Alberto Ruiz Méndez

Who Are the Subjects of Justice in a Globalized World?

From the ‘Unidimensional Identity’ to the ‘Diversity of Identities’

Abstract: This article states that the idea of national citizenship, bound to rights and duties circumscribed to a State, is no longer fit to reflect upon the political challenges of a globalizing world. Instead, I argue in favor of the ‘diversity of identities’ as a ‘political heuristic’ that offers an alternative frame to the question about who is the subject of justice.

Our current understanding of the political and social action lacks of something: the concept of a citizen that we inherit from Modernity—the citizen as the subject of rights and duties—doesn’t let us explain its current dynamics in a globalizing world. Problems such as migration, refugees and contemporary social movements, among others, have led us to problematize two ideas associated with that concept: a) citizenship is defined based on exclusively national rights and duties, that is, those which are circumscribed to a politically and geographically well limited territory; and b) a State’s citizens are the only subjects for whom justice is understood as the equal distribution of those rights and duties. But the paradigms of national citizenship and just distribution are being undermined by globalization’s dynamics, since we are shown that their effects are transnational and that the expressions against these effects can also have a global character. This context rushes us to find new forms of understanding for those transformations, as well as the political action of people. To meet this challenge, this work argues in favor of the idea of the ‘diversity of identities’ as a way to understand people close to their concrete experiences of injustice, and as a ‘political heuristic’ that lets us offer an alternative frame to national citizenship as an answer to the question about who are the subjects of justice in a globalizing world.

Alberto Ruiz Méndez, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM)

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A first answer: the ‘national who’

The concept of citizenship has a long tradition, from its formulation until its most recent criticisms. It is not my intention to make a critical balance of this long tradition or its different meanings. Instead, I will adopt as a reference point the political idea of ‘person’ developed by John Rawls (who interprets citizenship in a specific way, which I will hereafter call ‘unidimensional identity’), to argue that such an interpretation contributes to the theoretical *impasse* in which we currently find ourselves: having to reflect upon the political dynamics of global and diverse effects using homogenous concepts from national frames; or, as Benhabib would write, discovering ourselves as “travelers sailing an unknown territory, with the help of old maps, made in different moments and in response to different needs.” (Benhabib 2005, p. 117) Those ‘old maps’ are the concepts of citizenship and the Nation-State as the frames through which people’s political action has been interpreted, and on which the struggles for justice have been staged. Let us see then the distinctive notes of the person as citizen in the Rawlsian theory.

Within Rawls’s wide conceptual plot that puts together theory of justice as equity, the political conception of the person is key, because its characteristics enable political agreement about basic justice questions that consolidate the construction of a reasonably fair society. According to this purpose, Rawls models his political understanding of the person as “someone who can be a citizen, that is, a normal and cooperative member of society through a lifetime.” (Rawls 1996, p. 18) Rawls tells us that this is a conception that starts in the public political culture, impressed on the fundamental texts of a democracy, and also comes from our daily notion of people as basic units of thought, choice and responsibility. What turns it into a normative conception is that it emphasizes certain characteristics that allow making people as citizens a key element to achieve a reasonably fair society. One of these characteristics is the distinction between ‘public identity’ and ‘moral identity’. The former is conceived of only in reference to the political rights and duties according to its shared status of citizenship, whereas the latter includes deeper commitments in people bound to values and principles of a reasonable, comprehensive doctrine (religious, moral, philosophical).

