová's book "Fundamentals of Ethics", which is the most widespread textbook of ethics in secondary schools in Slovakia (Miedzgová, 1994).

In *Bulgaria*, ethics was introduced as a standard high school subject in the first years of social transition, and it is taught in the many philosophical subjects represented in secondary education in 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grades, with 2 hours per week (Damianova-Ivanova, 1995, 50-51), including and Philosophy, History of Philosophy, Philosophy of Law and Aesthetics. Three textbooks were made for this class: the textbook "Ethics" for the 10th grade by Krasimir Mutafcieva (Мутафчиева, 1995), textbook "Ethics" for 11th grade, Krasimira Mutafcieva and Mariana Pencheva (Мутафчиева & Пенчева, 1992), and which was the first textbook in the Republic of Bulgaria made at the time of the rise of philosophical education after the beginning of the transition period, as well as the textbook "Ethics" by Nedeljka Videva and Petar Goranov (Видева & Горанов, 1994).

Based on all this, Ethical education is one of the most modern pedagogical phenomena in the world today, its necessity and essential location in the nomenclature of educational activities that make up today's education (intellectual, health, cultural, mathematical, natural sciences, etc.) that we too should approach its implementation and development in our schools.[[13]](#footnote-13) In this context, in N. Macedonia, experimental teaching and research on the needs and possibilities of ethical education in all grades of secondary schools, as well as in the class and subject phase of primary education, but also in kindergartens, while in several high schools began teaching Ethics in the first two years, and as an elective were made. Namely, the need for such widespread Ethical education at all educational levels is explained by the great need for teaching Ethics, with the diversity of students' ages, and the breadth of ethical content, which has different goals and achievements at different ages.

In *primary education*, between the ages of 10 and 13, students should be introduced to primary and standardised ethical attitudes about morality as a form of social relations, the ethical dimension of the human personality, and special issues that interest and "torture" young people in that period. In *secondary education*, students between the ages of 15-17 should be acquainted with the system of human values ​​and, the mechanism of moral choices and decisions and the specific values ​​of health, social, family, work, and political ethics. Finally, in *higher education*, according to the logic of the scientific approach at that educational level, the content of Ethical Education would be acquaintance with the most important ethical ideas of humankind, with the modern ethical system and with the specific morals of the profession (deontology, professional ethics). That is why it is suggested that ethical education has three levels and forms.

Since in primary education, Ethics teaching should have a more pronounced form of moral education and an initial approach to building positive methods in the socialisation of personality, and in studies, Ethics teaching should have emphasised scientific research content. Ethics teaching in secondary education should be separated into a special ethical -pedagogical sense. This is the "purest" form of ethical education, according to the previously presented concepts of Piaget and Kohlberg, which are primarily aimed at special value education and personality development, or to engage personal potential in understanding, evaluating, choosing and accepting social and high personal values ​​as prerequisites "for the developed ethical life of future adults and mature individuals, in a healthy ethical environment and with the value system of a mature society" (Темков, 1998, 162). Along with this, the pedagogical practice has been enriched, and special literature for the ethical education of young people is being created.

**Conclusion**

 In summary, ethical education is a new but necessary teaching area built into the system and forms of education in all countries of the world. It is an expression of the new ethical spirit of the epoch and the knowledge of modern developmental psychology and pedagogy. That is why it has become an educational hit (Davis, 1999, VII), something that is unavoidable on the way to building young personalities, and an essential informative and emotional "baggage" of a new personality, which "conquers" the world, but which the world needs with its purity, existential creativity and moral courage. It is about the ethics of life, the value and activist dimensions of morality; ethics necessary for young generations to realise their duties and responsibilities in preserving and further developing the world.

More concrete, ethical education is the latest type of philosophical education of the younger generations. The teaching of philosophy is the development of the spirit and the path to self-awareness and awareness of human duty. Ethical knowledge and feelings are the basis for a person's human, moral, and intellectual development. That is why UNESCO insists on developing regular philosophical and ethical education of young people at all levels of education (*Париска декларација за философијата*, 1996, 144). In the encounter with ethical issues and contents, the young person fits into the world's reality as a human work. Through ethics, it manages to realise that personality is continuity, but also progress; that the individual is part of his small community, but also an integral part of the whole world; that she is the builder of her home and family, but also the common builder (with all people) of all humankind.

