

The Concept of Ethical Education in CR and Possible Inspirations in the Concept of Philip Cam

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Introduction

Valid from September 1st, 2010 by decision of Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic (MŠMT) a new supplementary educational subject called Ethical Education (EE) was introduced in the General Educational Program for primary¹ education. In academic circles and schools this step on the part of the Ministry is generally perceived as an expression of a shift in the view of man, as placing an emphasis on human development and the related requirement for a new conception and realization of education in schools. The vision of the concept of EE in CR is a “morally mature human being characterized by empathy, creativity, healthy self-confidence, positive evaluation of self and others and prosocial forms of behaviour.”² The concept has adherents and critics.³

This paper intends to contribute to the current discussion over the concept of EE in CR and its importance in state schools, without being a pointed defence or criticism. The goal is somewhat more modest, though it is not, as we believe, insignificant for the discussion. We intend to attempt to compare the concept of EE in CR with the concept of Ethical Education co-authored as part of the Australian educational reform (*Ethical Behaviour for the new Australian National Curriculum*) by the author of the successful pilot program of EE for state schools in New South Wales and Australian teacher Philip Cam.⁴ In that we want to point out the possible inspirations it contains for a better understanding of the significance of EE in Czech state schools and its more effective realization. This comparison is at hand, as the approach formulated by Philip Cam is close to the values and goals formulated in the concept of EE in CR, and also because in Australian schools EE has been taught already for some time as a compulsory subject. Thanks to that there is reflected experience with this practice, which confirms its positive results. Our methodology corresponds to our intention formulated above. We will not provide a detailed analysis and evaluation of the two concepts, but merely a brief presentation of their basic determinative features and general characteristics. By means of the method of simple comparison we will then attempt to highlight possible inspiring moments contained in Philip Cam's concept of EE for the form

1 In secondary schooling ethical education has been part of the educational curriculum of schools since 2006. Cf. © ETICKÉ FÓRUM, *Etická výchova pro zš a sš od ledna 2014*, p. 7 (online), at: <http://www.etickeforumcr.cz/eticka-vychova/o-eticke-vychove>, retrieved November 23rd, 2015.

2 © ETICKÁ VÝCHOVA, *O čem je Etická výchova?*, 2014 (online), at: <http://www.etickavychova.cz/predstavujeme-etickou-vychovu>, retrieved November 10th, 2015.

3 The concept of EE in CR is e.g. criticised for being rather or merely prosocial education, not EE in proper sense of the word. Cf. on that Jindřich ŠRAJBER, *Když „Etická výchova“ nemusí být etickou výchovou*, *Caritas et veritas* 2/2012, p. 16.

4 Philip Cam (Australia) is Associate Professor at the School of Humanities and Languages at the University of New South Wales in Sydney. He studied at the University in Adelaide and in Oxford, where he obtained the doctorate of philosophy. Philip Cam is Chair of the Federation of Australasian Philosophy in Schools Associations and Chair of the Philosophy in Schools Association of New South Wales. For a number of years he was Chair of the Asia Pacific Network for Philosophical Education for Life in Democratic Society and in cooperation with UNESCO edited a series of books on philosophy, democracy, education and values. He is also co-author of the EE conception within the Australian educational reform (*Ethical Behaviour for the new Australian National Curriculum*) and author of the successful EE pilot program for state schools in New South Wales.

and realization of the concept of EE in CR. These moments then in themselves represent an implicit criticism, or on the contrary confirm the substantiation of the concept of EE in CR and the approaches contained in it.

1. The concept of Ethical Education in the Czech Republic

1.1 Points of departure and purpose

The Ministry of Education was moved to introduce the educational subject Ethical Education into Czech schools, as already indicated above, primarily by the finding that “in our schooling system a subject systematically developing the moral aspect of the pupils’ personality is lacking.”⁵ The more general intention of the Ministry of Education is thus basically to support the spiritual and moral renewal of society, including greater activation of cooperation of family and school in values determinative for the education of a child.⁶ In a pupil it is a matter of acquiring social skills, in which she will be “led”: “to make and sustain satisfactory relationships, to form a true idea of herself, to creatively solve everyday problems, to formulate own opinions and attitudes based on own judgment with use of findings from discussion with others, to critically perceive the influence of models in forming own worldview, to understand basic environmental and ecological problems and connections of the modern world, and others.”⁷

The introduction of EE into Czech schools is finally especially due to the activity of the civic association “Ethical Forum” (EF), which followed up on the results of international surveys asking about factors determining the development of human character.⁸ These surveys have shown that “what in a fundamental way affects the development of character in the desirable direction is so-called prosociality, which is the ability to show benevolent love.”⁹ In other words “it is behaviour aimed at help or the benefit of other persons, groups or social goals, without there being an external reward for the author of the behaviour. This means that the prerequisite and motive of prosocial behaviour is the inner need to do what benefits the other and not expect a counter-service.”¹⁰ On this basis the EF association, viz. Pavel Motyčka and Zdislava Vyvozilová, inspired especially by the project of prosocial education of the Spanish professor Roche-Olivar and the project of EE created and realized by the Slovak pedagogue L. Lencz,¹¹ created a complete material for realizing EE in schools. The Ministry of Education then officially accepted it as suitable material for teaching the subject EE in state schools.¹²

5 © MŠMT, *Kurikulum Etická výchova* (online), at: <http://www.msmt.cz/vzdelavani/zakladni-skolstvi/kurikulum-eticka-vychova>, retrieved November 10th, 2015.