Values and principles that form moral identity are so important to people that they could even represent an obstacle to the agreement upon a political conception of justice fit to a democracy. To overcome this hurdle, Rawls states that public identity has a priority function to reach such an agreement, because only from its perspective could we make the distinction between our commitments

derived from a reasonable, comprehensive doctrine and those that we acquire as citizens. This doesn't mean that we are supposed to be two different persons; we all are at the same time a moral person within a comprehensive doctrine and a citizen in the public environment—but to Rawls:

[...] we can only hope to achieve a constitutional liberal democracy if we manage to distinguish between a private sphere and a public sphere or, as he says, between the shared culture (*background culture*) and the public environment (*public forum*). (Dreben 2002, p. 325)

Out of the priority of public identity above moral identity, the political conception of the person is a key element to agreeing upon a political conception of justice, because people, as citizens, by prioritizing their public identity assure the fulfilling of their freedom and political rights, as well as the freedom to practice their own understanding of good. This priority guarantees, on the one hand, the full preservation of their person irrespective of any alleged wellbeing and, on the other hand, that their ideas of good may have the same consideration and respect as those of any other. The fact of reasonable pluralism also forces them to privilege public identity, because in the same measure they are not able to reach an agreement on any base or moral rank (and even doing so would bring undesirable consequences)—only their goals and political commitments would allow the finding of a point of shared agreement. This doesn't mean that people as citizens must abandon all comprehensive doctrines in the quest for agreement. Priority states that they must be framed inside the limits of the political conception of justice, to promote that the social order guarantees a diagram of liberties and equal rights for all, and to avoid that their comprehensive doctrines can get to exercise a coactive power through the State. Distinguishing the field of influence of both identities, and giving priority to the public identity, is a strategy that helps guarantee a shared status as free and equal citizens within the frame of a Nation-State that will be in charge of solving every conflict of basic justice, by means of the political idea of justice agreed by the people conceived of as citizens.

The political conception of the person and its emphasis on public identity is thus a paradigmatic example of citizenship as the 'national who' of justice, because the latter, understood as a measure of distribution (of income, liberties, rights among others), is exclusively addressed to those on the inside of the Nation-State, which in due time becomes the legitimate scale for expressing and solving possible conflicts of justice—even if a widening of rights and liberties is demanded or the current measure of distribution is questioned. The only relevant subjects of justice in both cases are the people conceived of as national citizens. Further, this 'national who' not only determines the rights and duties

of the people considered citizens, but also the language with which these people express themselves and formulate their demands for justice, so that an argument between people thus conceived of and the State is valid only if they interrogate it about the measurement of distribution; that is, the current conception of justice. Whatever is found outside this environment, such as the cultural dimensions of acknowledgement, the problems of economic inequity, or the political exclusion due to gender reasons, are not conceived of as matters of basic justice.

John Rawls's political conception of person justifies itself within his theory of justice, but we must admit that it was created in a political and social context that was already in transformation. Before taking on its criticism and stating the need for new categories, we will take a short stroll through the characteristics of that transformation.

Nevertheless, it's suitable to depict that even the characterization made of those who compound the old and the new social movements was in consonance with the 'national who'. In the so-called old social movements, even though they had international repercussions (Tilly 2009), the working class had as a range of action and protest the Nation-State, and the paradigm of justice as distribution. And in the case of the so-called new social movements (ecologists, pacifists, among others), although their objectives and vindications (world peace, preservation of nature) sought repercussions outside the Nation-State, what is true is that they didn't achieve the level of global coordination required to leave that range, and hence their actions or protests stayed inside the Nation-State, refuting more the symbolic terrain than the political (Melucci 1999). We must look to the transformations surrounding the national frame to explain how the movements that followed let through to what is global and contributed to the theoretical *impasse*.

The context of globalization

At dawn of the twenty-first century, Albert Melucci described the political and social arena as a global stage, based on a 'hypothesis of discontinuity' (Melucci 2001). To him, we were being witnesses of structural phenomena that would radically modify social and political life on a planetary scale. That hypothesis stated that while the global map was changing based on new phenomena, the modern categories we used to attempt to describe them remained the same. So there was a discontinuity between the tools of analysis and the phenomena that they tried to explain, such that to him those were "crucial years that see emerge, at a planetary scale, unforeseen actors and struggles, but that have also shown the inadequacy of the instruments [allegedly] capable of catching and interpreting the

emergent forms.” (Melucci 1999, p. 176) Those structural phenomena and the theoretical discontinuity associated with them are collectively what today we have agreed to call globalization.

