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Version: Accepted Version

Publisher: Palgrave Macmillan

Please cite the published version
Justice and global citizenship education

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‘The social relations between the various Peoples of the world have now advanced everywhere so far that a violation of Right in one place of the earth, is felt all over it. (…) A Cosmo-political Right of the whole Human Race, (…) is a necessary completion of the unwritten Code which carries national and international Right to a consummation in the Public Right of Mankind. Thus the whole system leads to the conclusion of a Perpetual Peace among the Nations’ (Kant, 2010/1795, p. 24).

Since Kant published his ‘Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch’ in 1795, humanity has seen two world-wars (and a cold war), hundreds of other wars, multiple genocides, processes of colonization and decolonization, the growth of a new Empire including the consequences of this growth, multiple violent revolutions, numerous coup d’états supported by countries declaring themselves liberal democracies, and increasing numbers of poverty pools following the expansion of capitalism worldwide. Some of these events have taken place after the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. The failure of the enlightenment promise of a peaceful and fair future has left many humans with the feeling that justice is an impossibility (see, e.g. Biesta, 1998). The hypothesis that globalization and interdependence will bring, as Kant suggests, something like empathy, mutual understanding and global compassion is, for some of us, implausible. And yet here we are discussing the links between universal justice and a (at least a priori) re-vitalized form of Kant’s cosmopolitanism named global citizenship. The questions we face in this chapter are, does globalization shed some additional light on discussions about universal justice, including the identification of possible situations of injustice? Can discussions on justice inform more democratic approaches to global citizenship and education?

A discussion on justice and global citizenship can be considered an ‘updated’ and ‘globalized’ version of the traditional philosophical debates on the links between ethics and politics. In these debates, questions on the possibility, meaning and desirability of any universality are essential. Two philosophical grounds are often used to frame these questions. For the universalists, a global notion of justice is necessary and possible. Within the liberal tradition, Nussbaum (2002), revisiting Kant’s notion of cosmopolitanism, highlights the urgency of defining a global ethics that, in her understanding, should be grounded in liberal principles, compassion and respect. McLaren (2005), instead, defends a totalizing social justice project based on Marxist social theory. Within a spiritual framework, Ikeda (2001) proposes a form of inner universalism based on the principals of human dignity and interconnectedness. Although defending competing views, Nussbaum, McLaren and Ikeda construct their views based on a
superior positivity in which global politics is understood as plausible practices of human ethics. For particularists, in contrast, any notion of justice is historically and geographically constructed and any definition of global justice is an attempt to universalise and impose some situated views (MacIntyre, 1998). ‘Saying’, Biesta writes, ‘that something is just, or that one is just, is a betrayal of the very idea of justice to the extent to which it forecloses the possibility for the other to decide whether justice has indeed been rendered’ (1998, p. 406). Universal justice, in this respect, can be considered un-democratic.

The authors of this chapter hold different views in relation to these debates and yet we all hold a firm commitment towards democratic and social-justice orientated educational practices, theories and research. We take as a starting point of the discussion in this chapter the (non-shared) assumption that there is no pre-determined universal justice in itself but yet multiple and contingent discourses on justice competing to gain hegemonic primacy (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). Simultaneously, we understand justice, as Derrida does, as a ‘a call, a promise of an independent future for what is to come’ that ‘we must seek, very carefully, to give force and form’ to (2004). In this chapter, we discuss three different discourses on justice competing for hegemony, trying to give form to this promise of ‘justice to come’. These discourses - economic, recognition and democratic justice – draw upon our interpretations of Fraser’s framework on ‘justice in a globalized world’ (2005)¹. For each discourse, we outline the conceptual underpinnings, key issues and implications for education for global citizenship. We conclude the chapter by highlighting some possibilities for justice-orientated practices and research on the field of global citizenship education.