6 Cf. © MŠMT, *Deklarace* (online), at: <http://www.msmt.cz/vzdelavani/zakladni-vzdelavani/konference-eticka-vychova-duben-2010>, retrieved November 10th, 2015.

7 © MŠMT, *Kurikulum Etická výchova*.

8 Cf. © ETICKÁ VÝCHOVA, *Historie předmětu Etické výchovy*, 2014 (online), at: <http://www.etickavychova.cz/historie-predmetu-etv>, retrieved November 23rd, 2015.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

11 Cf. *ibid.*

12 © ETICKÉ FÓRUM, *Etická výchova pro zřa sš od ledna 2014*, p. 8.

1.2 Educational style and methods

Unlike classical pedagogy building of individual work with pupil (student) with focus on her decent behaviour and discipline, the concept of EE in CR, based primarily on the project of Education to Prosociality by Roche-Olivar and EE by Ladislav Lenzc, prefers prosociality, cooperativeness, sensitivity for others. In that it first of all wants to equip pupils and students for the requirements of family, social, political and economic life, which rely on cooperation and teamwork.¹³ The mentioned projects are built on factors conditioning and promoting desirable behaviour of pupils and students and represent the main sections of the program. These are: 1. communication, greeting, question, answer, thanks, clarification, apology; 2. dignity of the human person; self-knowledge, self-acceptance; positive evaluation of self (self-esteem); getting to know one's strong points in the form of games; distinguishing between good and evil; 3. positive evaluation of others; praise; respect for others, attitude to the ill, attitude to old people; 4. creativity and initiative; solving problems and tasks, games and task for developing creativity; problems, collages, completing figures, finishing stories; drawing, appreciating music; reaching decisions, etc.; 5. expressing own feelings and their regulation; 6. interpersonal and social empathy (appreciating the ideas, positions and feelings of others or other social groups); 7. assertiveness; coping with aggression and competitiveness; self-control; solving conflicts; 8. empathy; 9. real and represented models (literary, from the media, but also models from real life); 10. prosocial behaviour in personal relationships; help, giving, sharing, cooperation, friendship; 11. prosocial behaviour in public life; solidarity; social problems; protecting nature and its ethical aspects. The application topics are: 1. relationships in family; 2. sexual ethics; 3. ethical issues of ecology; 4. relationship to economic values; relationship to work; 5. relationship to spiritual values; 6. relationship to persons with different opinions; 7. relationship to the media.¹⁴

The concept of EE in CR based on the two models (projects) mentioned above also assumes a specific educational style, attitude and relationship of teacher to pupils. This relationship ought to be joyful, partner-like and friendly, although demanding and rigorous in requirements. It is not authoritative. The basic rules of the educational style of ethical education are formulated as follows: 1. Form the class into an educational community. 2. Accept the child as it is and display friendly feelings to her. 3. Ascribe positive characteristics to children, especially prosociality. Express positive expectations. 4. Formulate clear and compliant rules of the game. 5. React to negative phenomena by calmly pointing out their consequences (inductive discipline). 6. Exhort, it is a proven educational means. Urge them to positive behaviour. 7. Use rewards and punishments cautiously. 8. Involve parents in the educational process. 9. Bring joy.¹⁵ The basic ambition of the educational method is to reach the hearts of pupils (students), to educate them to friendship and cooperation by means of a friendly and joyful attitude, engage their interest by means of the educational methods of EE and at the same time gently guide them to reach the educational goals in accordance with the educational program. EE makes use of a broad spectrum of methods and techniques, especially those akin to the particular teacher. It can be recording scenes from television films, collecting newspaper articles, interview with parents or other persons, records of observations, writing diary, psychological games, family session at TV, project

¹³ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 8–9.

¹⁵ © ETICKÉ FÓRUM, *Etická výchova pro zš a sš od ledna 2014*, pp. 9–10.

learning, work with image, work with music, group cooperation, dramatization, structured drama, image-projective methods, etc.¹⁶

Making use of modern pedagogical-psychological methods in realizing EE has the goal of providing pupils (students) with experience and enabling them to form their own judgment. It is to be experiential learning, in which the children (students) learn from own experiences that naturally affect their attitudes and behaviour. The teacher remains in the background. She primarily creates the environment in which the children (students) have matters to consider, discuss, where they can play and experiment. The pupils' path to accepting the presented value or manner of behaviour has four steps: 1. Perception and sensitization – becoming more sensitive for a particular topic (emotional; rational). 2. Value reflection – give children space to say how they perceive the topic. 3. Practicing in class – particular practice of a social skill, technique, and again second reflection. 4. Real experience and connection to real life (generalization and transfer) – practicing, application in everyday life (in family, in the street, among friends). In that the interconnectedness of step 3 and 4 is very important.¹⁷

1.3 Position of Ethical Education in the educational process in the Czech Republic

In practice the above stipulated goals are realized in the topic area “Moral development” as part of the educational area Personality Social Education (PSE), where one of the subtopics are values, attitudes and practical ethics,¹⁸ and further in so-called curriculum of the supplementary educational subject EE.¹⁹ However, PSE is on the whole ethically neutral and its focal point consists in developing and improving communication skills.²⁰ The curriculum of the subject EE introduces ten topics/areas,²¹ into which all teaching contents is divided, whether in the form of a cross-sectional topic or supplementary subject, including also six application topics,²² which are an almost clear copy of education to prosociality according to R. Roche Olivar and EE by L. Lencz.