Beginning at a simple definition, we can say that globalization is a phenomenon of history in which relationships among countries, societies and people have soared, and time-space boundaries have been reduced through the flux of goods, services, products, knowledge and financial capital. Of course, globalization as a concept is a much more complex phenomenon, but that basic description allows us emphasize the fact that its effects have been so widespread that we face a double challenge: ‘how to understand the global society’ and ‘how to think of the global society’ (Campillo 2015); in other words, how to elaborate a philosophical and political reflection that enables us to comprehend the current world, and how to reflect upon the impact that this kind of society is having on our understanding of intellectual philosophical work and its role in such a society. Without trying to exhaust the complexity of globalization, but hoping to build an understanding of the same that adds to the purposes of this work, I will briefly expose three characteristic dimensions.

Firstly, one of the factors that stimulated this phenomenon was the revolution of information and technology that lets us stand in a digital space from which we can establish relations regardless of physical or time barriers. The Internet is the main tool of this revolution, because its most important technological innovation was turning that digital space into a platform from which almost anybody can produce and publish content in a simple way, using basic technical knowledge and skills. This innovation allowed digital applications to thrive in almost every dimension of life, keeping us in a non-synchronized but nevertheless coordinated state of interconnection. That innovation created a whole new process of “hypersocialization [by which the] new technologies of information create the possibility of action detaching from space and time, thus letting through to the appearance of time and the virtualization of space” (Melucci 2001, p. 32), and introducing to our actions both the global dimension and simultaneity, by separating them from lineal space and time. In the same way that content on the Internet can be hypertextual (audio, video and text all at the same time), so too can human action, by occurring in various spaces and times simultaneously through its global dispersion on the great digital spider web.

Secondly, besides the interconnection, globalization also implies interdependence at different scales, because decisions made within a State can come to have an influence on the life of those who are not part of it. For example, the economic measures that a country undertakes related to agriculture could affect the migrant workers and the families in their country of origin; or if a coun-

try decides to close its borders to legal or illegal migration, this would have consequences in diverse regions of the world. Interdependence is also part of the inter-, trans- and supranational organizations that thrust agendas with objectives and actions that are framed beyond any one Nation-State. For example, the implementation of certain economic politics that the International Monetary Fund demands in exchange for loans has regional and global repercussions; or in the case of organizations such as Reporters Without Borders that champion freedom of speech worldwide, we are shown the shared responsibility we have regarding such topics as ecological disasters, refugee crises or famine. Interdependence created by globalization points out how impossible any 'reversibility' (Bauman 2004) of our mutual dependence appears.

Thirdly, interconnection and interdependence also reveal to us that globalization is built upon a series of relations marked by the exercise of power that entail the generation of deep inequity among and within countries. While it is true that with globalization the positive flow of capitals towards developing countries has thrived, it is also true that with the global consolidation of financial elites and the supranational institutions that back up and take care of their interests, less developed governments and local markets exhibit their inability to recover from economic crises and their incapacity to fix the inequities that result from being subordinated to the benchmarks dictated by those elites. While the number of countries with prosperous economies that develop a stronger immunity to crises diminishes, the number of countries with poorer welfare and greater political uncertainty soars. This uncertainty increases their internal inequity by increasing the gap between those who have access to social benefits and those who don't, those who can access education and those who cannot, etc. The inequity spawned by these global relations of power makes visible the constitutive injustice of our world.

Each of the three dimensions pointed out implies the need for reckoning both its specific complexity and also their communicating links, because it is in them that the fight for justice is taking place. The wide range of political languages by means of which that fight is expressed represents a problematic horizon of reflection. Because the space of our actions is broader, the common objectives are restated, the distinction between what is global and local stops being clear, and the involved and affected actors increase in number. As a consequence, "globalization is changing our way of speaking about justice" (Fraser 2010, p. 12), by being the stage of the political and social battles of our time, and demanding new strategies that enable us to explain and analyze a variety of languages and vindications in the social and political environment that can't be approached through a homogenizing lense.

