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# **Ethics of Cordial Reason**

## **Educating in Civic Values in the 21st Century**

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### CHAPTER I

#### MINIMAL ETHICS AS *ETHICA CORDIS*

##### 1

#### TWENTY YEARS AFTER *MINIMAL ETHICS*

Twenty years ago I published a book titled *Minimal Ethics*. It was not my intention to offer a bargain basement ethical system within the reach of the limited price range of the prevailing moral standards, as some took it to be. Rather, it was an attempt to discover whether a collection of moral principles and values might exist that would share what I called "the ethics of maxima: i.e., an ethical system that seeks to offer a full and happy life in morally pluralistic societies.

Spain was breaking free of the restraints of an officially monistic society in moral terms—a society with a single moral code—and it was important to determine whether the necessary foundation existed for the creation of an effective pluralistic society. In such a society, people with different good life projects could work side by side towards the realization in everyday life of the ideals of a just society.

After all, we all search for happiness, or should be doing so if we don't wish to

lose our moral compass. However, within morally pluralistic societies, groups with different full life projects coexist and it's important to determine whether there is a point at which these are so different that they cannot even share the same requirements of justice that would allow them to build their lives together. These requirements would comprise a set of *civic ethics*, a *citizens' ethics* which has implications for moral life but also for political, economic and religious life. The absence of such a minimal ethic would be bad news - terrible news - because any ethical decision affecting society as a whole that had to be made would have to ignore the moral sensibilities of a segment of the population.

Of course, those who enjoy conflict for conflict's sake (not the aggrieved but the resentful, those who harbor in their souls a strange fossilized resentment) are happy to find that values are not shared. "The worse, the better" is still their slogan. "Let's accentuate the contradictions" is still the message. But these addicts of conflict for conflict's sake will never have a critical capacity; they will never be critics, because to critique is to discern between what unites and what divides, between what is just and what is unjust. Total rejection as dogmatic, as uncritical, as unconditional support.

It was certainly good news to discover that there really are standards shared by different moral codes that allow lives to be built together: common values and moral principles that cannot be renounced without falling below basic standards of morality. That was the meaning of my "ethics of minima": the collective discovery of the shared "ethical capital" without which a society would appear inhuman, falling below the most basic levels of humanity.

Twenty years ago I believed the question was urgent, especially in a country such as ours in which the shift from moral monism to pluralism, from a single moral code for a happy life to the recognition of different codes legitimized to propose their own good life projects, could lead one to believe that diversity implied the impossibility of mutual understanding, with the result that rather than pluralistic societies we would end up with polytheistic ones, devoid of a shared ethical capital.

The situation was not all that different in other parts of the world: for example the countries of Latin America, pleasantly close to us in so many ways including in this one, many of which were (and are) preparing for the step from moral monism to pluralism; or the United States, with a significant number of different "ethics of maxima", which John Rawls would later call "comprehensive doctrines" of the good; and the nations of the "extinct Soviet Union", which must prepare for the step from fierce secularism to what will hopefully be pluralism and not mafia domination.

In our case, and in that of many other countries, civil ethics has been generally described as the collection of values and ethical principles that a morally pluralistic society shares and that allows its members to build their lives together.

It was, and is, the *ethics of the people as citizens*, as people involved in the life of a political community within which they must be the indisputable protagonists.

It was, and is, the ethics that can and must be transmitted by the national public education system and that no other school with its own ideology should be allowed to avoid as a required minimum, regardless of its entitlement to offer education according to its own maximums. It was, and is, the ethics that can and will guide the decisions of the commissions and ethical committees that don't belong to a religious institution within the various spheres of what have been called "applied ethics": health, business, politics, professions, communications media, computer science, sports and consumerism.

It was, and is, *ethics*: shaper of the character of the *ethos*, never involving indoctrination in political principles, however much a part of democratic constitutions they may be and however much the history of the development of such constitutions is explained.

Obviously, if we wanted to find this *shared ethical capital*, we could not take as a starting point any specific moral position on good living, whether religious or secular, as it would then be impossible to overcome the monistic system, the single model for full life. So how then could we discover these minimum shared values?