The general educational program for primary education further defines relationships of the subject Ethical Education to other educational spheres in which the concept is set. These are relationships with six educational spheres (ES): Language and Linguistic Communication; Man and His World; Man and Society; Man and Nature; Man and Culture; Man and Health. These spheres manifest themselves in six educational subjects: Czech Language and

16 Ibid, p. 10.

17 Ibid, p. 11.

18 © RVP METODICKÝ PORTÁL, *Osobnostní a sociální výchova* (online), at: http://wiki.rvp.cz/Knihovna/1.Pedagogick%C3%BD_lexikon/O/Osobnostn%C3%AD_a_soci%C3%A1ln%C3%AD_v%C3%BDchova, retrieved January 31st, 2015.

19 © MŠMT, *Kurikulum Etická výchova*.

20 Cf. © Pavel VACEK, *Etická výchova ve škole... už teď je pozdě!*, Referáty z konference Etická výchova (online), at: <http://www.msmt.cz/vzdelavani/zakladni-vzdelavani/referaty-z-konference-eticka-vychova?highlightWords=u%C5%BE+te%C4%8F+pozd%C4%B>, retrieved November 10th, 2015.

21 General topics of the curriculum: 1. interpersonal relationships and communication; 2. dignity of the human person; positive self-evaluation; 3. positive evaluation of others; 4. creativity and initiative; solving problems and tasks; accepting own and common decision; 5. communication of feelings; 6. interpersonal and social empathy; 7. assertiveness; coping with aggression and competitiveness; self-control; solving conflicts; 8. real and represented models; 9. prosocial behaviour in personal relationships; help, giving, sharing, cooperation, friendship; 10. prosocial behaviour in public life; solidarity and social problems. Cf. © MŠMT, *Kurikulum Etická výchova*.

22 Six application topics of the curriculum: ethical values, sexual health, family life, spiritual dimension of man, economic values, protection of nature and the environment, seeking truth and the good as part of human nature. Cf. *ibid*.

Literature; Foreign Language; Education to Citizenship; Science; Art; Education to Health; in one supplementary educational subject (SES): Dramatic Education; and with cross-sectional topics where EE follows up especially on the contents of personality and social, multicultural, environmental and media education.²³ All these inter-subject relations are aimed at the sphere of the pupil's social development. It is confirmed also by the following list of topics on which EE follows up in educational subjects by means of educational spheres: listening, speaking, writing and creative activities with literary text, communication in common everyday situations (ES Language and Linguistic Communication in educational subjects Czech Language and Literature, Foreign Language); home, school, family, human cohabitation, human behaviour, basic global problems, considerate behaviour to nature, protection of nature, partnership, parenthood and basic sexual education (ES Man and His World); our school, community, region, province, human meetings, human relationships, principles of human cohabitation, similarities and differences between humans, personal development, human inner world and human rights (ES Man and Society in educational subject Education to Citizenship); lifestyle and protection of nature and the environment (ES Man and Nature in educational subject Science); means for expressing emotions, feelings, moods, fantasies, notions and personal experience and confirming communicational effects (ES Man and Culture in educational subject Art); human relationships and forms of cohabitation, changes in human life and their reflection, healthy way of life and care of health, risks posing threat to health and their prevention and personality and social development (ES Man and Health in educational subject Education to Health); basic prerequisites of dramatic action and the process of dramatic and staging production (SES Dramatic Education).²⁴

1.4 Meaning, importance and goal of Ethical Education

The above presented, mostly "technical" and methodological form of the concept of EE in CR must – in order to facilitate adequate understanding – be supplemented by the meaning, importance and goal attributed to it, as formulated by selected authors linked to the concept of EE. These are ideas of Pavel Motyčka, Jiřina Tichá and Jan Sokol. Pavel Motyčka, at present also chair of the administrative board of the civic association "Ethical Education", formulates the conception of EE following up on J. Dewey's concept of pragmatic education (conception of *learning by doing*) and focuses on personality development in the sphere of virtues. He mentions the so-called life-hermeneutic approach as the point of departure of the conception of EE introduced in CR. The ethical dimension of this attitude according to him "consists in reflection in which the pupil together with others searches for basic life values and norms and thereby formulates his attitudes and ways of acting."²⁵ At present it is according to him insufficient to form an awareness of moral qualities, it is necessary "to work on systematic acquisition of classical virtues – important parts of the moral 'dimension' of man."²⁶ Jiřina Tichá in this context "underlines the importance of the context of the time

23 Cf. © Pavel MOTYČKA, *Etická výchova – cesta a naděje pro budoucí generace* (online), at: <http://www.msmt.cz/vzdelavani/zakladni-vzdelavani/konference-eticka-vychova-duben-2010>, retrieved November 10th, 2015.

24 © RÁMCOVÝ VZDĚLÁVACÍ PROGRAM. RVP ZV, 2015 (online), at: <http://rvp.cz/informace/dokumenty-rvp/rvp-zv>, retrieved November 25th, 2015.

25 © Pavel MOTYČKA, *Etická výchova – cesta a naděje pro budoucí generace*.