Economic justice

Economic justice is often described in relation to distributive theories of justice. As Fanon wrote, ‘what counts today, the question which is looming on the horizon, is the need for a redistribution of wealth. Humanity must reply to this question, or be shaken to pieces by it’ (1961, p. 98). The meaning of ‘redistribution of wealth’ is, nevertheless, controversial. Redistribution is often understood through the lends of liberal theory (e.g. Fraser, 2003). Here, the capitalist mode of production is assumed and so they are the consequent socioeconomic injustices (Biesta, 1998). To weaken these injustices, liberal theorists propose to redistribute the accumulated wealth in the sense of what Rawls calls a “duty of assistance”. ‘Certain provisions’, Rawls exposes, ‘would be included for mutual assistance among peoples in times of famine and drought, and insofar as it is possible, provisions for ensuring that in all reasonably developed liberal (and decent) societies people’s basic needs are met’ (2002, p. 38)².

Economic justice, nevertheless, can also relate to the notion of exploitation, one of the central ideas in Marxian theory. Exploitation is the modus operandi and the foundational basis of the capitalist mode of production. Under capitalism, it is the exploitation of labour and resources that makes profit possible. Therefore, exploitation is one of the main sources of business

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¹ Fraser (2005) understands justice as recognition, redistribution and participation.
² For a more in depth account of the relation between liberal distributive justice and global ethics, see Forst (2001).
growth, wealth accumulation and further, the origin of class struggle. The ultimate source of profit and the force behind capitalist production is the unpaid labour of workers or the new value created by workers in excess of their own labour-cost, which is appropriated by capitalists as profit when products are sold. In this sense, the capitalists’ appropriation of productive labour permits the accumulation of wealth, since profits are the result of the surplus value that is not reflected in the worker’s wage. Class struggle emerges from the capitalists’ attempts to extract more profit from labour and maximize their appropriation of surplus value, and the workers’ resistance to such exploitation. From a Marxist perspective, labour exploitation is an inherent injustice deeply embedded in a capitalist mode of production.

Exploitation has reached a global scale in the neoliberal phase of capitalism. In the neoliberal age, the idea of economic justice not only includes the traditional understandings of labour exploitation, but is also part of a wider struggle joined by people who are marginalized, excluded, under-privileged, oppressed and segregated by capitalism. Global capitalism has forced “poorer regions and countries into a subordinate economic and political position where they can (at best) have some dependent standing as a provider of basic goods (be it natural resources or labor) for which they are scarcely compensated” (Forst, 2001, p.61). For some, rich countries try to legitimize their capitalist power by using educational aid agencies to teach students of the Global South their ‘proper’ roles in the capitalist society (see Wallerstein, 2004).

Within countries, economic injustices have intensified because neoliberal reforms advance the idea that governments have to withdraw from their social welfare function and instead focus on expanding private markets and creating conditions for entrepreneurship, competition and new private investments (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Robertson & Verger, 2012). Therefore, economic inequality and disfranchisement rises as neoliberalism advances a series of reforms that support an aggressive privatization of public services, grow international private markets, and advance economic austerity policies that lead to decreases in state funding for health, education, housing and other public services (Kumar, 2014; Ross & Gibson, 2007). In a globalized neoliberal world, the accumulation of capital is not only the result of capitalists’ exploitation, but, as Harvey (2005) argues, accumulation under neoliberal capitalism is the result of dispossessing the most vulnerable people in society of their wealth, opportunities, land and means of survival.

Education is one of the areas where neoliberal reforms have been advanced during the last decades. This movement is composed of a series of market-based reforms best conceptualized as a coordinated effort by an entwined and complex global network of governments, international governmental organizations, private corporations, think tanks, nonprofits and venture philanthropists who influence and steer national education policies in countries across the world (Anderson & Herr, 2015; Ball, 2012). There are several examples of how neoliberal based reforms spread and influence educational policies, global standardized testing and their impact in test-based accountability policies is one of the most salient examples (Mathison & Ross, 2008). One of the most recent is Teach for All (TFA), a global network of organizations including Teach for America and Teach First among others,
which advances a corporate and an entrepreneurial approach to solving educational inequity and strives to forge a global vision of quality in education (Friedrich, 2004). As the TFA network expands throughout the world it has become an example of a global effort to reform teacher education by affecting teacher identity and the public perception of good teaching. TFA is pushing schools towards corporate management models and has become a platform that exemplifies precariousness of employment in the private sector. TFA rests on notion that educational inequality can be reduced by placing graduates from elite universities, without professional preparation, into marginalized schools (Gautreaux & Delgado, in press; Vellanki, 2014).