In the previous section, I stated that the old and the new social movements didn't reach a global impact because, among other things, they didn't account for the digital tools that could allow them to overcome time-space barriers. But it is important to also point out that the sociological and philosophical theories that explained them conceived of them within the frame of Nation-State, and refuted justice in terms of the distribution, either of labor or symbolic—but always within that frame and without considering their possible effects on a wider scale. That is the reason why whenever the alterworld and networked social movements following the former first appear, the need for restating our modern conceptual diagrams arises, because in their protests they involved a wide range of vindications and actions that are only understandable without the tight frames of the Nation-State and citizenship—precisely because the dynamics of their action and the content of their protest had a global character that went beyond those frames and those theories. Thus, before proposing new forms of understanding, we must first undertake a criticism of the 'national who' and thereby identify the milestone for remaking the map.

The 'unidimensional identity' of the 'national who'

The conception we have inherited of people as citizens framed by the Nation-State is 'unidimensional' insofar as it emphasizes their 'political identity' to turn them into subjects of justice. But under the circumstances of a globalizing world, this unidimensional conception of people produces more questions than it ever offered certainties. Let us consider the case of the aforementioned social movements.

There was a time in which we could clearly identify who demanded some vindication of justice and their opponent: the struggle of the workers' movement (mainly formed by the workers themselves) fought against capitalism and the educated property owner (bourgeois) State; the feminist movements gathered persons, without gender distinction, who shared the diagnosis of the patriarchy represented by the State as an oppressive power; and to these can be added many ecological or peace movements. It can also be said that, despite their global repercussions, these struggles were always framed within the Nation-State. But with the emergence of antiglobalization movements (Juris 2004) and subsequently, of networked social movements (Castells 2015), that break with the Nation-State frame, "the movements lose their condition as a character [giving] individuals and groups a benchmark to rebuild divided identities among different

memberships, functions and times of the social experience.” (Melucci 1999, p. 118)

‘Unidimensional identity’ no longer seems to be the adequate category to conceive of people, nor to explain their social action, because in those movements the opponent was no longer the Nation-State but, for example, supranational organizations such as the International Monetary Fund. Additionally, the members of each movement no longer conceived of themselves just as workers or feminists or ecologists, but all of their particular belongings gathered in a common indignation due to the negative effects of the world politics or economy, and, in some cases, not only did they refute the conception of justice as a scale, but also demanded a ‘radical democracy’ that implied a change in our conception of justice. I will return to this topic later. I will now explain the errors of the inherited conception of the ‘national who’, to show the reason why this response cannot help us deal with the contemporary challenge of simultaneously managing the difference and the integration within the frame of globalization, and hence our need for an alternative point of view.

In her book *Scales of Justice*, Nancy Fraser tells us that the contemporary philosophical theories in matters of justice (such as Rawls’s) are based on two given ideas, which she identifies with the images of a scale and a map. The first image evokes the intention of impartially, assessing different vindications of social justice based on a ‘distributive’ measure that makes them measurable; whereas the image of the map sends us back to the metric resource of the geographer, with which it is possible to limit and represent spatial relations through which those social demands would take place. (For the case of such theories the adequate scale or frame is the Nation-State and its citizens.) But given the problematic context of globalization, we must ask ourselves what is their pertinence as normative categories: because in the case of the scale, the complexity and variety of the current political language on which the vindications of justice are formulated take to trial the paradigm of distribution; and, concerning the map, because cases like the ones I have mentioned regarding social movements refute the frame of Nation-State, since their demands of justice succeeded to transcend the national scale thanks to their dynamics and the content of their protest.

