

Paradojas del individualismo (Paradoxes of Individualism)  
VICTORIA CAMPS, 1993  
Barcelona, Critica  
201 pp., paperback, 2.400 pts, ISBN 84 7423 591 X

Etica para naufragos (Ethics for Shipwrecked People)  
JOSE. ANTONIO MARINA, 1995  
Barcelona, Anagrama,  
243 pp., paperback, 1.950 pts, ISBN 84 339 1389 1

Educacion moral, postmodernidad y democracia (Moral Education, Postmodernity and Democracy)  
JOSE RUBIO CARRACEDO, 1996  
Madrid, Trotta  
254 pp., paperback, 1.800 pts, ISBN 84 8164 090 5

El oficio de la ciudadania (The Craft of Citizenship)  
FERNANDO BARCENA ORBE, 1997  
Barcelona, Paid6s  
301 pp., paperback, 2.200 pts, ISBN 84 493 0425 3

In Spain today there are many authors working on moral education. The recent growth of interest in this area is a reflection of the trend that can be observed internationally. This review covers four books that are representative of theoretical reflections about moral education within Spanish education in the last 4 years.

Let us begin with the book Paradoxes of Individualism of V. Camps, Professor of Ethics at the Universidad Aut6noma, Barcelona, which looks at the philosophical background to the renewal of interest in ethics and moral education. She explains that it has now become a pressing need to speak of social habits, because the importance of the individual has tended to overshadow them in recent thinking. She provides a precise description of the key points in this approach, and examines the thinkers with whom it originated in modern philosophy. She presents the aspects which she believes to be positive, and also those which have led to severe problems of understanding what is meant by the "social" sphere: her book could equally well have been entitled "contradictions or exaggerations of individualism".

In short, Camps asserts that individualism is the product of modern philosophy and has the effect of imprisoning individuals in the private sphere, so that the public sphere is neglected. This kind of individualism could be considered illegitimate. However, it is possible to defend a legitimate individualism, that of the individual who makes his/her life into a creative project. That is, we can emphasise the value of individuality, and with it that of independence, without implying any isolation. Being an individualist, or being independent, is not synonymous with

being selfish. The wrong kind of individualism arises out of an anthropological view that is afflicted with "selfish prejudice". This anthropology derives from a subjectivist epistemological position: the subject who is the centre of knowledge ends up as the subject who is the centre of the possession of reality and of itself. The paradox of modern philosophy is that it bases truth on doubt, on the fragility of the individual on his/her own, yet is oblivious of the limitations of any real individual in theoretical and practical knowledge, and of his/her feelings and will. The result is formalism as a condition of individual freedom, freedom to interpret and discover new meanings of the universal. Modern philosophy has thus exalted moral autonomy, the rational being's particular ability to set his/her own standards of behaviour. It is essential to these standards that they should combine equality and freedom in a kind of treaty: everyone is free, equal and an owner. People advance from being individuals to being moral individuals for utilitarian reasons in order to survive. The problem is that these standards are not kept, even though our reason tells us that they are right. The failure of the Enlightenment lay in proclaiming reason as our guide; the failure of socialism lay in imposing a universal reason; and the failure of liberalism lay in the blind freedom which requires the State to set limits. The individualism generated by this philosophy is negative if we see only rights, or if duties are taken into account only for utilitarian reasons. Personal interest is of paramount importance and interests are always disparate, which means that it is impossible to establish rights with universal validity.

