

BOOK REVIEWS

HORIZONS FOR EDUCATORS. EDUCATIONAL PROFESSIONS AND THE FOSTERING OF HUMAN PLENITUDE

Ibáñez-Martín, J.A. (2017). Madrid: Dykinson.
279 pp. ISBN: 978-84-9148-163-8

Horizons for educators, the last work of Ibáñez-Martín, and which we can consider to be his pedagogical legacy, is a plea for the importance of truth and for the need of existential commitment linked to its discovery, as the main problem of current education is of a cultural nature; that is, forgetting the discussion about the limits of what we consider to be a decent, examined and achieved life. "The antinomy between truth and freedom is of the greatest importance in culture these days" (p. 104).

The work, along with the prologue, the introduction and a clarifying final name index, is divided into four parts which include seventeen chapters. The first part, aimed at the bases of educational know-how, outlines its anthropological and ethical foundations over five chapters, contextualises the current educational processes and argues the need to seek excellence, as well as delineating the appropriateness of a pedagogy of desire linked to human dignity. From the reflection about the deepest aims of the task of educating, considering the new social scenarios characterised by so-called globalisation, the author invites us to search for fertile ways of reconciling wisdom with educational processes.

The educational profession is indeed risky, as light has to be shown to others about what transforms life into it being worth living. The section "Beacons for the educational task" develops the second part of the book in five chapters. In line

with the author's thoughts - arrayed in a large work - in these chapters we can appreciate the capital importance given to cultivating prudence, trying to overcome the lurking limitations of conceding to what is "politically correct", reminding of, amongst other illustrious authors, Popper (pp. 126-27), for whom the secret of intellectual excellence is a critical spirit and intellectual independence. What is politically correct is the enemy of freedom. Propagating the idea of the impossibility of attaining any truth, diminishing the status of truth is the breeding ground for "Faustian policies", as the author calls them: those which try to impose their own notion of human beings. Many reflections and pages are dedicated to the defence of daily liberties, where fruitful arguments about going from a *diktat* to new educational pacts are provided, and to the current requirements of the information societies for reshaping teaching ethics and standards, as well as to religious freedom and its projection in the educational system.

Plato, in *The Laws*, concurred on restricting the concept of education to the training of the citizenry, but the contemporary university extends its know-how to other areas. Employability, in fact, has become a relevant indicator for academic authorities. The third part of the work, which consists of four chapters, tackles the profile of the university lecturer and the goals of the institution in the complex societies of today, not exempt of a singular contribution to the forming of peace, beyond its consideration as a mere means for employability. The case for critical thought resounds again. To authentically teach is to help form a critical sense, to guide towards the search for plenitude, beyond silence and conventionalism, proclaimed in many ways by Ibáñez-Martín. It means

methodologically drawing on that “broadened reason” (the evidence which we can attain does not depend only on a technical reason), exemplifying the lack of presumably efficient models, given that, ultimately, invoking George Gusdorf, our author reminds us: “Every master, whatever their speciality, is above all a master of humanity”. As George Steiner would say, a valid Master must, in the end, be alone.

In the fourth and last part of the work, three chapters are dedicated to the portraits of three authors related with him: his master, Millán-Puelles; his colleague and friend, Eisner; and his first disciple, Esteve. These are representative of the different biographical heights of the author

and are also a way of exploring his “broadened reason”.

In the face of the fragmentation and flippancy of postmodern life, Ibáñez-Martín searches carefully – he has investigated all his life – in the legacy of Greek philosophy, in outstanding Western social inventions, in multiple authorised voices of contemporary culture and in Christian humanism to find persuasive arguments capable of fending off the threat of transforming the human fabric into a kaleidoscope devoid of sense.

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IN PRISON. REALITIES, SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION AND DRUG ADDICTION IN WOMEN

Fanny T. Añaños Bedriñana (dir). 2017. Madrid. Narcea Ediciones. 273 pp. ISBN: 978-84-277-2280-4.

The text presented here is aimed at university students and lecturers, prison professionals, education professionals, and society in general. Although a book can be the result of various experiences, this particular one has emerged from the research process for a project funded by the Spanish Directorate General for Research and National Plan for Scientific Research, Development and Technological Innovation R&D&I, Ministry of Science and Innovation / Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness, reference EDU2009-13408. This Project has also been endorsed by the Spanish Home Office, the General Secretariat for Prisons and the Government of Catalonia, Department of Justice, Directorate General for Prison Regulations and Resources.

The book was coordinated by Dr Fanny Añaños, a lecturer at the University of Granada who has worked very closely with marginalised women and who has a long history of conducting research in prisons. The authors of the different chapters are university lecturers or prison professionals with extensive research experience and a deep knowledge of prisons.

The book is structured into five distinct parts:

- The first addresses the fundamental traits of women in prison. It defines the drug addiction profiles and consumption patterns of female inmates, the sociodemographic profiles of women in prisons, and the development of the physical and mental health of the women held in Spanish prisons.