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### DISCOVERING SHARED ETHICAL CAPITAL

Turning to everyday life was the only possible option. In this case it was a matter of finding within the *social moral culture* of Spanish society the values and principles that were accepted by the various ethics of maxima, whether religious or secular. This moral culture would be visible in public statements, texts, declarations and events that influence public opinion.

Clearly, ethical capital is to be found in the moral conscience of a society, in which its *political* and *religious culture* are also intermixed, and which, in turn has critical repercussions on social, political and religious life. That is why *Minimal Ethics* carried the subtitle "Introduction to practical philosophy", because its aim was to address those spheres of human life that are related to deeds and to the method applied to guide them, and it is practical philosophy that attempts to guide the *praxis*, the *deed*.

Goethe's *Faust* begins with the affirmation that "in the beginning was the deed". But also in the beginning was the word which allows us to interpret and guide our deeds.

The purpose of the book was to address the field of *guidance of deeds* and it therefore attempted to explore the realms of *morality, justice, politics* and *religion*.

As is clearly evident, there was a surprising omission among the fields of knowledge that are closely associated with deeds: *economics* was conspicuous in its absence. This may be because philosophers almost always mention economics as if it were a two-headed monster, but rarely do they treat it seriously and rarely do they try to delve down into the values and strategies of an activity which, in reality, depends on human freedom and, as such, should direct its efforts at serving the people. Or maybe it is because most economists, convinced that within their science there is no room for moral evaluations but only cold, hard facts, have deceived us into believing that they are right. In fact, they are not. Economics also depends on freedom and justifies its existence by creating a good society.

This is why it was good news that Amartya Sen received the Nobel Prize in Economics, while it was bad news that this year Muhammad Yunus, the promoter of micro-credits in poor countries, has received the Nobel Peace Prize, suggesting that an economist who encourages the development of nations through the empowerment of the poor was a good person but not necessarily a good economist. Good economics is ethical economics, and our research group has more recently worked hard to demonstrate this.

### 3

#### THE MISERY OF FUNDAMENTALISMS

Returning to the subject of *Minimal Ethics*, to achieve its aims it was deemed necessary (and rightly so) to work in at least *two registers*. One of these was that of *daily life*, in which we choose one or another moral code, of greater or lesser complexity, we respect the values of one set of civil ethics, we subscribe to certain political tendencies and we decide to follow one particular religion or none at all.

The other register was that of *moral philosophy*, to which those of us who work in philosophy give the name "ethics". Ethics or moral philosophy study everyday life and attempts to determine whether there really is such a thing as "morality", since we talk about morally correct actions, moral values and principles, virtues and vices, immoral actions and extraordinary actions from a moral point of

view. Assuming this phenomenon called "morality" exists, ethics would have to identify its constituent parts, its specificity and its fundamental bases.

The question of *fundamental bases* always raised hackles. From the beginning of the Modern era, one of the essential tasks of philosophers was to seek fundamental bases for the veracity of knowledge and for the correctness of actions and maybe for that reason, in these postmodern times, any attempt to establish a fundamental basis provokes an outcry. When you think about it, this is quite an incomprehensible reaction if by "finding a basis" we mean something as rational as to attempt to "explain", which is exactly the opposite of fundamentalism.

The *fundamentalist* accepts certain principles on the basis of some type of faith and refuses to question them or to submit them to the slightest rational examination. It may be *economic fundamentalism*, based, for example, on the "indisputable" principal that the economy seeks growth, and does so via a prescription such as that of the Washington Consensus. Alternatively it may be *political fundamentalism*, which chooses a particular party and sees only virtue in it while seeing vice in all others. Or *fundamentalism of facts*, incapable of thinking anything other than what the world already accepts and sees as good, because the thought of being rejected by the mass of "good thinkers" causes panic.

Of course, there is also *religious fundamentalism*, but I have listed it last precisely because it tends to be considered the only form of fundamentalism in existence, as if public life were not saturated, and to a much greater degree, by all the others. And if we look for insulting names as is often done to reduce morality to "petty morals", we may also find "petty economics", "petty politics" and "factoids", each one as deplorable as, or worse than the first.