The alternative is that individuals should build up their own knowledge, decide on their own life plan, but do so in collaboration with others to find out about and plan their own life and the society in which they live. Universals can only arise out of dialogue. Some basic ethical values have to be admitted in which relativism has no place: justice, human rights, the material basis for the exercise of freedom. The recognition of certain collective goods which should be obtained and respected is what makes true humanity possible. Moral autonomy does not mean acting alone. Ethical autonomy has a telos, which is that all individuals enjoy a positive freedom, and that this is how they truly become individuals. Human dignity consists of choosing what one wants, but certain basic conditions are necessary without which it is impossible to speak of this dignity. Ethics can be seen to be founded on beliefs. An ethical society must be democratic. Democracy is a procedure for taking just decisions about what ought to be done, or criticised, at the heart of the community. It is important to maintain mutual respect between individuals, and to adhere to the principle that all people, as people, are equal and free. Individuals and democracy are created at the same time; participation in democracy is good from the ethical point of view, because it entails equality and obligation, social and economic equality. We can reach an agreement on ethical values in the abstract, but concrete matters are decided in practice. It is important to maintain pluralism in ideas and equality so that all citizens can express their views.

A noteworthy feature of Camps's exposition of Enlightenment and liberal thought is the ease with which she shows up the deepest cracks in the moral and political agendas of this philosophical trend. Her own stance involves highlighting once more the fact that the human

being is a social being, and that he/she does not only need others in order to survive, but also relies on their collaboration to become fully human. Her own aim is to salvage this aspect of human reality and apply it to ethics and political theory. She underlines the importance of solidarity and dialogue, of collaboration and co-operative work, the participation of all members of a society to direct it fruitfully, and so on. However, her ethical and political projection seems only to go half-way. At the outset, she states that the egoism and utilitarianism characteristic of rationalist and liberal views give grounds for concern and must be overcome; but she promises more than she can achieve, as we see from the alternative she offers.

In the final analysis, she is still trapped in the epistemological subjectivism which she herself condemns as the root of the "selfish prejudice", even though she tries to circumvent this problem by replacing the reason of the lone individual with the reason of the individual in dialogue. This problem can be appreciated in the main points of her new individualist ethic. To overcome the radical relativism which leads to a consensus morality, or one imposed by a mechanism of political power, she defends an ethic based on the individual's acceptance of universal and absolute values, and on his/her commitment to living in accordance with them. These values are expressed in a way that is broad and formal enough to allow every individual to interpret them and work out their concrete implications in accordance with his/her own views. Here, we must ask ourselves two questions. The first is, why should we accept some values, but not others? Because we believe that they are the genuine ones. We could continue this line of attack. Why are they genuine? Camps offers no answer or, rather, she evades this as being an unanswerable question. "It is obvious that certain basic rights must exist to defend the person and oblige others to respect the person; these must exist, regardless of whether we agree, on their religious, natural, historical or rational basis. If there is agreement on these rights or standards, does it really matter that there is no agreement about their basis? [...] I must emphasise that there is no need for these to have a basis" (p. 52). Evidence is different from belief, but Camps seems to mix them when she declares that ethics is an act of faith which relies on a set of basic beliefs or reasons, which are the expressions of good will: faith in ethics is pure voluntarism (p. 75). All these assertions are ambiguous and impinge directly on a key issue in all morality, the question as to what values one should strive for.

The second question we must ask concerns the way these values can be established. Through dialogue, Camps would say. We might suspect that there are forms of dialogue between human beings in which these principles perhaps never emerge; it is hard to see how an ethical standard can arise out of dialogue. On the other hand, in Camps's critique of liberalism she states that for individuals to fulfil their duties it is not enough for these duties to be conceived of as limits to their freedom in the interest of the common good; it is necessary to present collective goods which should be sought and respected, in order to motivate people's aspirations and commitment. Is it possible to make the individual receptive to these attitudes by means of the formalism Camps advocates? In our view, this is dubious.

Camps seems to be saying that the main aim of the ethics she proposes is that the individual should choose what he/she wants to be; she later underpins this idea with the notion of human dignity and describes the chosen life project as being right if it respects the values on which she insists. In fact, she seems to be imposing these values because, at least in this book, she does not give reasons why we should accept them. Her account fails to mention certain other basic values that are needed if the transformation of the lone individual into a social being who cooperates with other human beings is to become a reality. Equality, justice, freedom, peace and even solidarity can on their own only be defended with the aim of guaranteeing that the individual can live well--her arguments here provide a safer and more human basis for this than does extreme liberalism. Perhaps social qualities cannot be fostered only by solidarity or by dialogue.