Some researchers have examined the functioning of the education systems and schooling in capitalist contexts³. For instance, in the USA, Malott and Ford (2015) expose attacks on critical thinking and social studies and illustrate processes that lead to working-class students experiencing standardized curriculum that serves the interest of capital, while bourgeois students are taught critical thinking and creativity. Their analysis poses a major challenge to notions of social justice education within capitalism, which suggests exploitation is the result of greed, prejudice, and bias. Similar results have been found by researchers investigating other subject areas and other institutions. In Germany, Straehler-Pohl and Pais (2014) have examined capitalist ideology at work in current mathematics educational classes where working-class students “can only postpone the materialisation of an already-determined exclusion” (p. 91) from further education. In the UK, researchers have examined how even some ‘successful’ higher education working-class students are forced to choose between their working-class and their student identity (Reay, Crozier & Clayton, 2010). Radical thinkers have concluded that the influence of social class characteristics is so powerful that schools cannot overcome them (Marsh, 2011).

There are also some examples of what we understand as global-citizenship-oriented practices framed by Marxist understandings of justice. In the USA, Greg Queen, a social studies teacher in Detroit engages in what we understand to be one of the most elaborated examples of contemporary classroom practice focusing on economic justice (Ross & Queen, 2013). Queen has for years used economic justice, social class, and class struggle as the organizing principles for his American Studies course, which interweaves five themes (inequality, capitalism, racism, globalization, and war) and fits within National Council for Social Studies curriculum standards and campaign for teaching global citizenship. Similarly, Malott and Ford (2015) propose a Marxist social studies course that begins with the insight that to capital and capitalists all people are equal, differences among people’s living conditions, or race, gender, abilities, and so on, do not exist. In capitalism the most important economic goal is to accumulate as much surplus value as possible, without any respect for workers’ lives or their rights. In this context, the capitalist state relies on intensified ideological management to devalue producers and justify exploitation, which also suppresses social unrest of labourers. Malott and Ford are conceptualizing a social studies education that bends toward communism, while responding to its capitalist context.

³ For a more detailed discussion on research in social-class, see the chapter on social class in this handbook.
Economic justice and class exploitation, nevertheless, are virtually absent from school curriculum and the research literature in social studies and global education, the key areas for teaching and research global citizenship. This absence contributes to the poverty of both curriculum and research on global citizenship education and leaves little or no room for consideration of class-based identity as a social, cultural, or economic subjectivity – an irony in an age of hegemonic identity politics. And because economic justice and class issues intersect and interact with cultural and psychological processes (e.g., identity) as well as relations of power (e.g., subjectivities) our understandings and explorations of the full range of human experience are impoverished. The failure to think and learn about citizenship issues without reference to economic justice and social class weakens efforts to understand the nature of social problems and distorts our conceptions of and inquiry into possible responses and solutions.

Recognition Justice

The cultural politics of difference are often seen as alternatives to theories of economic justice. The roots of the controversy can be found in two different debates. First, against Marxist views, the so-called identity politics theorists argue against the primacy of economic injustices above other injustices. The redistribution of material goods is in itself no longer considered to be sufficient to bring about social justice. As Fraser (2003) points out, what really matters, is not the injustice itself but the experience of injustice. Only through a reorganization of institutions and practices, structural and cultural changes, will these experiences of injustice be called into question (Young, 1990). Second, liberals often defend the need for inspecting justice at an individual level (see Kymlicka & Norman, 1994). For identity politics theorists, ‘the community is the source of any right; and strong communitarian allegiances, the origin of any identity’ (Laclau, 1999, p. 104). By operating as difference-blind politics, economic justice theories can reinforce injustice by falsely universalizing dominant group norms, requiring subordinate groups to assimilate to them (Honneth, 1995). The denial of the role of identity in politics can also lead to a denial of the cultural and social practices that make us individual. To quote a young activist in the ‘Black Lives Matter’ campaign following the shootings in Ferguson (USA)⁴, ‘if you don’t see that I am black, you don’t see all of me’.