Globalization, especially because of the three dimensions I have highlighted, is then the stage on which the vindications of justice and the claims of injustice demand us to discuss yet again the question: who are the subjects of justice? The ‘national who’ reassured by theories like Rawls’s was the agreed answer for a long time, but since today the negative or positive effects of political decisions are global, dynamics of protest and political action that can be carried out by people are global too. Based on this certainty, I add to Fraser’s statement—according to which those theories of justice can’t offer a guide for analyzing the

problems derived from these challenges for having fallen into a ‘dogma of egalitarianism’ (Fraser 2010, Chapter 3)—that the Nation-State is the correct frame for the reflection of justice, and that its citizens are the subjects to whom it is addressed. In democracies based on the idea of the Nation-State, the arguments about justice agreed that distribution was the measurement to solve justice demands. Although they debated *what* should be equally distributed (rights, liberties, capacities, cultural identity), they agreed on the *who*: the national citizens to whom distribution was addressed. Given the challenges of globalization, both coincidences are being questioned and the national scale with the citizens bound to it no longer seems fit to set justice the relevant questions. Having assumed the ‘national who’ dogma, theories like Rawls’s can’t help us determine *who* should count as a relevant justice subject in a globalizing world, because the dynamics of political subjects, as well as those of social movements, escape from their theoretical diagrams; they set sail from the experience of injustice of both the ones on the inside and the ones on the outside of the national frame, which recoils in a dynamic of global protest and starting from different identities.

But besides having fallen into this dogma, the point of view both traditions offer about the ‘national who’ is also limited. In Rawls, the conception of identity is ‘unidimensional’ by limiting it to its political aspect, in which it is only possible to take part of the public affairs and formulate vindications of justice from the language of rights and duties, forgetting that those same vindications can only be made from concrete positions of exclusion, and that expressing them just in political terms can imply its perpetuation when not taking into account their specificity. In this way, Rawls’s political conception of person as the ‘national who’ of justice leaves voiceless those who demand the amendment of an injustice that has had global effects. In this sense, the theory of Rawlsian justice not only has assumed without reckoning the idea of the ‘national who’, but also offers us a limited understanding of it by presenting it in terms of a political identity that encloses people within the same interests and the same needs, rendering the political dialogue unnecessary.

From the challenges before us in a globalizing world, those ‘monological theories’ of justice (Fraser 2010, p. 27) lack the necessary concepts to analyze and understand the political dynamic of those who are both on the inside of the national scale and on the outside of it, and who need to express their demands in another language which is not that of distribution. When blindly assuming the framing of the Nation-State and of national citizenship, this dogma turns into an instrument of manipulation of the public space, because from it the rules of political decision unfairly exclude people who belong to the community, and because the boundaries of community exclude those affect-

ed by the inner decisions. This phenomenon, which Fraser (2010) calls a ‘misrepresentation’, denies people the possibility of denouncing an injustice and participating in its amendment; by conceiving of them from a ‘unidimensional identity’ perspective, an unjustified exclusion is performed and we are left with a conceptual gap that appears unavoidable.

Today’s political and social conflicts are the result of many factors, and the struggles for justice are no longer only for the widening of rights and liberties; hence, political action of protest by people is also the result of multiple inner and outer factors. Conceiving of people as having a unidimensional identity has made us think that what is important is explaining, analyzing and solving conflicts, since the actors are already given—but in reality, the multiplicity of the actors that appear at a local and (sometimes simultaneously) global level demands us paying attention to the diversity of people. Amartya Sen has pointed out this same need by demonstrating that beginning at a unidimensional identity (or a ‘singular affiliation’ of the identity, as he calls it) opens an unbridgeable abyss between the ideal conception and the real behavior of people (Sen 2009), because the ‘singular affiliation’ of identity mistakes its perspective about people by putting them in very tight circumstances for their action. In his opinion, only the acknowledgement of our different commitments and adhesions could allow us “a bigger understanding of the plurality of human identity and the acknowledgement that such needs overcome across and act against a strict separation along a unique rigid line of impregnable division.” (Sen 2006, p. xiv) The conception of unidimensional identity creates an idealized vision of people, and consequently, leaves us without a proper guide for thinking the dynamic of the conflicts and people in their political action. As a result of this conceptual gap, the ‘right to the word (Melucci 2001, p. 57) and to ‘parity of participation’ (Fraser 2010, p. 28) of groups of individuals to decide what they are and what they want to be, has been limited. These authors consider this to be an injustice, both within and beyond the frame of Nation-State, and contemplate what it takes to remediate it.