26 Ibid.

which amplifies the requirement of ethical education.”²⁷ In that she mentions that “after the so-called Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia and later in the Czech Republic at the time of uncontrolled transition to early capitalism there was neither time nor will to take heed of morality. Those who pointed out the importance of moral and value aspects of life were even perceived as brakes on the path to free market, prosperity and welfare.”²⁸ Jan Sokol perceives EE as “early and much more universal education”²⁹ that “can significantly help (pupils) in acquiring, understanding and internalising moral principles.”³⁰ As reasons for introducing EE in state schools he states that “if there is no public talk of something in modern society, there gradually arises the impression that it is a purely private matter, or that it is not at all, does not exist, (and therefore), if it is to be possible to dispassionately speak in public of moral and ethical issues, young people must learn it. As they have learnt to distinguish between correct and incorrect sentences in language, they ought to learn to distinguish between honest and dishonest, acceptable and unacceptable, licit and illicit behaviour.”³¹ According to Sokol EE has three main functions for pupils: “1. Remind them that they live in society where they certainly want to assert their rights and freedoms, but where necessary – though often unenforceable – obligations also issue from that; 2. Help them overcome infantile focusing on themselves and appreciate the moral aspect of human relationships and life in society; 3. Show them how these apparently abstract relationships manifest themselves at each step of everyday life, which they can make joyful or also unbearable to each other”,³² since “freedom in society is possible only if all adhere to certain rules and limitations.”³³ These statements manifest the ambition of acquisition (internalisation) of value attitudes in pupils linked to EE.

2. Philip Cam's Concept of Ethical Education

2.1 Points of departure and goals

Acquisition (internalisation) of value attitudes in pupils is the most basic ambition of Philip Cam's conception of EE. In creating the concept of Ethical Education Philip Cam finds basic inspiration in the method of philosophical dialogue of the program *Philosophy for Children* developed by the American professor of logic and aesthetics Matthew Lipman. Cam's concept of EE is realized in the Australian milieu specified below, which is very similar to the Czech milieu, especially with respect to the economic development of the country, to its democratic ordering and to future visions in the educational sphere.

Philip Cam presents his conception of EE in the book *Teaching Ethics in Schools*.³⁴ The author's involvement in the sphere of EE is also to a great extent influenced by the changes in Australian legislation, which reflect the changing attitudes in the issue of the need for moral

27 © Jiřina TICHÁ, *Význam doplňujícího vzdělávacího oboru Etická výchova pro výuku ve školách* (online), at: <http://www.msmt.cz/vzdelavani/zakladni-vzdelavani/konference-eticka-vychova-duben-2010>, retrieved November 10th, 2015.

28 Ibid.

29 © Jan SOKOL, *Etická výchova a svobodná společnost* (online), at: <http://www.msmt.cz/vzdelavani/zakladni-vzdelavani/konference-eticka-vychova-duben-2010?highlightWords=etick%C3%A1+v%C3%BDchova+sokol>, retrieved November 10th, 2015.

30 Ibid.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid.

34 Philip CAM, *Teaching Ethics in Schools*, Melbourne: ACER Press Australia, 2012.

education. Cam perceives this need as principal. As he writes in the book mentioned above: "We want our children to develop a strong sense of values and to learn to make the right ethical decisions."³⁵ Cam also regards reflecting the relationship between family and school in the issue of ethical education as very important. In that he believes that contemporary families do not fulfil the task of morally educating their children, and therefore this handicap in children must be compensated for by school, especially because the moral sphere is at present the source of numerous discussions and disagreements, which is due especially to the plurality of worldviews and religious convictions represented in Australian society.³⁶

Although belief does not manifest itself much in the practical life of Australians, it is evident that two religious traditions are crucial in forming the moral consciousness of the individual and society: Catholic and Anglican. These churches are the most numerous in Australia. Precisely on these two religious traditions Philip Cam formulates the principles of EE of children for Australian milieu. In that he is aware that state schools are attended by children from various social and religious milieus. As a consequence these schools are led to present some kind of general values to children, acceptable to all. According to Cam this conceals two dangers. On the one hand the danger of *value relativizing*, where values are subordinated to cultural and individual understanding, and on the other hand there is the threat of *cultural absolutism*, which can lead to enforced orthopraxy of one of the religious traditions. In confrontations with these dangers Cam formulates so-called middle approach. In his rendering the point is to encourage pupils to discussions and considered debates on the individual religious creeds and values,³⁷ whereby good moral judgement is not something that can develop automatically. "The development of good moral judgment takes time and effort, and benefits from a working knowledge of what is to make in various ways of forming such judgment."³⁸

To understand Cam's concept of EE adequately it is finally necessary to at least briefly outline the philosophical concept mentioned above (Philosophy for Children), on which Philip Cam draws in formulating his concept of EE and which is the basic construction element of his conception. This philosophical concept is based on the "belief that the truth and essence of things is best cognized in dialogue. In dialogue we can confront our knowledge and attitudes with the knowledge and attitude of others. (In that) dialogue is taken to be group discussion, shared searching for answers or solving problems."³⁹ An important characteristic of this dialogue is that "in the forefront there should not be the views of individuals and the effort to set them through, but rather the readiness to adjust one's idea."⁴⁰ In this dialogue independent thinking plays "an important part, but only in interaction in thinking with others, in mutual dialogue. In the centre of the community there is the topic or problem being solved and real effort to solve this problem. It is not a competition, who will beat who with his arguments, who is right and who is not, but shared searching. The goal is first of all the process, which helps to develop so-called critical, creative and carving thinking,

35 Ibid, p. 1.

36 Cf. ibid, p. 2.

37 Cf. ibid, pp. 4–5.

38 Ibid, p. 7.

39 © FILOZOFIE PRO DĚTI, *Co je filozofie pro děti*, 2015 (online), at: <http://www.p4c.cz/index.php?s=o-projektu>, retrieved November 10th, 2015.