In short, Camps provides a perceptive critique of extreme liberalism, especially in the area of ethics, but her alternative could lack a sound foundation as she explicitly rejects the need for this, in order to look for a new individualist ethic.

J. A. Marina offers an analysis of morality in a perspective combining ethics, anthropology and psychology, which can serve as a starting point for moral education projects, *Etica para naufragos* (Ethics for Shipwrecked People) is the continuation of a theory of creative intelligence which the author outlined in earlier books (*Elogio y refutacion del ingenio* and *Teoria de la inteligencia creadora*). Creation and rights are concepts which recur throughout this book. It consists of nine chapters which fall into two broad sections: the first five and the last four. The first chapter ("Intelligence and desire") sketches an image of the human being (see p. 27). It is essential, the author says, to get the human being into focus first, because "only by starting from the subject can we understand the moral phenomenon, which comes before the setting of standards" (p. 41).

In "The immorality of ethics" (Chapter 2), the relationship between the human being and society is defined (p. 49). The author then gives a concise overview of the subject of authority and obedience with reference to the work of Piaget and Kohlberg on moral development. Chapter 3 ("The ergometrics of the proofs") is summarized in the final notes (see p. 88). Chapter 4 takes us on to "The choice of orbit", and introduces the topic of rights, which is a leitmotiv through the rest of the book. "The sphere of rights is a construct of the human intelligence turned legislator which for good or evil, has been functioning in some countries for centuries" (p. 109). Consequently, democratic societies often have an ethical regime which is unconscious. In such a case, the point lies in the conscious acceptance of the moral propositions which we have, in some vague manner, received.

It is at the end of Chapter 5 ("An intelligence in search of definition") that Marina offers the main thesis of the book: "The thesis of this book is that the best plan for self-determination is

to reach an orbit of freedom without limits of profile, area or level. The only limits will be the result of your choices" (p. 141). Chapter 6, which is entitled "The horizon of happiness", emphasises that happiness is not primarily a sentimental state, but a way of being in the world (p. 168). In "Good feelings" (Chapter 7), the author studies the emotional attitudes which promote or maintain the leap to the ethical orbit. These are the feelings of poetic rationality. He speaks of patience as a way of adapting to the rhythm of the object (p. 183), and of generosity, shame, guilt and honour.

The last chapters (8 and 9) are about rights and duties, respectively. Chapter 8 ("But what rights?") underlines the need to build an ethics of dignity on top of the ethics of survival which forms its basis. Chapter 9 ("The discovery of duties") asks how duty can be turned into a motive.

The psychological foundations which underlie the whole book are constant and consistent. Kohlberg, Piaget, Gilligan and a long list of other names appear not only in learned quotations, but as fitting references with critical comments. The critical and bibliographical apparatus used by this author is considerable and valuable. Some of the definitions given at different points in the book are thought-provoking, such as those of attention (p. 36), values (p. 69), rights (p. 107), happiness (p. 156), perception (p. 82) and patience (p. 183). One particularly attractive aspect of the book is the dialogue between the author and an imaginary student, Marta, in each chapter, in the section "Notes, comments and other matters". This speaks volumes about the author's pedagogical abilities.

On the whole the book is interesting and stimulating to read, and should have a wide readership, although it is obviously of particular interest to people in the world of education.

J. Rubio Carracedo presents some of the principles of moral and political philosophy that are essential to a proper understanding of moral education. *Educación moral, postmodernidad y democracia* (Moral Education, Postmodernity and Democracy) is a further constructive step in Professor Rubio Carracedo's intellectual quest to recover democracy and restore it to its full potential. "Citizenship demands democracy, just as democracy demands citizenship" he reminds us at the start of the book (see p. 9 of the introduction), hinting at the educational dimension, and educational consequences, which are to be found throughout the book. In Rubio Carracedo, citizenship and democracy are an ideal of life, not mere juridical formalism, which means that his ideas are particularly valuable for education.