To get over the conception of unidimensional identity, we must undertake the following challenge: provided that people don’t exhaust their identity nor their action under the idea of citizenship, we must be able to find a conception of the same that transcends that conceptualization through analytical instruments that describe and analyze what people are or can be and what people do or can do. The person as citizen within the Nation-State is no longer the starting point, as supposed by theories of justice like Rawls’s. Instead, within the frame of the challenges that a globalizing world presents, it is a phenomenon to be explained by some dynamic model that facilitates catching the complexities of the actors and the conflicts derived from them.

A second answer: the ‘diversity of identities’ as ‘political heuristic’

I now return to the aforementioned social movements, to exemplify this challenge and to derive from their experience the idea of ‘diversity of identities’.

Digital interconnection allowed the creation of a different dynamic in social movements from the last years of the twentieth century until the movements of the outraged. Internet, text messages from mobile phones and digital social platforms like *Facebook* or *Twitter* made possible a wider diffusion of protest, which allowed other networks and people to support protest speeches that might be territorially distant, but brought emotionally near thanks to digital interconnection. Pioneers in this dynamic were the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional and the so called ‘Battle of Seattle’, since in both cases they used the digital communication tools of their time to broadcast their message and coordinate their own and third parties’ actions. But the ones who maximized the usage of those tools were the social movements that occurred between 2009 and 2012 in Iceland, the movement of the Outraged in Spain, the occupation of Wall Street in New York and the movement #YoSoy132 in Mexico. Each of these has its specificity and would require a particular study, but from the common characteristics that Castells (2015) has proposed, we can abstract one that helps the purposes of this research: the identity of the people who took part in those movements.

Since mobilization was organized through communication and coordination networks to which anybody could materially or virtually access, participants didn’t have to be identified exclusively as workers, feminists, ecologists, global-phobes, pacifists or any other discrete group. In the context of these networked social movements, people could assume demands, protests or indignation as their own, even though they didn’t belong to their immediate context, and without having to compromise their own identity or goals in case of belonging to another movement. Characterization of earlier movements had a tendency to centralize the identity of their members, but in these new movements, each individual gets involved from a ‘diversity of identities’ that favors union around a common objective. The global injustice present in our world affects us in different areas of our lives—we don’t need to see ourselves exclusively as workers or ecologists to mobilize. It was precisely the confirmation of that injustice through the diversity of identities that we acquired and affirmed as persons that led the participants of these movements to mobilize and protest.

Based on what has been exposed about the context of globalization, the mistakes of theories of justice such as Rawls’s, and the dynamic of social movements as an example of the political and social challenges of that context, the

conception of the citizen now appears before us as a reductionist vision of people's identity within democratic societies. In particular, Rawls's theory of justice created a conception of the person based on a 'public identity' that favored the language of rights and duties to express demands that at the same time were valid only within the frame of the Nation-State. Nevertheless, this conception entails singularizing its identity to certain needs or interests valid in resolving questions of basic justice—but that cannot include the demands of justice that people make based on their social position, their economic situation or their cultural identity at a global scale, because the effects of globalization transcend the national frame. Therefore, we can say that no philosophical reflection of politics that alleges a 'unidimensional identity' in people conceived of as citizens can be a useful guide for reflecting upon the conflicts of global character, because conceiving of people as a 'national who' doesn't take into account that people act from different positions, adhesions and indignations that go beyond the political language exclusive to rights and duties, nor that they are even aware that the formality of such language is no longer adequate to express their discontent. In consequence, the unidimensional identity keeps us from understanding that "contemporary individuals act in the confinement of diverse systems and have the increasing need of pregnable identities that allow them to transit through the different regions of meaning and the different institutional frames." (Melucci 2001, p. 47)