A different type of fundamentalism is entrenched in its principles, accepted blindly based on economic, partisan, sheep-like, bureaucratic or religious "faith", and resists being submitted to rational criticism or any effort to "explain". On the other hand, those who look for fundamental bases, attempt to explain their convictions, options or positions on different topics. They attempt to form a judgment using arguments posited to themselves and offered to others, because either an argument can be shared or it is not an argument. And they are prepared to listen to opposing arguments, which is the human way of exercising good judgment.

Finally, in these tasks of ethics or moral philosophy, it is important to attempt to apply the values and principles to daily life because, as Aristotle rightly said, theory is not sufficient to cure the soul, even less so in the arena of practical philosophy, which is the arena of action. As we will see later, this task of application has taken on a special relevance since the last third of the 20th century.

## CITIZENS' ETHICS

*The morality of daily life and ethics or moral philosophy* thus constituted an object language and a metalanguage. Moral philosophy or ethics is a language of specialists, of philosophers, whose aim is to develop a moral language for daily life, i.e. the life actually led by ordinary people rather than a life invented by philosophers.

This is not to suggest that different individual moral doctrines exist in daily life that are either religious or secular and that an ethic exists that is universal, as has sometimes been proposed. As Fernando Cubells, a former professor of mine, used to say: "you can say 'Romanian' or 'Romenian', but if you say 'Romenian', you are wrong." Within daily life there are different religious or secular moral doctrines that aspire to universality, and in philosophy there are different theories of moral philosophy or ethics that equally aspire to universality.

"Civil ethics" belongs to daily life, a life lived by people and not invented by philosophers, as do Christian, Buddhist and Islamic moral doctrines and the various secular moral theories. It should perhaps be called "civil morality", but the truth is that the two expressions are used interchangeably; here one can say "Romanian" or "Romenian" and in both cases be correct.

Ethics or moral philosophy attempts to delve into this daily life and establish what morality is, what the bases of moral obligation are, and how all this is applied to ordinary life. Ordinary life is the point from which it departs and to which it returns. It is true that it is a circle, but much has been learned by traveling it: it has led to the discovery of the codes that allow us to exercise criticism and judgment regarding what the contents of civil ethics should be. But let's not get ahead of ourselves; for the moment let's turn back to *Minimal Ethics*.

*Minimal Ethics* effectively involved an attempt to work in two registers: the first related to the morality of daily life, and the second to ethics or moral philosophy. In doing so, I believed that I could assert that societies with a more or less consolidated liberal democracy could be viewed as pluralist rather than polytheistic, and that it was possible to outline the basic features of a *civil ethics*, an ethics of people viewed as citizens, which could be considered shared ethical capital.

This was good news, much to the detriment of those who love conflict for conflict's sake. Taking into account that capital is "a created, productive and

lasting asset that is not exhausted with one use," it was good news to know that our societies had this type of capital to confront vital challenges. This was a question that was crucial in many countries, but especially so in those that were taking the step from monism to pluralism, as was happening in Spain and as was occurring and continues to occur in many Latin-American and other countries.

There is no doubt that a civil ethics of this type morally supports the strengthening of "authentic" *democratic politics*, in one of the senses in which Hegel referred to truth as corresponding to the concept that a true friend is loyal, supportive and compassionate; a true democracy, although for its creation requires the right history and context, strives to make the autonomy and equality of its citizens a political reality. Otherwise, it falls "below democratic minimums" and corrupts the values that give it meaning and legitimacy.

But civil ethics is also strengthened when the organization of democratic life fosters the development of virtues such as a passion for justice and freedom, the realization of solidarity, active respect for positions that differ from one's own and the use of fair dialogue to resolve conflicts, whenever the conditions for this are available.

At the same time, civil ethics encourages *ethics of maxima*, both religious and secular, to present their full life projects, provided that these do not infringe upon the values of freedom, equality, solidarity, active respect and dialogue. In turn, the type of ethics of maxima that encourages happiness in a pluralistic society may invigorate or weaken the requirements of justice, encourage people's empowerment or lose itself in power struggles – an occurrence that is all too human.