The book is a collection of previously published texts (which appeared between 1989 and 1995). This means that they can be read separately, and that some material may be repeated a danger which the author himself points out in the introduction.

The book has three parts: (1) moral education; (2) postmodernity and communitarianism; and (3) citizens' democracy. The first two focus more on moral philosophy, while the third centres on the sphere of political philosophy, although all are interrelated. We should not lose sight of the fact that no educational issue can be divorced from its ethical and political dimension. The break between the first two parts and the last part may seem somewhat abrupt.

The first part, entitled "Moral education", consists of two articles ("Moral psychology" and "Moral education"). In the first, he gives an overview of two central figures, Piaget and Kohlberg, summarising their originality, weaknesses, critiques of them, and the responses to that criticism. Within this, the section "Habermas and the logical evolutionary foundations for the moral stages" (p. VII) seems to me to be of greatest originality.

The second article bears a certain resemblance to the first. As in other parts of the book, the author here argues for a dialogic constructivist perspective, and asserts that a central role should be given to personal autonomy in the area of morals.

The second part ("Postmodernity and communitarianism") reviews the postmodern ethos in its three varieties (sceptical, epicurean and affirmative), and analyses the figures of Foucault and Rorty as being paradigmatic of the first two of these, respectively.

The author advocates a critical (post)modernity, which he calls the affirmative ethos.

He maintains that an appropriate ethical paradigm must be one which properly combines notions of justice, solidarity and autonomy. Here he reviews the communitarian critique of the liberal theories of justice, Kohlberg's reformulation of his stages of moral development, Habermas's ideas for reconciling justice with solidarity and the autonomy and contextual application of moral principles.

In the third part ("Citizens' democracy", which is also the title of another recently published book of which J. Rubio Carracedo is co-editor), which takes up almost half the volume, we glance at the need and desire to mark out the democratic paradigm and find a way of putting it

into practice. Moreover, this needs to be done without "throwing the baby out with the bathwater", as the author himself points out.

After tracing the history of frustration, analysing the triumph of the representative model after the French Revolution and the successive readjustments of the model (party democracy, market democracy, neo-corporativism), he finally reaches postdemocracy, or participatory democracy, which is the option he himself prefers.

The second article in this third part, entitled "Democracy and rationality", gives interesting material for reflection as it shows the different models of conciliation between individual rationality and political choice. He reviews the different models proposed in contemporary political philosophy: Buchanan, Nozick and Gauthier, Arrow, Sen, Olsoll, the logic of social cooperation, Elster, Rawls and Habermas, communitarians and postmodernists and so on.

In "Minimal democracy" he presents a democratic paradigm consisting of 17 democratic traits (p. 221) which include "education and civic culture". This is followed by an article on the present-day problems in democracy in the light of the thinking of M. Zambrano and, lastly, by a brief outline of the paradigms of politics and democracy, showing which best realise the democratic idea.

Throughout the book he keeps an open mind, in accord with his ideas about dialogue. Even though he takes sides over some issues, as in the case of Habermas, he also discusses the criticism of them and the possible answers to it. His book has a heavy bibliographical load, taken mainly from the English-speaking world. The specific bibliography included in each chapter is useful.

What is missing, by way of complementary material, is a discussion of the concept of virtue as a habit, a key notion in education, in its social, civic dimension which could have united the first and second parts of the book with the third. This author provides us with the kind of serious, serene, deep and rigorous handling of the subject which we have come to expect from him, and which does not make the book any the less accessible to a larger readership among people interested in these issues. When we read this book, it is as though we had opened a window to let in fresh air. The author shows us how to seek new ways of constructing democracy that are more genuine and fulfilling for human beings and for society as a whole: this is an excellent challenge for education.