To overcome this conceptual gap, it is necessary to factor in a conception of people's identities that reflects the 'diversity of identities' that constitute us, and which are built from the influence that the different adhesions, loyalties and commitments—both political and moral—that set up our demands of justice and that encourage us to mobilize against some kind of injustice have in the course of our lives. This idea of the diversity of identities appears as a 'political heuristic' that could serve, on one hand, to make possible critical reflection on the categories of the political philosophy we have inherited, and, on the other hand, as an alternative point of view about the people opposite to the 'national who' that could help us break out of the rigid conceptual structures that have been passed on to us, so that we could design a map to guide us accurately through a globalizing world.

By 'political heuristic', I understand a knowledge that appears as an alternative method to solve a problem when all the other existing methods generate more confusion than solutions (Navarro 2015). Regarding the question about who counts as a subject of justice, the answer of the 'national who' generates more problems than satisfactory explanations when we try to approach global phenomena like networked social movements. For this reason, I propose using the idea of the diversity of identities as a political heuristic to redesign a relevant

and reliable starting point; to help us determine who counts as a subject of justice in each case—but not in such a singular way that in the long term would generate more uncertainty rather than options to think about the conflicts. The heuristic I am trying to build from this idea of the diversity of identities is political because it would only apply to the analysis of subjects that refute the frames of State-Nation and citizenship from the global perspective of injustice and inequities; thus it justifies its characterization as a tool for the creation of new knowledge concerning the political problems of a globalizing world by assuming, on one side, that inherited political philosophy doesn't guide us correctly in its examination, and, on the other side, that that world is complex, interactive and interdependent enough to elaborate exhaustive analysis or seek exact solutions.

The way in which the question about who counts as a subject of justice is answered is crucial, because by doing so from the perspective of the diversity of identities, we are set on the inverse course within the map; in other words, while inherited theories of justice determined monologues like the goal and the path to reach it, setting sail from the diversity of identities means instead to begin with the concrete experiences of the people (such as the ones we find in social movements) to determine the steps to take towards justice. Beginning from the diversity of identities would mean acknowledging that the different spheres within which we define our actions, responsibilities and additions represent a different political language that we have the right to vindicate, because it is precisely this diversity of identities—national citizens, workers, defenders of animal rights, or all of these at once—that favors and sustains collective action in a globalizing world. Those “multiple identities get past national frontiers, and the people do things they feel they really ‘have’ to do, instead of accepting them by virtue.” (Sen 2009, p. 129).

Of course, none of the problems that the three dimensions of globalization entail can be solved just with a change of perspective about the people—but I think it would be much more difficult to propose an adequate view if we don't incorporate a conception of the person based on their diversity of identities, and which reflects the variety of commitments and adhesions that are part of their interpretation of the injustices that could affect them in one or more aspects of such a variety. The diversity of identities seems to be a good starting point to reflect upon the refutations of justice at a global level because, on one side, it lets us bear witness of the injustice of the current system in different ambits, and, on the other side, it also lets us associate with common actions derived from injustice, such that we can experiment in different aspects of social life. Its pertinence as a political heuristic is that, in opposition to the ‘national who’, it allows us to “open a way for the acknowledgement of the plurality of meanings and forms of action present in the concrete collective phenomena.”

(Melucci 1999, p. 59) The conception of people from their diversity of identities seeks to contribute to the creation of a theory according to our time that serves to undertake the task of drawing the proper map to guide us from the inside of the complexity of a globalizing world. Its success will depend on our capacity to think from the global frame, and to explain how the political action of the people from the convergence of their diversity of identities is configured.

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