#### ETHICAL INTERSUBJECTIVITY: BEYOND SUBJECTIVISM AND RELATIVISM

In this context of ethics, politics and religion it was possible to discover what has come to be called "ethical intersubjectivity"; that stone, which curiously is not a "philosopher's stone" but is embedded in ordinary life and allows us to move beyond subjectivism and relativism, positions which, in reality, are humanly unsustainable.

This discovery was arrived at by accepting distinctions that are normal in political philosophy between the good and the just, between the very personal *options for a happy life*, a full life, and the requirements of justice, which are

very interpersonal and very intersubjective.

The choice of one happy life model or another of is not "very subjective", as if an individual could not communicate to others his or her full life projects and receive comprehension, disagreement or advice from others. It is, however, very personal: it is my choice, and I might well share it with others, but in the end I am the one who makes it and there is no sense in demanding that others make the same choice.

Nevertheless, the requirements of justice have an intersubjective intention, because when people say "this is just", they are not only seeking to express their point of view or the choice they have made, rather, they believe that they are expressing a conviction that others should share, or alternatively explain very clearly why they do not.

To assert that "the current distribution of social wealth is unjust" is not merely the expression of a point of view that can coexist with an opposing one and be equally respectable. It is people who are respectable; opinions have to earn respect. Whoever says "this is unjust" does not believe that the opposite is equally acceptable and is in fact waiting for his or her interlocutors to give reasons to defend their point of view.

Precisely because the requirements of justice are not only personal but are intended to have a value that is intersubjective, whoever maintains them has to be open to a dialogue in which arguments must be presented in order to defend or amend them, and, in fact, not only arguments but also other forms of expression such as life histories, supporting evidence or experiences. To discover these intersubjective elements in daily life required an attempt to *discover creatively* what it is that exists in ordinary coexistence and dialogue that is already shared: an *intersubjective ethics*, capable of articulating the ethics of maxima; because *questions of justice demand intersubjectivity*, they are intended to greatly exceed the limits of subjectivism. Nevertheless, discovering the ethical capital of the people is not a matter of drawing up a record of what exists as if ethicists had to assume the role of notaries and limit themselves to certifying it; it also requires the application of criticism and the ability to discern the requirements of what should be, within all that already exists.

But to accomplish this in the case of a civil ethics, it is unacceptable to abandon ordinary life and, in a prodigious leap, to look outside it for the key elements for criticism. It is in ordinary life that these elements must be found. It is a matter of discovering —as certain authors have said— *a certain transcendence in immanence*. These are terms that without doubt give rise to a great deal of distrust, but if we consider them carefully we will find that they represent the only viable way to avoid settling simply and purely for existing reality and to allow us to ascertain within that same reality, that which we believe should be. How can we make this discovery?

Accepting the theoretical framework of what has been called "ethical proceduralism" appeared to me a good option, and continues to appear so, albeit with substantial modifications.



## THE VALUE OF PROCEDURES

There exists a Kantian tradition, very widely accepted in our times, which considers it absolutely necessary to discover in daily life the ethical intersubjectivity discussed above, and asserts that this can only be done with reference to the procedures by which the norms that we use to organize our collective lives are legitimized.

*Norms* are not hideous instruments, but something as simple and necessary as reciprocal expectations of behavior that allow us to move forward with our plans. When we get up in the morning, we normally see the members of our family. At the specified time we normally find the professor in the classroom. The college café is normally open on schedule. These regular occurrences which we take for granted form a web of habits that give us a base to organize our plans; they form the normative network for our coexistence.

At a higher level of complexity, United Nations working procedures, WTO regulations, the laws applying to foreign residents and immigration, traffic regulations, the unwritten rules that regulate the relationship between rich and poor countries, judicial codes and codes of good practice are only a few more examples of how our common life is regulated by norms.

Naturally, norms may be just or unjust, and this is a key question for coexistence, because the question may move us towards the possibility of leading a good life or towards disaster. But also, precisely because they are related to our reciprocal expectations of behavior, norms express by their very nature an intersubjectivity that is articulated in a just or unjust manner. There are no subjective norms, nor even "very personal" norms. The choice of a particular good may be very personal, the preference for certain values over others may similarly depend on the evaluative capacity of the people concerned, but norms are necessarily intersubjective and therefore constitute the privileged moral position from which to discover ethical intersubjectivity. How can we determine whether a norm is just, unjust or simply irrelevant from the point of view of justice?

