

ETHICS:
ACTION, POWER, AND MORAL AUTHONOMY



Ethics – Action, Power, and Moral Authonomy

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Bejtulla Demiri

About the Author

Bejtulla Demiri is a professor of Political Sciences at the International Balkan University in Skopje. His academic work has long been driven by a set of fundamental questions about political life: how institutions shape ethical behavior, what responsible use of power looks like in practice, and how different moral traditions, including Islamic political thought, can inform contemporary governance.

His teaching and research connect political theory, comparative politics, public policy, law, and ethics. Rather than treating these as separate fields, he approaches them as interconnected ways of understanding how political systems function and how they can be improved. A central concern in his work is the ethical dimension of public authority and the ongoing tension between institutional structures and individual moral responsibility.

Alongside his academic career, Prof. Demiri has served as an advisor in government institutions in North Macedonia and participated in committees focused on policy development and institutional reform. This experience has reinforced his view that political ethics is not only a theoretical field but also a practical necessity in public life. He is the author of three books and numerous scholarly articles on political ethics, institutional development, and comparative politics.

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Foreword

For Western scholars and policymakers, the central challenge of the 21st century is the reclamation of human autonomy in the face of the invasion of things. In an era where algorithmic systems and economic machinery increasingly dictate the terms of human existence, we risk falling back into a state of heteronomy. This foreword emphasizes the strategic importance of reclaiming the Kantian tradition of autonomy and the Arendtian notion of power, distinguishing between raw coercion and the legitimate authority derived from a normatively disciplined orientation toward the common good. At the heart of this recovery is the Stone Arch of Justice. This architectural metaphor illustrates how justice serves as the keystone that binds individual conscience to social institutions.

Law and morality work together but in different ways: law focuses on outward behavior and keeps society stable through clear rules, while morality is about inner intention and how we choose to act from within. Law judges what people do, but morality looks at why they do it. One creates

order in society, the other shapes character and integrity inside the person.

We need to resist a world where things and systems start to replace human judgment. The answer is praxis thinking and acting with purpose so that our work stays guided by conscience and keeps human freedom alive.

Western ideas of duty need to be balanced with a deeper spiritual dimension found in Islamic ethics. Through Akhlaq, it brings reason and faith together, forming a living moral conscience. It strengthens the inner self, protecting human dignity against blind conformity and system-driven thinking.

Ethics: Action, Power, and Moral Autonomy sees life as an ongoing journey, where we keep shaping what it means to be human. This book invites you to join that journey and take part in building a more just and meaningful world.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nikola Dacev

Preface

Ethics is far more than a restrictive book of prohibitions; it is the fundamental strategic response of the human being to a universal existential lack. Unlike other beings that inhabit in a state of biological completion, human encounter with the world is one of truths and primordial fear. In the silence of instinct, ethics become our way of creating meaning, responsibility, and a moral path through an uncertain world.

Human evolution moves from fear and myth toward reflection and dignity: from the Magus and Priest, through the imagination of the Poet, to the Philosopher, who questions inherited truths and builds an ethical world that must be constantly cared for. By moving from fear to reason, people stop living under imposed truths and begin shaping their own values, dignity, and moral choices through thought and action.

In this book, praxis is presented as the unity of thought, action, and human purpose. Values gain meaning only when they are lived through work, responsibility, and care for us and others. Labor becomes ethical when it is guided

by intellect, shaped by will, and grounded in conscience, turning moral ideas into lived reality and shared human dignity. When work loses its human meaning and becomes only an economic function, people risk being treated as tools rather than individuals with dignity. This weakens responsibility, disconnects people from the common good, and raises new concerns as technology increasingly replaces human labor. Modern society risks letting technology and systems replace human judgment, creating a dangerous gap between our growing power and our ethical maturity. Modern technology favors automation, efficiency, and control, while ethics calls for responsibility, justice, dignity, and human accountability. AI can become a problem when it turns people and relationships into data and efficiency, weakening our sense of justice and responsibility. The real risk is losing our moral voice and becoming passive users instead of active, caring agents. The response is to stay rooted in our humanity, conscience, and love. Personality is where ethics become reality, turns freedom into responsibility and holds together thought, feeling, and will. At its core is love, not just emotion, but a force that rebuilds trust and lets us truly see others. And in remorse, we recognize ourselves as both judge and judged, accountable from within.

Conscience works in layers: it warns us before we act, grounds us in universal values without reward, and can sometimes be shaped rightly or wrongly by outside authorities. Together, these inner voices shape how we build a more responsible shared world.

A planetary ethic is needed today because our world is deeply connected. It brings together ideas of personal freedom and

moral responsibility into a shared global sense of right and wrong. In this view, power is never ownership but trust, humans are caretakers of the world, and all authority must remain accountable to justice and the common good. At the end we can say ethics is not a finished system, but a living process, a workshop where we keep shaping what it means to be human. We are not just surviving in the world; we are constantly rebuilding it through our choices.

At the heart of this is the search for the Highest Good, where what we ought to do connects who we are with who we can become. To live ethically is to turn freedom into responsibility, and to move from simply having things to truly being fully human.

This is where this book begins and where it leaves the reader: with the simple but demanding task of becoming human, repeatedly, through thought, action, and care.

Bejtulla Demiri

Introduction

Ethics: Action, Power, and Moral Autonomy promises to lead into a systematic philosophical inquiry into the ontological ground and historical rise of human morality. It is the answer of a being forced to create meaning, normativity, and responsibility in a world of facticity. By transitioning from the instinctive, archaic matrix of nomos—the original spatial and temporal ordering of life—into the realm of autonomous decision, the individual transcends pre-reflective necessity to embrace morality as a conscious act of self-legislation. This move from a passive, inherited order to an active, rational commitment defines the birth of a true ethos, where the agent is no longer driven by impulse but by the strength of their own internal character. Since it is founded on human inconsistency, normativity does not presuppose the elimination of evil from the world, impossible as that is in any case for humans to imagine. The problem of evil is how violence and domination can be obstructed and defused through institutions and practices that allow just arbitration between diverging claims and the protection of a robust