40 Ibid.

i.e., leads to correct justification of statements and to stipulating logical criteria, develops imagination, emphasizes the emotional dimension of searching (interest to find something out).⁴¹ But critical and creative thinking itself is not reaching the goal according to this philosophical concept. As Lipman notes, “to critical and creative thinking the value and emotional dimension must be added. Only then (...) will development of logically correct judgement facilitate easier deciding for practical action. (...) It is not a matter of learning what is right, but of being able to discern or based on suitable criteria decide for what is right. This philosophical concept strives to develop the ability to quickly and critically think in everyday situations, reflect the outside world, as well as own thought.”⁴²

In order to understand Cam’s concept of EE generally it is also necessary to emphasize that based on the interconnectedness of the philosophical concept (Philosophy for Children) with Cam’s conception of EE, the key concepts for Cam, as basis of “teaching” EE, or their individual steps, are ethical inquiry and collaboration. According to Cam they are the basic construction elements of the functionality of the conception of teaching EE. Cam is convinced that if the teacher herself does not understand its essence and cannot apply it, the conception loses meaning. With respect to the importance of this basic element of Cam’s conception, or rather the prerequisite of successful teaching of EE, Cam created a scheme (methodology), which is a tabular representation of the process of ethical inquiry in its individual phases. Each of these phases consists of ethical inquiry and work on forming collaborative ethical inquiry (collaboration). We will now present the individual phases of Cam’s concept.

2.2 The process of Ethical Education according to the program of Philip Cam

2.2.1 Stimulating – inciting the atmosphere of “ethical inquiry” through a situation

According to Cam the first phase involves setting a situation containing an ethical problem or an ethical question.

*Ethical inquiry*⁴³

According to Cam inciting the process of ethical inquiry does not arise spontaneously but by presenting a particular situation familiar to the students. They have so much experience with it that they are willing to discuss it. In other words: ethical inquiry does not begin without a question or a problem whose contents would interest and motivate the group. But school environment is not suited to immediate solving of moral issues and problems, but to acquiring an awareness how the pupils should be able to act with respect to such a question or issue. That is why it is necessary to use real topics from life that will sufficiently catch the pupils’ attention and incite them to take part. In selecting the topic the teacher must not imagine possible questions beforehand or answer the questions already mentioned in the text. That could negatively influence the process of shared inquiry.

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid.

43 Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 72–74.

*Collaboration*⁴⁴

The atmosphere plays an important part. If the pupils are afraid they could say the wrong answer or be ridiculed for their opinion, it will certainly not nurture inquiry. It is essential that all students see one another throughout the time of the inquiry and that the teacher is part of the group and not its head. Group direction is very simple – only one speaks at a time and pupils follow up on one another. At the end of the lesson they must know that there can often be more than one correct answer to a given question.

2.2.2 Setting the agenda

In the second phase of Cam's concept pupils formulate the question or problem and form inquiry questions.

*Ethical inquiry*⁴⁵

In the second step of "setting the agenda" pupils learn to recognize the ethical question or ethical problem and form a question that would be so-called first probe of their ethical inquiry. The question must be formulated so that it manifests the pupil's interest in searching for an answer. The question is the basic construction element of the process of inquiry. The pupils must know that even in normal everyday life moral questions or problems are not presented to us, we must search for them. There can be different views of certain issues or questions. That is why we must enquire together which view we ought to take and how to act.

*Collaboration*⁴⁶

After using the motivation material the teacher asks the pupils to suggest a problem or question they find interesting. It is also possible to divide pupils in groups, each of which has the task of pointing out a problem or posing a question. The individual formulated problems or questions are written on the board. Then the problem/question with which most pupils want to engage is selected, e.g. by vote. It is then written on a clean board.

2.2.3 Suggesting

The third step in Cam's concept is sharing opinions, suggestions and ideas.

*Ethical inquiry*⁴⁷

Ethical enquiry begins, as Cam underlines, when the pupil begins to make suggestions for solving, answering the question. The suggestions take various forms, e.g. the form of estimates, conjectures, estimated meanings, proposed explanations, etc. The goal of this part is first of all to involve all pupils so that they learn to perceive the importance of posing questions themselves and to accept and respect the questions or ideas of others – positing counterexamples.

*Collaboration*⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 83–84.

⁴⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 74–75.

⁴⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 85–86.

⁴⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 75–76.

⁴⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 86–87.

Here begins, according to Cam, work with pupils' suggestions and eventually the value of collaboration stands out. The inquiry includes the phases of selecting the way to solve the problem. In ethics this step includes matters such as choosing between two different ways of dealing with the situation, choice between different ethical principles, relying on different values or deciding between two points of view concerning human character or behaviour. Pupils make suggestions as to how to solve the given problem/question. All suggestions are written under the question on the board.

2.2.4 Reasoning about suggestions

The next step in Cam's concept is drawing out meanings, implications and assumptions.

*Setting the agenda*⁴⁹

One of the key rules according to Cam is the origin of ethical questions. It is a matter of presenting an ethical question and problem to pupils and introducing material they will perceive at personal level. To appreciate this fact adequately we need to keep in mind that in everyday life ethical problems and issues are not immediately visible. We need to identify them and express them for ourselves. Pupils should therefore be classically asked to identify the ethical question and problems contained in the inciting materials, rather than that we do the work for them beforehand.