Procedural ethics are not viewed as valid for deciding what is just and what is unjust; it is those affected by norms who must make such decisions in daily life. Ultimately, ethics is a metalanguage and no substitute for ordinary life, in which people must be the protagonists. But what ethics can and must do, is try to discover rational procedures that allow decisions to be made regarding the justice of norms. Not surprisingly, this is what pluralistic societies need: not the

determination in one specific instance of what is good *urbi et orbi*, but the discovery of the necessary rational procedures to decide jointly what is most just, leaving it to the people who are affected to decide what they consider to be adequate.

Clearly, to design these rational procedures, ethics must turn to philosophical methods, and in *Minimal Ethics* I opted for the one which — in my judgment — is the philosophical method *par excellence*: the *transcendental* method, of which various versions exist. But before discussing some of these, it is worth noting that while the word "fundamentals" raises hackles, the expression "transcendental" produces veritable hives; I've never quite understood why in either case. On the contrary, in my judgment, they belong to the most pure philosophical common sense.

What transcendentalism essentially proposes is that to design the procedures that we are searching for, it is not necessary to look beyond daily life, but to find within it some significant and undisputable fact and attempt to reflect on the rational conditions without which it has no meaning. In this context, *Kant* posited an awareness of universal and necessary laws which, in his judgment and in mine as well, everyone possesses. Through transcendental reflection on the conditions that give meaning to this awareness, he arrived at the recognition of personal autonomy. *Hegel*, conversely, viewed the realization of freedom in history and the reciprocal recognition of individuals in which the spirit lives. Then in the 1970s, *discourse ethics* posited an event— communicative action— and discovered the conditions that give it meaning, such as reciprocal recognition of all who take part in this type of activity as valid interlocutors.

As is obvious, with this method there is no attempt to make a prodigious leap into a strange world. It is not that Jack plants the beans and a giant beanstalk grows through the clouds to take him to the ogre's castle from which it is impossible to return. Because, as the story goes, Jack comes back and brings good things from that other side of a world which, in reality, is the same. It is thus a question of discovering perspectives on our world that would remain unknown and unjustifiable if we did not apply the transcendental experiment. It is to assert that *without autonomy there is no morality* (Kant), *without implementing it in the political community, ethical intersubjectivity does not take on the flesh and blood of daily life* (Hegel), and *without the reciprocal recognition of those who know themselves to be interlocutors in a community of speakers, it is not possible to discern which norms are just* (discourse ethics).

To employ such a method was thus just a matter of philosophical common sense.

In essence, this was the *Minimal Ethics* project twenty years ago. It is a project that I continue to develop and that curiously has been supported, albeit in different versions, by a wide variety of people. However, as is natural, in its initial form it had severe *limitations* that were —and are— necessary to overcome. Moreover, twenty years do not go by without changes, and the situation is not the same either at a global or local level, from which it follows that to identify and apply this ethical capital requires *changing* the framework of the original. *To overcome the limitations and modulate the original*

*framework*, taking into account the new situation at local and global levels, is what is proposed by minimal ethics which, reformulated, is now *ethica cordis*.

## 6

### ETHICS OF CORDIAL REASON

Regarding the *limitations* of a minimal procedural ethics, José Luis Aranguren himself, in his warm introduction to *Minimal Ethics*, pointed out one that is critical: by focusing on intersubjective ethics, he says, we are overlooking *intrasubjective ethics*, an ethics of the individual, which is concerned with molding of *character* with the age-old objective of attaining happiness. Traditional ethics (he continues), places the person at the center of its attention, focusing above all on the ethics of the individual and leaving what has been called "social ethics" as a second priority. However, lately the tables have turned and it is social ethics, now transformed into intersubjective ethics, which occupies the first page of the philosophical press, while the personal version is practically ignored. Would it not be worthwhile to return to the task embarked on by the Greek philosophers, to attempt to forge the character, or *ethos*, of the individual, in the quest for happiness, which is everyone's goal?