Identity politics arguments have widely been used to discuss the relation between social justice and education. Recognition theories have informed more socially just micro practices in social structures such as education whereas misrecognition is a matter of externally manifest and publicly verifiable impediments to some people’s standing as full members of society (Gewirtz, 1998). Recognition theorists have also cut across all social movements (including economic) and required a new evaluation of identities that have become devalued and disrespected (Young, 1990). In this respect, identity politics have arguably helped to denounce processes of marginalization and misrecognition in education contexts including those caused by reason of gender, ethnicity and religion (Gewirtz, 1998).

⁴ In August 2014, Michael Brown, an 18-year-old black man, was shot by Darren Wilson, 28, a white Ferguson police officer in Ferguson (USA). The shooting evolved into a chain of civil protests against systematic racism.
There is, however, a key question that identity politics have not yet solved. ‘How a politics’, Hall wondered, ‘can be constructed which works with and through difference, which is able to build those forms of solidarity and identification which make common struggle and resistance possible but without suppressing the real heterogeneity of interests and identities?’ (1996, p. 445).

The acceleration of the globalization process, with increasing overlaps within most communities, has fostered the need of debating this question. Indeed, recognition approaches have been seen by some as responses to the ‘ethical paradox of post modernity’ (Bauman, 1998). By the time of writing this text, the four authors of this chapter are living in a country different of the one of their birth. In a less privileged situation, refugees, asylum seekers and economic migrants have become increasingly visible in the past few years, amongst them, ‘the most vulnerable people on earth-children on the edge’ (Unicef, 2016). The ‘vagabonds’, in Bauman’s term (1998), face major barriers to participate in the societies they live in, including barriers to participate in their education institutions and practices (Pinson, Arnot & Candappa, 2010).

Previous experiences of migration and nomadic lifestyle have not left a lot of scope for optimism. Attitudes towards peoples such as the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, have remained remarkably consistent across countries and throughout history (Wilding, 2008). Gypsies have been present in large numbers in Europe alone since the 15th century yet, ‘in many ways the discrimination GRT groups face throughout Europe and internationally is distinct and distinguishable from other immigrant groups’ (Bhopal and Myers 2009, p. 420). While progress has been made with documented accounts of more inclusive practices, (Levinson, 2007; O’Hanlon and Holmes, 2004), for most societies, the figure of the Gypsy is still ‘an exaggerated stranger’ (Bhopal & Meyer, 2009). They are simultaneously perceived as a threat to the values and social norms of the majority, while remaining invisible and unrecognised in relation to access to mainstream services. Sir Trevor Phillips famously described attitudes to GRT communities as ‘the last respectable form of racism’ (Foster & Norton, 2012, p. 87). The transnational nature of discrimination reflects, in some respects, the failure of Gypsy groups to be recognised internationally. There are strong cultural and social links amongst the different GRT communities in different countries, and it could be argued that they are truly European, or even, global citizens. Yet, ironically, as Hancock (1987, in Bhopal & Myers, 2009) hints they have never become a single nation, with the rights this status would command and this, perhaps, contributes to a perception of relative political powerlessness.