Last of all, we turn to F. Barcena Orbe's book *El oficio de la ciudadanía* (*The Craft of Citizenship*), which is a further example of the effort to construct concrete models of moral education, in this case, civic education. "The main aim of this book is to stimulate pedagogical reflections with a view to analysing the business of citizenship", Barcena states. We are particularly in need of books like this which, within the framework of philosophy in general and political philosophy in particular, tackle educational issues of great importance today, such as that of education for citizenship. "What type of education is needed to prepare people for citizenship in an era like our own?" he asks (p. 16). One possible reply might be a kind of education that combines training in civic judgement with training in civic virtue. Logically, this question refers us back to another, that is, what is a good democratic citizen like?

The central theme in the book is "the possibility of strengthening the bonds between education in citizenship and a philosophical idea of education" (p. 19), and therefore "how to construct, or how we ought to construct, the human judgement; in this case, the citizen's ability to make political judgements" (p. 19): in short, the construction of a theory of knowledge and civic awareness. It is at this point, following the arguments in this book, that the objection occasionally rears its head that knowledge, albeit practical knowledge, is not enough to make someone behave like a citizen--this requires action, preceded by thought. At other points in the book this issue finds a better solution.

One essential feature of this book, with all its possibilities and limitations, is that it is based on the thought of Hannah Arendt. This choice is laudable, first because he has made a choice at all, rather than confining himself to a mere description of the different liberal and communitarian contributions to this subject, and secondly because he has made this particular choice in favour of civic humanism. It is also positive that he has made the risky attempt to seek an interdisciplinary approach to the issues at hand.

The book has five chapters which form two parts. The first "The discourses of civility" encompasses the first two chapters, which are "Political education and the business of citizenship", and "Two models of political education: citizenship as status and practice". This last distinction is particularly relevant in the handling of these subjects, as whether you understand citizenship, and therefore democracy, as a form of government or a mere decision-making procedure, or as a way of life which involves democratic participation (freedom, human development, equality), has major consequences for education for citizenship.

The second part tackles questions such as the "Ethics of citizenship: civic humanism today" (Chapter 3), "Political understanding: the will to meaning in H. Arendt" (Chapter 4) and "The wisdom of citizenship: the formation of the political judgement" (Chapter 5).

It comes as a surprise to see that he refers to citizenship at various points as a feeling (e.g.p. 184). Perhaps the very expression craft of citizenship points towards its being a habit, a practice, in which the emotional aspect plays a central part. Elsewhere he describes citizenship as a game (p. 171).

In short, Professor Barcena's book is a valuable contribution. He offers a calm and reflective assessment of these issues which have received little attention from the area of philosophy of education. The author also explains his own intellectual journey, which aids understanding of the book. This is an erudite book, with a large number of notes and a certain tendency to summarise the works of others (for example, the final notes occupy over 30 pages); but in subjects such as this, this is perhaps inevitable. In this case it is certainly not the way for the author to avoid making a personal appraisal of the situation. The systematic final bibliography is also useful (particularly for books from the English-speaking world).

In conclusion, we must highlight certain features common to the books by the most representative Spanish authors. Their interdisciplinary approach involves anthropology, psychology, ethics and moral and political philosophy. Their attitude to the legacy of modern thinking and the new departures in postmodernity is critical, and they seek to salvage from this various ideas which they regard as being valuable. They emphasise that a person's morality consists at least partly of habits, and that the aim of moral education should therefore be to promote these. Social habits are of particular importance. It is also noteworthy that they lay a particular stress on the development of critical thinking, the individual's ability to make judgements, and his/her autonomy. Even though these books go some way towards emphasising the importance of habits, the idea that the reason is formed somewhere outside the realm of habits still prevails, perhaps less in J. A. Marina, which amounts to saying that the key to morality is seen as being in the reason, without taking the will and the emotions into account. One further dominant trait is that of associating moral education with education for citizenship, a citizenship which is understood as the quality possessed by those who know how to live in a democracy.

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