José Luis Aranguren was right. Since its origins, ethical knowledge has been associated both with the *ethos*, the character of individuals (who after all, are the main actors in the moral world), and with happiness, the goal or *telos*, to which all aspire. Character is that collection of predispositions or habits of working in one way or another which we develop each day as a result of the choices we make. We have no alternative but to build a character for ourselves and so, since the days of classic Greece, it has rightly been said that it had better be a good one. To build a bad character is not only immoral but stupid.

Those habits that predispose us to behave well are referred to as "virtues" or "excellent qualities" of character; those that predispose us to behave badly are referred to as "vices". Virtues direct our choices towards happiness; vices towards misfortune. Just as the shoemaker carefully works the leather to make good shoes, forging a good character is the best task that people can undertake and, since the last third of the 20th century, we have come to understand that it is also the best task that organizations and institutions can undertake even if only by analogy.

A discussion of the social responsibility of businesses may be nothing more than cosmetic on the assumption that they will have to maintain indicators that will be published. Directors of Social Responsibility Departments will dedicate time and effort to study magazines containing corporate responsibility indexes, monitoring the performance of departments similar to their own and trying to take the lead. But unless they incorporate the need to take responsibility as part of their character and their habits, their efforts will be no more than a mixture of bureaucracy and cosmetics. This might benefit those affected by the company in the short term, but it would still be limited to addressing only the current situation.

Procedural ethics should be self-reflective and recognize, even if it is not openly stated, that they are proposing a dialogical self, a collection of excellent qualities of character that predispose people to engage in dialogue and to do so well. To be willing to engage in dialogue with those affected by norms in the most symmetrical conditions possible, allowing oneself to be convinced solely by the strength of the better argument, requires a determination of will and excellent dialogical qualities. Citizens' ethics requires that these qualities be brought out into the light.

Going even further, it is also necessary to consider not only the world of norms but the world of *values*, however complicated that world may be, and specific *sentiments*, taking into account all the baggage that we moral beings carry.

It should be noted that in the version of its creators, Apel and Habermas, dialogic ethics as the philosophical foundation of a set of civil ethics for daily life was extremely forceful at the argumentative level, but no effort was made to bring into the light of day the elements that are built into that foundation and give it flesh and human warmth: character, virtues, values, common feelings, sentiments. As a result, referring to dialogic ethics in the version of its creators Apel and Habermas, at a certain point I had to recognize "an ethics that bestows on art, the models of self-realization; on religion, art and the sciences, it grants happiness projects; it endows law and politics with the legitimization of norms and the formation of will; and within all the different communities and groups, the configuration of virtues has dissolved a phenomenon once called 'moral'".

To unravel those moral elements that give human flesh to a procedural rationality was therefore of prime importance. Not only those elements but also others that we will try to bring to light over the course of this book, above all in Chapter 8.

## 8

### THE NEW SCENARIO OF A CITIZEN'S ETHICS: THE CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY

The situation has changed enormously since 1986, both at the global and local levels. The Berlin Wall fell, and with it also crumbled the possibility of a radical economic and ethical alternative to the capitalist system. Political blocs lost meaning and reality, the Soviet Union started on the road to *perestroika* and then to dissolution as a political entity. Neoliberalism was left as the only framework in the economic world and democracy as the single political ideal. The United States gradually imposed its military and social power, although at

this point of the 21st century it is China and India who are shaping up to be to be future competitive powers.

With great difficulty, the European Union has been consolidating a transnational union which, if fully implemented, may serve as an example to others that are being considered in Latin America and in the East. Immigration, which in reality is just a process that should be guided with caution and justice, has turned into a all-time worldwide problem for lazy reasoning. Terrorism has taken on unprecedented dimensions. Elusive (and sometimes not so elusive) individuals strive to bring East and West into confrontation, as if such blocs actually existed and could be identified respectively with Islam and Christianity. Globalization, the product of computer science, economics and communication networks, is an emerging platform from which one must inevitably speak.

