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Alternative feminist strategies to confront the pitfalls of identity politics.

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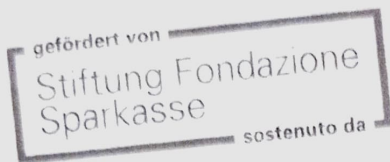
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Positionen und Perspektiven im zeitgenössischen Feminismus

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Alternative Feminist Strategies to Confront the Pitfalls of Identity Politics

Abstract

Identity politics, in its multiple and diverse meanings, has been at the core of feminism since its origins. It has served as a foundation for the constitution of a collective subject of the movement and a sense of community, and has provided a shared criterion to define an agenda, themes and intervention strategies. On the other hand, identity politics has been criticised from different fronts both inside and outside the movement. In this chapter, we mobilise a decolonial feminist framework to explore alternative ways of imagining and exercising the political from a feminist point of view that would evade those critiques, while fulfilling the two functions that identity politics has in the movement today. In relation to the constitution of a collective subject, we propose a conception of political identity as narrative identity, without predefined criteria, in which identification involves assuming and promoting a vision of the world, while the narration is available for other people to identify with. In relation to the establishment of an agenda, this proposal corresponds to a situated praxis: the constitution of contextual political assemblages around specific problems that affect different social groups.

The consciousness, the political will of the revolt concerns everyone involved in the operation of the machinery – even those who are in greater privilege; even when those who have suffered the most are the first to be concerned with the struggle. This is not only possible but desirable.¹

¹ Yuderlys Espinosa Miñoso, *De Por Qué Es Necesario un Feminismo Descolonial: Diferenciación, Dominación Co-constitutiva de la Modernidad Occidental y el Fin de la Política de Identidad*, *Solar* 12 (1), 2012, 165, https://om.juscatamarc.a.gob.ar/articulos/De_por_que_es_necesario_un_feminismo_des.pdf, retrieved on 25.08.2025. This and all other citations from Spanish sources are our own translations.

1 Introduction

Identity politics has occupied a central place in the life of feminisms since their origins. Whether as a criterion to define the subject of the movement or the agenda of its priorities, or – on a smaller scale – the circulation of voices and the internal disputes over who counts or not as a woman, the question of identity seems to be at the very core of the movement. While it is true that in Latin America, where we write from, feminisms have been forged and sustained in alliance with other movements,² when identifying as feminist³ their discussions and strategies tend to revolve largely around identity politics.

Although the definition of what exactly identity politics is can be complex, and is still the subject of prolific discussions⁴, here we adopt the meaning proposed in previous works⁵ according to which it is “a mode of political organisation and an approach to interpreting the political” based on the idea that “subjection is organised around identities, and therefore so too must collective organising and empowerment”.⁶ An important implication for our point is that, in many cases, this position also supports the need to exclude those who do not belong to that identity, as it is characterised and understood by the movement or political space in a given context. Of course, ‘identity’ is an even more contested notion than that of its politics; suffice it to state here that its instantiation in these forms of politics requires a more or less fixed understanding of identity

2 Such as peasant, *piquetero*, anti-racist or indigenous movements, collectives in defence of sexual diversity, among many others.

3 It is common to find organised women in our region who include the emancipation or well-being of women among other issues on their agenda, but do not identify as organised around feminism. See Mariana Daniela Gómez, *Mujeres Indígenas y Feminismos en Argentina: Encuentros, Desencuentros, Críticas y Obliteraciones*, *El banquete de los dioses* 11, 27.12.2022, <https://publicaciones.sociales.uba.ar/index.php/ebld/article/view/7845/6893>, retrieved on 25.08.2025; Gladys Tzul Tzul, *Sistemas de Gobierno Comunal Indígena: Mujeres y Tramas de Parentesco en Chuimeq'ena* (Guatemala: SOCEE/Maya'Wuj Editorial, 2016).

4 For a detailed analysis of identity politics and its meanings, see Jonatan Kurzweil/Maira Pérez/Andrew D. Spiegel, *Identity Politics and Social Justice*, *Dialectical Anthropology* 47 (1), 2023, 5–18.

5 Maira Pérez, *Contracting Imaginations: On the Political and Hermeneutical Monopoly of Identity Politics*, *Dialectical Anthropology* 47 (1), 2023, 85–96.

6 Pérez, *Contracting Imaginations*, 87.

prior to such articulation, whether in biological, historical or cultural terms, for this criterion of inclusion and exclusion to be sustainable and communicable.