Traditional communities (including the nation itself), nevertheless, might have been called into question by the globalization process. Some claim that the world is slowly integrating into a single global culture that gathers the best of all cultures (see e.g. Baker & LeTendre, 2005). Post-colonialists authors, instead, have long argued against this ‘global culture’. For them, global culture is not understood as ‘the best of all cultures’ but as an attempt to impose certain forms of (Western) knowledge – including Western-style schools – onto others (Spring, 2008). Global citizenship framed by world culture perspectives, tend to fail in “educational practices

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5 Chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission in UK from 2007
that unintentionally reproduce ethnocentric, ahistorical, depoliticized, paternalistic, salvationist and triumphalist approaches” (Andreotti & Sousa, 2012, p. 1). Simultaneously, globalization is also perceived as a threat by some (Western and non-Western) nations (Brown, 2014). Whereas in the local/national scale, nationalism is often understood as being related to the imposition of dominant values, in the global scale, ‘the claim to nationhood affirmed the dignity of the people and legitimated the demand for independence and equality’ (Hardt & Negri, 2000, p. 106). What is misrecognized here is not a particular community within the nation, but a particular nation within the globe.

All these issues are particularly relevant in educational theory, policy and research. Education – including but not limited to schools – is often perceived as being essential for the survival of any community (Durkheim, 1956). The questions here are, which community? And at what cost? Schools have often been criticized for educating (or indoctrinating) children into the dominant national values, principles and traditions (e.g. Sant, Pages, Santisteban & Boixader, 2015). Indeed, assimilationist approaches are antagonistic to most understandings of social justice, including but not limited to the one we propose in this section (e.g. McLaren, 2005). But there is also a question of whether these national values, principles and traditions can be a ‘weapon’ against the homogenization character of the globalization process (e.g. Sant, 2016). And within these debates, the education of the ‘stateless’ (to use Arendt’s term) cannot be forgotten. The history of Gypsies, including the failure of education systems in recognizing their diversity, alerts us of some of the risks that education faces in post-modern times in which states are fixed but people decide or are forced to move. Negative feelings towards groups of people who have become stateless and, therefore, dehumanized are open to exploitation by politicians.

**Democratic justice**

Most of the issues highlighted in the two previous sections could be framed by a discussion on democratic justice. According to Fraser, justice ‘requires social arrangements that permit all (adult) members of society to interact with one another as peers’ (2003, p. 5). Two conditions need to be satisfied: ‘First, the distribution of material resources must be such as to ensure participants’ independence and “voice” [distributive justice]. Second, the institutionalized cultural patterns of interpretation and evaluation express equal respect for all participants and ensure equal opportunity for achieving social esteem’ [recognition justice] (Fraser, 2003, p. 5). But simultaneously, both economic and recognition justice can only be granted if the conditions are met for democratic interactions. Indeed, liberal, marxist and communitarian authors argue for democracy and democratic practices as a way of giving form to ‘justice’. What differs is the way in which they define democracy.

Democracy is often associated with liberal institutions and practices such as parliament, the participation in elections and the division of power. For some, living in a democracy in which elections are periodically held can be understood as a symptom of democratic justice (e.g. Friedrich, 2007. However, according to Fraser (2003), national liberal democracies suffer from a lack of democratic justice themselves. The existence of transnational private powers, international organizations of governance and power relations between states challenge any notion of national popular sovereignty (Habermas, 2005). In the line of Marxian theory, it is
the global market and not the nation-state who is, indeed, sovereign (e.g. Brown, 2014). In addition, liberal democracies privileges certain forms of participation over others. Although there is a wide range of participatory activities from voting, to rioting, to radical forms of non-participation, education for participation in liberal democracies seems to be reduced to an electoral participation (e.g. Farthing, 2010) from which certain citizens feel (or perhaps are) excluded (e.g. Hughes, 2011). For instance, concerns have been raised in relation to the lack of possibilities for children and young people to contribute in democratic societies and the tokenistic character of the few opportunities of participation directly addressed to them (e.g. Wall, 2011).