*Ethical inquiry*⁵⁰

At this moment the teacher plays an important part, as she – although not formally educated in logic – can note the common illogical ideas in her pupils. It is necessary to carefully follow the pupils' way of reasoning so that their arguments are not too weak, as that would later jeopardize the process of justifying moral judgements and of forming moral judgment as such in general.

Cam believes that justification can disclose the assumptions on which the suggestions are based. It is highly practical. It often happens that suggestions are based on false assumptions. The situation can also occur in which it is found out in discussion that a proposed principle is generally inapplicable or expressly unsuitable for some situations.

*Collaboration*⁵¹

Justification, as Cam reminds us, is forming/suggesting conclusions based on stated assumptions. Assumptions are necessary to support suggestions. If an assumption is disputed, it must be crossed out. The problem is that pupils do not naturally work with their assumptions/points of departure. At the same time it will be difficult for a pupil to accept that his assumption is disputed. At such a moment it is the teacher's task to enable the pupil to see that he forms disputable assumptions, in order for him to understand the necessity of the process of disputing. All disputations must be recorded on the board.

49 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 74.

50 Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 76–77.

51 Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 87–89.

2.2.5 Evaluating suggestions

This phase has to do with “appealing to criteria, evidence and counter-examples”.⁵²

*Ethical inquiry*⁵³

This step deals with the impact of the individual suggestions or answers to the initial question. According to Cam it is alright if a pupil raises the objection that the impact version is a merely subjective view. It is true since each of the pupils can start from a different fixed moral principle. Ethical inquiry involves pupils in the evaluation through the process of disputing their own suggestions. In this step of ethical inquiry pupils come with the notion of using criteria. According to Cam this discovered concept makes it possible for pupils to form better judgment in solving questions.

*Collaboration*⁵⁴

In the process of evaluating suggestions pupils engage in providing and disputing reasons. Evaluating requires explanation and defence of own criteria. There follows justification and offering proofs. Matters such as contradiction or inconsistency, dubious assumption and liability to counter-examples are as important here as reference to undesirable consequences or introducing examples/samples. For students correcting their own imperfect justifications is the best practice field.

2.2.6 Concluding

In the concluding phase the point according to Cam is to reach reliable conclusions, solutions and resolutions.

*Ethical inquiry*⁵⁵

Ethical inquiry will probably, Cam believes, issue in a broad spectrum of conclusions, of which it will be possible to say that they are value-oriented. Traditional moral and value education offers guidelines that enable the pupils to distinguish among them and determine which of them to hold in esteem. It states which activities are right and which are wrong, and that some things are good while others are not. It can be done in many ways, as e.g. by setting rules and asserting own opinion, referring to higher authority and leading by example. However, the goal of ethical inquiry is not reaching a conclusion, but deeper insight into a moral problem.

*Collaboration*⁵⁶

Investigating questions having to do with the moral life according to Cam inclines to an open end in the sense that whatever conclusions are reached in the process can almost always be subject to correction in light of further experience or deeper insight. That is why Cam underlines the view that the students must see the process of inquiry they have gone through as the required result. They must see their direct solution to the ethical problem or

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 77–79.

⁵⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 89–93.

⁵⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 79–81.

⁵⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 93–95.

question they had asked about, but also investigate and evaluate a range of questions. This will help them grasp the problem better or it can mediate a view from a different perspective.

3. Possible inspirations of Philip Cam's concept of Ethical Education for the concept of Ethical Education in the Czech Republic

The brief presentation of the concept of EE in CR and the concept of EE of Philip Cam finally provides the required prerequisite for fulfilling the intention formulated in the introduction to this paper. That is, by simple comparison of the two concepts, to highlight or emphasize possible inspirations that can enrich or deepen the concept of EE in CR and as a consequence contribute to its better realization. In this comparison it is also possible to discover certain challenges or questions, an evident answer to which need not be at hand at present; they deserve all the more focused attention in the future.

In the first place it is the question of justification of EE in state schools, discussed for a long time at the time of the preparation of the realization of the intention to set this project through to Czech schools. It cannot be said, however, that by fulfilling this intention this discussion has become insignificant in this respect. Justification of EE in state schools, as we have shown, is addressed by Philip Cam as well. His reasoning is similar to the one we know from our milieu, especially under the baton of the Ethical Forum which initiated EE in CR. Cam perceives the need for EE in state schools as principal, because contemporary families, as it is to not little extent the case in the Czech milieu, do not fulfil the task of morally educating their children, so it is according to him necessary that this handicap in children is compensated for by school. With respect to the Czech milieu it is necessary to emphasize that Cam regards the need to reflect the relationship between family and school as very important. When Cam says that school is to compensate for the family handicap with respect to educational goals, it does not mean on his interpretation that the school ought to take over or substitute for the educatory role of the family. He only highlights an important element of the complementarity of the family-school relationship, which can with appropriate setting amplify the successful realization of the set goals within ethical education. In that the question concerning the form of this cooperation is principal. It is sufficiently evident that it can be neither mandatorily ordered by one of the involved parties, nor left to a completely free course. It will rather require the focused attention and continual discussion of the parties involved, which will apparently concern primarily the contents of EE. Precisely here there can be, as Philip Cam also notes, marked differences in the view of values. In the Czech milieu we must add a handicap from the past to the realization of this requirement, i.e., the desired cooperation between family and school. The past totalitarian regime did not make such cooperation possible and did not support it, at least not to the extent that there would be a possibility of the parents to enter the contents of school teaching or its activity in any way. There is therefore a lack of preceding positive experience on both parts that would make the required cooperation easier. By that we mean the tradition lacking in this respect that would take such cooperation more or less for granted.