Beyond definitions, feminisms' recourse to identity politics has sought to cover different needs of the movement, among which we are interested in highlighting two. On the one hand, the approach through identity (however the latter is understood) has laid the grounds for the constitution of a collective subject, capable of mobilising, questioning and being mobilised in pursuit of the improvement of the living conditions of the people included in it; capable of establishing bonds of solidarity and of granting a sense of community in a hostile context. On the other hand, identity politics has provided a shared criterion (although not undisputed⁷) to define an agenda, by selecting the causes, priorities and strategies of the feminist movement based on what is interpreted as the gender affected by each problem.

Still, the critical literature on identity politics is vast, both inside and outside feminist discourses. Although this is beyond the scope of this article, it is worth mentioning some of the main problems attributed to it: (1) a gap between this collective term 'women' and the type of women whose problems actually set the agenda, tactics and definitions of feminism;⁸ (2) the gap between the multidimensional functioning of oppressions and the one-dimensional strategy proposed to resolve them;⁹ (3) the way of conceiving the subject as closed, self-evident, rational, centred, etc., which would be suspiciously similar to that of traditional politics;¹⁰ (4) the anxieties gen-

7 These disputes about 'what problems feminism should be concerned with', however, could be referred to another discussion, caused precisely by its identity-based approach: 'who is the subject of feminism' or, more specifically, who is that 'woman' at the basis of the definition of an agenda for a movement articulated around that identity. Needless to say, these discussions are rendered even more complex by an intersectional approach which compromises the possibility of referring to 'woman' in a more or less significant way, even when using the term in the plural.

8 Maria Lugones, *The Coloniality of Gender, Worlds & Knowledges Otherwise* 2 (2), 2008, 1-17, https://globalstudies.trinity.duke.edu/sites/globalstudies.trinity.duke.edu/files/file-attachments/v2d2_Lugones.pdf, retrieved on 25.08.2025.

9 Pérez, *Contracting Imaginations*.

10 Ochy Curiel Pichardo, *Hacia La Construcción de Un Feminismo Descolonizado*, in Yuderkys Espinosa Miñoso/Diana Marcela Gómez Correal/Karina Ochoa

erated by identity politics/spaces for people who are excluded from them because they do not have the same identity; among others. As we will see shortly, the concept of coloniality contributes important elements to all these critiques, especially the first three. At the same time, as a flip side of the critique, the concern has emerged of being left without a 'floor', without a foundation, for politics once any constitution of the subject has been de-essentialised and historicised, which led to the revision of Spivakian "strategic essentialism".¹¹

These observations, and the forms that identity politics has taken in the context of Latin American feminism, impel us to seek alternative ways of imagining and exercising the political within feminism. On this occasion¹² we chose to mobilise a decolonial feminist framework, which through the notion of "gender coloniality"¹³ points out how colonisation violently produces a dichotomous gender system with a visible/'light' side and a hidden/'dark' side. The light side constructs and orders the modern/colonial gender of the white bourgeoisie. The dark side is absolutely violent and implies a reduction to the non-human that excludes the genders of the colonised.¹⁴ In short, this approach insists that gender is not a category imposed in isolation, and emphasises the distinction between human and non-human. It points out that depatriarchalization is only possible along with anti-racist decolonisation, and in turn, that decolonisation requires depatriarchalization.

Considering gender as part of a texture indissolubly woven with other factors, we aim to explore other possibilities that evade the problems of identity politics mentioned above, and that avoid the

Muñoz (eds.), *Tejiendo de Otro Modo: Feminismo, Epistemología y Apuestas Descoloniales En Abya Yala* (Popayán: Editorial Universidad del Cauca, 2014), 325–334.

11 Pichardo, *Hacia La Construcción de Un Feminismo Descolonizado*, 325–334; Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak/Ellen Rooney, *In a Word: Interview, Differences* 1 (2), 1989, 124–156.

12 We present our proposal in this way because many other axes could be prioritised when considering the intersections with gender: disability, religion, age, to mention just a few. In any case, we believe that a decolonial reading, with its historical and structural perspective, enables the incorporation of those other factors as part of a modern-colonial project.