In addition, in the post-Westphalian era, new questions arise about the real possibilities of liberal institutions to be globally democratic. Liberals often place their expectations for a more democratic globe in the constitution of a ‘world government’. Drawing upon the work of Kant, Held (2005) argues that the acceleration of globalization processes requires a common framework for global political action to take place. The assumption here is that an ethical framework (global values) can be agreed – through a process of deliberation – and transformed into a political one (universal rights) (McGrew, 2005). The ‘world government’, in this respect, would be responsible that universal rights are granted to all global citizens in the same way national governments are expected to guarantee the rights of national citizens. For some, cosmopolitan demands can be understood as overarching regional, national, and local “sovereignties” (Held, 2005). If this was the case, and all citizens of the world were granted the same rights, issues such as the right of residence would likely arise. As Žižek argues, ‘under present conditions, such a step would trigger an invasion of cheap labor from India, China and Africa into the United States and Western Europe, which would result in a populist revolt against immigrants’ (2001, p. 3). Alternatively, universal rights could rely on treaties between countries as Kant himself suggested (see Derrida, 2001). Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNESCO, 1948) states that “Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.” But in the line of what we have discussed in the previous section, this would mean that those defined by Arendt as ‘stateless’ would lack any framework in which their universal rights, including any possibility of challenging these rights, are or can be guaranteed (Arendt, 1962). The lack of national citizenship, in the case of stateless children and adults, seems to evolve into an exclusion from other forms of citizenry including the global. To an extreme, the education of the ‘stateless’ results in a paradox. There is an attempt at socializing migrant, asylum-seekers and refugees children into national forms of good citizenship, although it is not clear how non-citizen children can fit into these principles (Boyden, 2009). For instance, Palestinian and Syrian children in Lebanon follow a Lebanese civic education curriculum but who themselves as curtailed rights with no foreseeable route to citizenship (Fincham, 2013).

Democratic justice has, nevertheless, alternative meanings. Communitarians understand citizenship not as “a status given by the institutions of the modern constitutional state and international law, but negotiated practices in which one becomes a citizen through participation” (Tully, 2014, p. 9). Here, if democratic justice is possible, it is, precisely,
because it is always situated and contextualized. This implies raising “‘women’s issues’ or ‘black issues’ or ‘gay issues’ rather than as raising questions of equality, fairness or justice” (Laden, 2014, p. 120). Citizenship education for democratic justice should be about examining the actual conditions of young people’s participation and interrogating the meaning of different concepts such as citizenship, democracy or justice (Biesta & Lawy, 2006).

Communitarians’ particularism has also been challenged. By failing to raise questions on universality (such as questions on universal justice), communitarians might privilege hegemonic conceptions (Laclau, 2007). For instance, if only liberals (or perhaps neoliberals) attempt to define ‘justice’, it is more than likely that their understanding will prevail. Democratic justice – including discussions on the meaning of universal justice and global citizenship themselves – requires different possibilities for each of us to examine. Further, if no attempt to reach universality is undertaken, the possibilities of ‘solidarity in a common struggle’ (Žižek, 2000, p. 220) are lost. Paradoxically, by defending the particularities of each individual community and rejecting any projection towards universality, communitarians might commit themselves to work against a global community.

Some contemporary conflict theorists argue for antagonistic forms of democratic justice. They understand conflict and antagonism as the driving force of politics (Mouffe, 1999) and liberal institutions – only – as one of the multiple public spaces where democratic culture is created (Laclau, 2007). Commitments to “Black issues” and “class struggle”, for instance, can compete in this chapter to define the causes of injustices with some arguing that the source of all injustice is the capitalist system in itself and others arguing that injustices are caused by institutionalized racism. In other occasions, for instance in a parliamentary context, they might work as allies against neoliberal understandings of justice as meritocracy. The global context brings additional demands -for example, “nation issues” and “stateless issues” – and additional spaces – international organizations, internet, world forums, etc. – where these demands can be discussed. The role of education here is essential. As suggested by Ruitenberg (2009), students need to develop an understanding of possible democratic spaces including but not limited to liberal spaces. Further, students need to understand that a political adversary is different from a moral enemy and from a competitor. In other words, “students may learn that engaging a political adversary is not a game, but an expression of a serious commitment to democracy” (Ruitenberg, 2009, p. 278).