All of the above only emphasises once again that the vision of personality has changed instead of an authoritarian personality, the personality of a bully, the ideal is for it to become a creator and collaborator, one who is compassionate and willing to share a concern for the world with everyone; instead of a "warrior," the ideal is a "builder." Based on these ideals with its insistence on virtue, well-being, altruism, positive egoism, cooperation, solidarity, the overall solutions it offers for the problems of endangering human survival and the new rise of humanism, ethical education becomes the leading spiritual discipline and necessary part of education. Such Ethical Education is proposed by the International Organization for Education, Science and Culture - UNESCO. It is introduced at all levels of education of young people to prepare for the significant challenges facing humanity in the 21st century. Therefore, in the pedagogical wholeness, in addition to intellectual, professional, technical, health and other types of education, ethical education was introduced in primary education, secondary education, and academic education as a kind of continuity in which basic topics and basic contemporary values ​​are studied through the cyclical-educational process.

This is the meaning of introducing ethical education in the new school system, which will develop in the same way as the problems on the path of human development. That is why ethical education is an indispensable part of the overall education of world educational practice. Such teaching would help young people understand the reality and significance of moral problems in society. It would strive for them to realise positive conceptual solutions to the value of life; to become acquainted with the axiology of modern humanity and our society; with a hierarchy of values, i.e. with the knowledge that specific norms for moral conduct and behaviour arise from more abstract, lasting and higher life interests, values ​​and goals.

Ethical education would build in young people faith and confidence in the assigned duties and responsibilities, and the necessity of their execution; it would acquaint them with the peculiarities and peculiarities of responsibilities and norms in various spheres of moral human life, personal, intimate, family, private, public, professional, social, political; it would teach them the importance and significance of bioethics, health ethics and the most important aspects of preserving the health and life of humans and other biological species without which even the human species cannot survive; it would teach them how to avoid addictions and to guard against dangerous infectious diseases. Such teaching would encourage our descendants to modern knowledge of environmental ethics. It perhaps most importantly would teach them and enable them to make ethical "accounts", i.e. directed towards taking into account personal interests and their harmonisation with the general, and vice versa. By developing a critical and self-critical awareness for detecting and distinguishing false from true interests and values, ethical education would strive to create modern and free personalities from young generations of men and women and good people while becoming and remaining true friends of themselves and others (Пешевска-Заревска, 2003, 38).

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1. Kant also pointed out that "man is the only being who is subject to upbringing". This is the basic idea of ​​pedagogical need and activity (Kant, 1994, 139; 1922, 3). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. As far as illustration is concerned, the famous German ethicist and theologian Hans King points out the problems in the ethical consciousness of young people, in which a crisis of values ​​and disorientation in moral norms and actions is noticed (Küng, 1996, 173). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Namely, it was considered that the school and the teacher should not have a prominent upbringing role, and that was not only a concept, but also a practice, which turned out to be very negative for the ethical conditions of the young generations. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Moral upbringing is an integral part of general education, and the theory of moral upbringing is an integral part of pedagogy (Vukasović, 1993, 17). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Look: Piaget, 1978, 99; there are hundreds of such examples in this book from Piaget's research in the early 1930s. Or the english translation: Piaget, 1997. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Look: Davidson & Youniss, 1991. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Look; Pijaže, 1979, as well as a selection from his works entitled *Развој на интелигенцијата*, Просветно дело, Скопје, 1988. On the significance of this intellectualist conception of Piaget for his ethical and educational views, see in: Миочиновиќ, 1988. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Look: Singer, 1991, 464–475. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. For developmental stages in Kolberg: Kapor-Stanulović, 1988, 95–101. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Detailed look chapter IV, *Making Ethical Choices - Resolving Ethical Dilemmas*, from Scott, 1998. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. About the teaching of Ethics in Slovakia see Temkov, 1998. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. The same issue was raised by the Institute of Philosophy of the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje with sending the *Иницијатива за воведување настава по Етика,*from the 5 of March, 1998. As a result of this initiative, as well as other current ones, and especially the previous ones, in N. Macedonia, in the fall of 1998, Experimental teaching of Ethics was started in four high schools, while in primary education experimental teaching was conducted in 2000, in one sixth grade class. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)