As has already been said with reference to the ideas of Philip Cam, at present there are within modern democratic societies considerable differences in viewing values. Cam notes

that the moral sphere is at present a source of numerous discussions and disputes, which is due especially to the plurality of worldviews and religious beliefs that are, particularly in his rendering, represented in Australian society. This is also from his point of view a second important factor not only for the need for EE in schools, but also for the question concerning its form. We can say that in this point Cam in a way anticipates an issue which is not as yet quite as topical in the Czech milieu, unlike developed democratic countries characterized by religious and cultural variety. In connection with the strong migration wave of the recent time and the related influx of migrants to our country it seems justified to expect in mid-term horizon that such religious and cultural variety will play a more important role in our milieu as well, and thus will logically be projected onto the form of EE in state schools. In other words, this question, as one can expect, will become a more topical and pressing problem in the future, which will have to be discussed and conclusions of these discussions transferred to practice. In this respect we should not miss Cam's distinctions and reminders mentioned above.

Cam is aware that in Australian society state schools are attended by children from different social and religious backgrounds, which has the consequence that schools present to children some sort of general values acceptable to all. But in that schools are not immune to a double danger: the danger of value relativizing (values are subordinated to cultural and individual understanding) and the danger of "cultural absolutism" (it can be enforced orthopraxy of one of the religious traditions). Facing these dangers, Cam formulates a so-called middle approach, in which the point is to encourage pupils to discussions and considered debates on the individual religious creeds and values. In that it is important that Cam conceives the principles of EE of children on the two pivotal religious traditions of Australia: Catholic and Anglican, which are determinative for the formation of the moral consciousness of the individual in Australian society, although religious belief is not manifest in the practical life of Australians.

In our view Cam's position touches on the crucial question linked to the most proper ambition of Cam's conception of EE, as well as the conception of EE in CR. In the latter case we judge so at least from the statements of selected authors cited here concerning its significance and meaning. This ambition is to help pupils in acquiring (internalizing) value attitudes, so that they will be able to act based on their inner conviction, based on their value orientation, i.e., correctly distinguish between good and evil. In other words, the goal of EE wants to be reinforcing moral competence in pupils. In Cam's conception this ambition seems to be underpinned by corresponding assumptions. In the case of the concept of EE in CR there seem to be in this respect as yet more questions than specific answers with respect to the target solutions.⁵⁷ In the necessary debates surrounding the above mentioned ambition of EE in CR attention should be, on our view, paid especially to those two dangers mentioned by Philip Cam, i.e., the danger of relativizing values and so-called cultural absolutism. With respect to the Czech situation – similarity of traditions or extent of religious practice in the Australian milieu – Cam's "middle approach" can be more than inspiring.

57 Cf. e.g. © Pavel MOTYČKA, *Etická výchova – cesta a naděje pro budoucí generace*; © Pavel MOTYČKA, *Metodika k audiovizuální pomůcce*, p. 4. (online), at: <http://www.etickavychova.cz/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/AV-metodika-na-web-final2.pdf>, retrieved December 2nd, 2015.

From the general or principal comparisons of the two introduced conceptions of EE presented above let us now switch to some rather methodological questions related to “teaching” EE at state schools. As in the case of EE in CR, so in Cam’s concept of EE it does not count with purely frontal teaching.⁵⁸ This does not mean, as Cam underlines, that the pupils’ requirement in access to information, which are also essential to them, should be impaired.⁵⁹ The realization of EE in Cam’s rendering, as it has been presented above, is based primarily on shared dialogical inquiry as to what is ethically correct and on mutual collaboration in this inquiry. According to Cam the point is primarily to teach pupils to think ethically. This also means to enable them to be confronted in class with controversial topics and different ethical attitudes of others. In this one can reasonably expect that in shared ethical investigation (inquiry) pupils will have an opportunity to think in new ways about topics they would hardly come across themselves.⁶⁰ Two emphases are principal in thus conceived manner of realizing EE, or with respect to its success, which ought not to be passed over in the Czech milieu, either.

First of all, Cam asks that moral education be embedded in the curriculum of individual selected subjects, rather than create a separate subject of moral education or something like that which, as Cam notes with respect to Australian practice, “would be taught by a school chaplain or was taught as part of religious education.”⁶¹ In this view Cam’s requirement corresponds to the concept of EE in CR. According to the school educational program, the separate subject EE is to penetrate other subjects through inter-subject relationships (see the six educational spheres above). But the practice so far has shown that schools manage to realize the separate subject EE, rather than integrate EE in the individual subjects. The authors of the methodology of EE in CR themselves deny the efficiency of EE as a cross-sectional topic and strictly adhere to the idea of EE as a separate subject.⁶² This contradiction between recommendation and practice can perhaps to some extent testify to that Czech schools have as yet not succeeded in realizing a suitable way of teaching EE that would teach pupils to approach the study material with an inquisitive, critical and active attitude, as Philip Cam’s concept of EE admonishes to do.