Radical democrats also assume - as we did in the beginning of this chapter – that concepts such as justice and global citizenship function as nodal points of different discourses (e.g. liberalism, communitarism, marxism) attempting to reach hegemonic primacy (Laclau, 2007b). If democracy is possible, it is because the meaning of justice is not (and should not be) fixed but will be (provisionally) defined by antagonistic political actors who will (contingently) result in more convincing. Discussions on global citizenship can be here understood as permanent (and impossible) political attempts to define universal justice. In this respect, global citizenship education might offer opportunities for students to learn ‘to read the social order in political terms, that is, in terms of disputes about the interpretation of
liberty and equality [and justice] and the hegemonic social relations that should shape them’ (Ruitenberg, 2009, p. 278).

Conclusions: Common struggles and the promise of justice

In this chapter, we have deployed different discourses attempting to define justice in a context in which the promise of justice has become more than ever a universal (global) one. Global justice has here been examined through the lens of marxian, identity-politics and radical democracy theories. We contrast these different interpretations to illuminate some of the key issues and challenges that a present-day justice-orientated education for global citizenship might need to consider.

First, capitalism cannot be left out of discussions on global citizenship and education. Not only because some scholars understand capitalism to be the root of all injustices, but also because there is nothing democratic in considering capitalism as the only alternative. There are numerous examples in which class struggle has moved societies towards more justice-orientated practices and nothing stops us thinking that this is also a possibility in the future. Researchers and educators, we believe, should continue considering how discussions on class struggle can be articulated in the curriculum and how capitalism can be examined in both, its local and global scale, as one among multiple possibilities.

Second, globalization has shaken traditional balances of majorities and minorities. Whilst nationalism has often been considered by social-justice orientated authors as a weapon to impose dominant ideologies upon minorities, some contemporary authors suggest that the nation (or some nations) can be in the side of those claiming justice, asking not to disappear under globalized homogeneity. The traditional understanding of the working-class as a majority can also be challenged if one considers that identity and community-based politics seem to be the basis of most contemporary claims on justice and, perhaps consequently, most social-justice orientated educational practice and research. Researchers and educators might need to tackle the role of the ‘other’ as fluid, probably now more than ever. There is also a need for researchers to keep on examining how different minorities can build alliances to construct new understandings of justice that might challenge present situations of injustice. Race issues, gender issues, among others have been extremely helpful in educational practice, policy and research to denounce situations of discrimination. But if a real attempt has to be made to challenge hegemonic notions of justice (e.g. meritocracy), researchers and educators might have to consider also people’s issues (see Laclau, 2007b).

Third, globalization has generated a new form of lumpen proletariat (in Marx’s term) or ‘people without history’ (in Hegel’s term). The ‘stateless’ seem to lack any form of justice including economic and recognition. Further, there is lack of spaces for them to claim democratic justice. Educational research and policy must take their situation seriously. Asylum-seekers, refugees, migrants, etc. cannot be educated to follow the rules of a liberal game in which they cannot participate. Instead, alternative spaces of participation in which they can demand economic and recognition justice must be explored, investigated and, ideally, financially supported.
We would not like to finish this chapter without leaving the door open to all possible interpretations of global citizenship. A few months before his death, Derrida defined alter-globalization movements, those gathering ‘the weak of the earth, all those who feel themselves crushed by the economic hegemonies, by the liberal market, by sovereignism, etc.’ (2005) as one of the main political actors trying to give shape to the justice to come. Universal justice —in the way the authors of this chapter understand— does not necessarily lead to the integration of humanity in a global community in which we are all educated as global citizens. There might be times in which universal justice will be mostly interpreted as a return to the local or as a challenge to certain forms of globalization. If a justice-orientated global citizenship is to have a space on national and global educational policies, this space needs to be open to competing understandings of globalization, citizenship and education. Global citizenship, in this understanding, cannot be an outcome to be learnt or achieved. The best contribution of global citizenship education towards the justice to come is not, we argue, the promise of a perpetual peace in Kant’s terms, but the creation of a space in which we all can debate about the promise of universal justice.

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