- The second studies the life trajectories of women before entering prison and the circumstances of their incarceration, in an attempt to find information about the childhood and youth of female prisoners, their relationships, the possible violence suffered and its consequences. It also analyses what happens to families when women enter prison.
- The third reflects on the programmes for women’s re-entry into society and the rehabilitation processes of women in prison. This includes programmes for the treatment of drug-dependent women, work on self-concept and the expectations of women held in prisons in Spain.
- Afterword and proposals for action. This chapter contains the conclusions and proposals for action taken from the research processes. This is clearly a complex task in which a great diversity of personal, group, professional and family circumstances must be taken into account.
- Annexes, which show the instruments used for the research, through questionnaires aimed at female inmates and prison professionals.

It is necessary to reflect on the life of women in prison, an institution created by men for men in which women do not have a space, let alone women who are mothers. In addition, one of the most essential attributes for the exercise of citizenship and coexistence must be taken into account: the overcoming of inequalities, including gender inequality. Therefore, it is essential to take women into account, even in an environment that poses major difficulties for the exercise of freedom such as prison, in order to give content and meaning to educational processes. While prisons as institutions have for some years been considering

women in prison as a population deserving of special treatment and attention, this consideration has not generally contributed to the improvement of their needs, or of their lives in prison, which are even more distressing if they are regular users of intoxicating substances.

Finally, the research presented in this book is conducive to reflection and contains praxis-based proposals that give value to the socialising and education measures provided for in the laws and regulations governing prisons in Spain.

UNESCO. EDUCATION IN ALL SENSES

Martínez Usurralde, M. J., Viana Orta, M. I. and Villarroel, C. B. (2015). Valencia: Tirant Humanidades. 180 pp. ISBN: 978-84-16349-49-4

This work, far from the traditional academic formats, brings us closer to one of the most arid issues we must currently address from the educational world: international organizations, specifically the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

The prologue, beautifully written by Francesc Pedró, reveals a different institution from the one offered by the media and conventional books, emphasizing its commitment to the transformation of reality, relying on "the true transformative potential of education in a development context" (Martínez, Viana and Villarroel, 2015: 17).

In the first chapter, aimed at understanding the origins, objectives, structure and functioning of UNESCO, the authors tell us, through a metaphorical journey, about the fundamental questions needed to understand this complex organization. Noteworthy is the section intended to deepen key concepts needed to understand the implemented international policies. Since its founding until now, two concepts will serve to "direct its steps: democratization of education and lifelong learning" (p. 56). The penultimate paragraph is essential, since it is where - building on the work done by María Jesús Martínez Usurralde, leading expert in international education - the transformative perspective of UNESCO concerning the close relationship between education and development is exposed.

The authors devote the second chapter to reflect on education as a human right, establishing links between it and the need for people to safeguard their dignity. In order to do this, they argue that the basic needs have to be covered; conducting an analysis of the different proposals from the

I encourage a thorough reading of this interesting and informative book. It is enjoyable and provides an opportunity to reflect on well-known, but rarely thought-about issues. This thinking process will certainly contribute to our learning and to improving our way of life.

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forties to these days. Right now, education is understood as a human right and as a promoter of other fundamental rights, being " (...) considered the quintessential tool that helps children, men and women to raise out of poverty" (p. 80). They give the deserved importance to the contribution of NGOs and social movements when implementing the right to education, which magnifies the work being done. They call the international community to, through cooperation based on dialogue, respect, learning and mutual enrichment, enable quality education for everyone.

It is imperative to note the presence throughout all the work of the gender perspective, which can be seen from the special attention to the education of girls and women and the main sources used. They emphasize in this regard the studies by various authors of international relevance, such as Rosa Torres (1999), Katarina Tomasevki (2004), Silvia Schmelkes (2011) and Martha Nussbaum (2012).

Through the dense chapter three, we are immersed in the politics of UNESCO, a policy that basically aims to create a more humane and democratic world (p. 118), and invited to discover their specific policies. Understanding them means to enter into a complex structure encompassing mission, strategies, policy instruments, programme, sectoral frameworks and themes. All these aspects, described pedagogically under the building metaphor, facilitate the understanding of this complex international organization.

When addressing these issues, these are organized into four major sectors. Regarding the first sector, the importance is given to vocational training. The second offers the opportunity to reflect on the importance of inclusive education. The relevant third sector focuses on policy and planning. Electronic resources are very useful, as well as simulation models in education. And the last, described at great length, is intended to Education for Sustainable Development, which includes the

formation of a global citizenship, “aware of their rights and willing to apply and claim their unexcused absence through democratic channels” (p. 155).

The work finishes with the irreplaceable contributions of UNESCO, which endorse the statement used by the authors to conclude: “If

UNESCO did not exist, we would have to invent it...” (p. 169).

This book is a contribution of great value and utility for all teachers and students committed to making the right to education a reality, not only where they live but anywhere on the planet, being true for every human being.

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