It is clear that the questions that a shared ethical system must answer have changed substantially. Without trying to be exhaustive, these questions are as follows:

#### 1) *GLOBAL AND LOCAL MULTICULTURALISM*

One must not only speak of pluralism but also of multiculturalism at local and global levels, because the question of cultural identities demands the creation of a citizenship which, rather than "multicultural" (which can result in ghettos), is an *intercultural citizenship*.

In our country, twenty years ago, the different ethics of maxima were either Christian or secular but with Christian roots. In reality, only the gypsy world displayed a worldview that was nevertheless difficult to articulate in terms of the minimums of justice. But the growth of immigration has brought with it the challenge of building a community with different cultures. This is the moment to accept the challenge and turn the problems into opportunities for growth, or alternatively resolve them only with administrative measures which, applied by themselves, just destroy life.

It is not only the growth of immigration that has placed the unavoidable challenge of constructing an intercultural citizens' ethics on the table, but also the phenomenon of globalization, which since the 1990s has made obvious what was once a forgotten reality: that the coexistence of different cultures must not remain limited to the construction of isolated ghettos, and that we urgently need to find shared values, without which there will be no world justice.

To find these values that diverse cultures can share, in a dialogue undertaken from within the cultures themselves, is a challenge for civil ethics and it will be difficult to respond to it fully with anything but *ethica cordis*.

#### 2) *THE SEARCH LOCATION IS BROADENED: APPLIED ETHICS*

In recent years, the field of *applied ethics* has acquired irresistible momentum and has become a privileged field for the discovery of ethical orientations and decisions. While in previous decades the question of the fundamentals of morality provoked the most intense debates in the world of practical philosophy, since the last third of the past century, applied ethics have moved to

the forefront. It is from the perspective of applied ethics that traditional philosophical frameworks are questioned and irrevocable transformations are called for. It is in the heart of bioethics, economic and business ethics, the ethics of development, the ethics of communications media and the professional, consumer and sport ethics where it is necessary to engage in a reflexive discovery of the principles and values that are the bases of morality.

At the same time, problems in fields such as biotechnology are provoking crises of growth in conventional conceptions related to notions of person, of human life and of an empty life, of death and of nature as a whole.

At the start of the third millennium, applied ethics is an irreversible reality, not just as an interdisciplinary method of identifying what pivots upon the ethics of each social sphere, but also as a way of guiding collective decisions related to moral questions within each one of these spheres through commissions, committees, orientation sessions, codes, audits and declarations. At local, national and transnational levels it constitutes a specific interdisciplinary type of knowledge that is the subject of study at educational institutions and is being incorporated into the institutions of civil society.

### 3) *THERE IS NO CITY WITHOUT CITIZENS*

The great debate of political philosophy in the 1980s, which confronted liberals and communitarians at innumerable conferences and in countless publications, gave rise in the 1990s to a deep and widespread reflection on the *concept of citizenship*. As communitarians note, citizens are understood to belong to a city, to a political community, but as liberals stress, citizens want that city to be just. Liberal, republican, socialist and communitarian traditions entered the debate and little by little they learned from each other, designing models of citizenship sometimes with a more liberal bias and at other times with a more communitarian one. The differences are ultimately related to political bias.

Meanwhile, civil society has resorted to the notion of citizenship as "a loaded weapon of the future", a powerful motor of social revolution in all its different dimensions (political, social, economic, civil, intercultural, complex, cosmopolitan), as I attempted to demonstrate in *Citizens of the world*.

Educators within the public and subsidized private education systems take this notion of citizenship as a guiding principle to deconstruct the values that should guide those who form part of the political community.

### 4) *RADICAL DEMOCRACY, DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY*

Radical democracy, the choice of those of us who favor a participative as opposed to an elitist democracy, with genuine substance given to the representative element, now appears to have taken the form of a *deliberative democracy*.

In effect, an active citizenship has to be exercised in its relationship with state politics, fostering a truly representative democracy, but its activity does not end there. Participation within public opinion as well as in health centers, businesses, universities, clubs or different associations is also an exercise of citizenship; it is also a way to foster language networks, generating intersubjectivity. It is the correct structure for a radical democracy, because to be radical is to go to the roots and the roots are the citizens.