The second emphasis in Cam’s concept, to a great extent linked to the previous one mentioned above, is reference to the importance of the teacher of EE for its overall success. If, as Cam notes, the teacher herself does not understand its essence and cannot apply it, the conception loses meaning. The point is in principle to understand the human as a moral

58 Cf. © Pavel MOTYČKA, *Etická výchova – cesta a naděje pro budoucí generace*.

59 Cf. Philip CAM, *Teaching Ethics in Schools*, p. 9. Cam certainly does not trivialize the importance of acquiring necessary information in study. As he says: “of course students cannot make progress without suitable information. If they do not have sufficient information on the given matter, they can hardly form an appropriate moral judgment. Nonetheless developing good moral judgment involves more than knowing the facts. It includes using them in the process of forming assumptions, explaining, justifying the moral aspect in this and that and other aspects of character and acting.” Ibid, p. 30.

60 Cam’s concept of EE, as it is presented here, is at the same time a criticism of the traditional model of moral education, which according to Cam does not fully appreciate human personality. This model was built, as Cam notes, on three pillars: 1) moral instructing of students how they ought to behave (according to Cam a bad assumption – morality cannot be taught); 2) using the principle of reward and punishment as means of regulating behaviour (according to Cam adequate moral motivation is not developed, it can even be weakened); 3) character training by means of good models and suitable experience (according to Cam a suitable but insufficient means of moral education). Cf. ibid, p. 24.

61 Ibid, p. 28.

62 © ETICKÁ VÝCHOVA, *Potřeby etické výchovy*, 2014 (online), at: <http://www.etickavychova.cz/potreba-eticke-vychovy/>, retrieved November 10th, 2015.

being and also the essence of ethical inquiry. It is “a sense of knowing the good, where such knowledge cannot be attained by any training. Just as it cannot be described in a teachers’ manual, according to which they could teach it.”⁶³ This knowledge of “the good” must be, according to Cam and as sufficiently follows from what has been said above, discovered by means of the method of ethical inquiry and collaboration.⁶⁴ If, metaphorically speaking, the alpha and omega of the success of EE in state schools for Cam is the figure of the teacher, we can with respect to the experience with realizing EE in the Czech milieu so far regard this fact as rather the “Achilles’ heel” of the project.⁶⁵ Here we mean the lack of qualified teachers for this position. Starting from Cam’s conviction that the success of EE in schools creates the basic prerequisite of quality preparation of children for life in free democratic society and moral education is just as important ingredient in the progress of a society as scientific and technological education is, including the fact that in the context of dominant individualism in Australian society (this holds without doubt also for the Czech milieu), accompanied by selfishness, dogmatism, bias and grudge against the different convictions of others, ethical education in schools can help protect pupils from overt emphasis on own interests and prevent negative social phenomena, such as e.g. racial or religious intolerance,⁶⁶ then in the Czech milieu one cannot but wish that prime, heightened attention is devoted to “healing” the abovementioned Achilles’ heel.

Conclusion

The presented comparison of the concept of EE in CR and the EE concept of Philip Cam raises questions and opens topics that would without doubt deserve deeper attention than is paid to them here. These are especially topics having to do with the value content, the methodology of “teaching” EE in state schools and its success; topics that also have social and cultural-religious context. It is first of all the question Cam raises concerning the extent of using own cultural and religious traditions of the given social milieu, which form the moral consciousness of the individual, though perhaps only subconsciously, as the foundation for the necessary value content of EE. That should especially eliminate the value indefiniteness or slushiness of EE leading to value relativism, or, which can to a great extent be a problem precisely for EE in CR, narrowing EE down to the mere question of prosocial behaviour, without on the other hand slipping to “cultural absolutism”. A no less grave topic is also the question of the importance of the cooperation between family and school in realizing EE.

The presented comparison of the concept of EE in CR and the EE concept of Philip Cam finally discloses, as we believe, a certain potential of the concept of EE in CR with respect to the possibility of its successful realization especially with respect to the fact that the Ministry of Education in the introduced conception of EE stipulates neither specific unified study plans for all schools, nor their methodology. It only stipulates spheres and subjects (see above), i.e., only an outline. The individual schools determine the contents and method

63 Philip CAM, *Teaching Ethics in Schools*, p. 21.

64 Cf. *ibid.*

65 Cf. on that e.g. Jindřich ŠRAJER, *Když „Etická výchova“ nemusí být etickou výchovou*, p. 17.

66 Cf. Philip CAM, *Teaching Ethics in Schools*, pp. 21–22, 28.

of EE alone, as is the case with other educational spheres and subjects.⁶⁷ This means that so-called initiatives from below can attain a more elaborate and with respect to the set educational goals more successful realization of EE in schools. The inspiring potential of Philip Cam's concept of EE for creating the concept of EE in CR seems ineluctable in this respect.

The Concept of Ethical Education in CR and Possible Inspirations in the Concept of Philip Cam

Abstract

The paper wants to contribute to the current discussion on the conception of Ethical Education in the Czech Republic and its purpose in state schools. By simple comparison of this concept with the concept of Philip Cam the paper tries to show possible inspirations which could be helpful for a better understanding of the purpose of Ethical Education in state schools in the Czech Republic and its more effective realization. The comparison was at hand, since the approach formulated by Philip Cam is close to the goals and values formulated by the concept of Ethical Education in CR.

Keywords: ethics, Ethical Education, philosophy, Philosophy for Children, Philip Cam, religion, school

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67 © Jaroslava ŠTEFFLOVÁ, Budeme mít předmět Etická výchova?, *Učitelské noviny* 4/2009 (online), at: <http://www.ucitelskenoviny.cz/?archiv&clanek=1597>, retrieved July 12th, 2013.