However, since the 1990s the main thrust of the "participationists" has "turned towards" deliberative democracy. Even Habermas, who would have been expected to propose a "discursive democracy" preferred to refer to "deliberative politics" when elaborating his theory on democracy. This caught his followers by surprise, since they had been speaking with enthusiasm of discursive democracy to refer to the type of representative democracy in which language networks acquire strength, thereby fostering intersubjectivity in the public sphere, although "without the aim of conquering" the political sphere. Nevertheless, they switched sides when they realized that the current or fashionable expression since the end of the 1990s has been "deliberative democracy", one of the big topics in political philosophy today. As a result, in the minds of those concerned with the topic there is such a wide array of different lines of thought that it currently represents one of the most prolific sources of bibliographical material.

#### 5) *ECONOMIC CITIZENSHIP*

In reality, to be one's own master in the political arena when one is an economic vassal is impossible. Nevertheless, political philosophers constantly overlook the economic dimension. Allusions to the market, for better or for worse, references to capitalism, positive or negative, are innumerable, but a serious treatment of economic citizenship is conspicuous by its absence. It appears to be taken as a given that economics belongs to a world without ethical principles, to that "atheism of the ethical world" that Hegel spoke of, in which strategic rationalism rules but moral reason is superfluous.

And, nevertheless, in opposition to outdated positivism, new approaches to economics recall, as Amartya Sen also asserts, that economics must be at the service of the skills of the people, and that its goal must be to empower them so that they can pursue the life plans that they value; that, as Jesús Conill puts it, real economics is ethical economics; and that, in the words of García-Marzá, businesses must make use of their moral resources.

To forget Adam Smith, the Kant of economics, has been a bad choice. The economy must be ethical in production, exchange, distribution and consumption. There is no political citizenship without economic citizenship.

#### 6) *Transnational civil ethics as global ethics*

In this area, the development of transnational civil ethics (which, in my judgment, is already becoming reality), may be of great help. Bioethics, economics, sports and media commissions, all of which must generate reports, consult their counterparts in other countries, while also referring to the guidelines of the WHO and the Global Compact for businesses. In this way, a transnational civil ethics with common ethical elements that cross national borders is being generated. This is not happening only in financial circles or transnational businesses; ethical frameworks are also rising to the global level and generating a certain shared awareness of what we believe should be.

So do we find ourselves at the portals of a cosmic city, a *cosmo-polis*, in which all human beings can find themselves at home, in their city? Just as the wealth of nations depends on global wealth, are we gradually developing a

transnational civil ethics that might become global, based on different cultures?

### 7) ETHICAL COMMUNITY WITH NON HUMANS?

At the end of this list, which does not in any way purport to be exhaustive, the concern for nature and, within that concern, for living beings, particularly animals, poses new questions for civil ethics. It is not just a matter of the need to design an "Ecoethics" that addresses the plundering of the ecosphere and of the Earth as a whole, but also that of expanding the ethical community - according to voices that are daily more insistent - to nonhuman beings, above all to animals.

The ethical community has been identified up to now with the human community and, according to the voices mentioned above, it has not been inclusive of other living beings that have a value in their own right, or are capable of suffering or have characteristics similar to those of human beings. The debate over animal rights has made its presence felt in the public forum, finding its way into codes of statutory law and raising a currently burning question: is it acceptable to speak of "rights of nonhuman beings", or is an ethics of the responsibility and care of the earth and that of the valuable beings that form part it, what is required.

The central concept of modern ethics, that of person referring exclusively to human beings, may come into question either by being extended to nonhuman beings or by raising questions regarding psychologically disabled or mentally ill people. Is "person" identified with the human individual or are there also animals that are persons? In any case, is it more important to be a person than to have the capacity to suffer or be deemed of intrinsic value in order to be able to enjoy rights?

This list of new questions creates an equally new scenario which, although rooted in the old one, demands new answers. Maybe these answers can be provided by that minimal ethics that 20 years ago sought to strengthen the ethical capital of pluralistic societies, but reformulated in such a way so as to overcome its limitations. This is the task proposed by *Ethica cordis*: to attempt to overcome the limitations of minimal procedural ethics while at the same time updating its approach with an ethical system that is no longer that of procedural reason but of entire human reasoning, of cordial reason

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