13 Lugones, *The Coloniality of Gender*, 1–17.

14 See also Afrontera, *Manifiesto de la Colectiva*, 08.03.2021, <https://terremoto.mx/revista/47342/manifiesto-afrontera>, retrieved on 25.08.2025.

politics of watertight compartments, while at the same time fulfilling the two functions detailed above. With a focus on the first function (the constitution of a collective sense of community), and without renouncing the need for political identification, we propose a conception of political identity as *narrative*,¹⁵ in the sense of discursive, which does not correspond to any 'objective', socially predefined identity criterion. Identification here involves the fact of assuming a political vision or understanding of the world, available to whoever wishes to sustain that perspective. With a focus on the second role (the establishment of criteria for the movement's agenda and strategies), this proposal entails a situated praxis: contextual political assemblages that articulate diverse sectors grouped not by an identity but around concrete and tangible problems that affect various collectives transversally. With an awareness of the interconnection of oppressions, this model seeks to move forward with a much more ambitious horizon of reducing social injustices.

As we hope to show, in both cases the political mobilisation we imagine promotes a vision of social justice as a whole, where feminism may be an entry point, if it is pertinent in a specific context, but which is sustained in a discourse that is also decolonial, anti-racist and anti-capitalist. It is, after all, about ways of doing feminist politics with an awareness of the importance of generating communities of political belonging, but also of the structural nature of oppressions, and the intersectionality, historicity and situatedness of identities.

2 Sense of Community: Decolonial Narrative Politics

The notion of decolonial narrative politics we propose is partially based on Paul Ricœur's idea of 'narrative identity'.¹⁶ Narrative identity has the particularity of defining identity by giving importance to the discursive realm. It is not about an identity one could define externally and objectively, based on an extant social classification, such as 'cis women', 'proletarian class', or 'Argentine nationality'.

¹⁵ Paul Ricœur, *La Identidad Narrativa*, in id., *Historia y Narratividad* (Barcelona/Buenos Aires/México: Grupo Planeta (GBS), 1999), 215–230.

¹⁶ Ricœur, *La Identidad Narrativa*, 215–230.

The point is to focus on the importance of the elaboration of a *plot* (or discourse) to conceive identity – in this case, *collective political identity*.

We understand with Ricœur that the *self* is known in a mediated way, indirectly, through the detour of cultural signs. Action and the interpretation of reality are symbolically mediated. In this sense, Joan Scott rightly contends that experience does not necessarily provide evidence.¹⁷ There is no political position that imposes itself on a social position: being a ‘feminist’ is not imposed on ‘woman’ as a social position, because adopting that political position is not self-evident and cannot be taken for granted. Nor does the ‘proletarian’ social position correspond to a Marxist reading of the world. As Laclau points out, “(s)ocial heterogeneity requires a radical and constitutive moment of construction, which is not dictated by any *a priori* sequence”.¹⁸

Ricœur’s concept of narrative identity is useful because it recovers a non-essentialist notion of identity that understands it as adjudicated by the plot of the story. Narrative identity is the identity achieved *through* the narrative function. The author points out that ‘identical’ has two meanings that correspond to the Latin terms *idem* and *ipse*, where the *idem* (sameness) is the identical and immutable, while the *ipse* (selfhood) is the proper or particular. Narrative identity thus implies a combination of permanence and change that will seek to mediate between, on the one hand, the events and, on the other, the temporal unity of the story being told. The author analyses the narrative as a plot with a beginning-middle-end logic that is imprinted on an action. In this sense, identity is not fixed in a single concept but is narrated, qualified and signified in the course of an ‘emplotment’, thus showing a temporal dimension.

In analysing the time-plot link, Ricœur finds three moments of ‘mimesis’, that is, of ‘imitation of action’ according to Aristotle. Mimesis 1 is the prefiguration of the world of practical action, and is not yet narrative, whereas Mimesis 2 is the moment of the narrative

17 Joan Scott, The Evidence of Experience, in Gabrielle M. Spiegel (ed.), *Practicing History: New Directions in Historical Writing After the Linguistic Turn* (New York/London: Routledge, 2005), 199–216.

18 Ernesto Laclau, *Los Fundamentos Retóricos de la Sociedad* (Montevideo: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2022), 149.

configuration, of construction of the story, when Mimesis 1 is organised as a discursive and temporal practice. Thus, Mimesis 2 turns a selection of mere events (which do not mean anything immediately) into a story shaped as a whole, integrating heterogeneous factors in a temporal order typical of the plot. For Ricœur, the elaboration of the plot configures the lasting character of an identity (here of a collective narrative identity) by constructing the (dynamic) identity of the story being told.¹⁹ Mimesis 2 is, in this case, about the construction of a decolonial feminist discourse that, building on the events of the world, promotes a political understanding with a decolonial and intersectional perspective, where heteronormative and racialised gender regulation is intrinsically constitutive of the current economic model.²⁰

The narrative, by imitating people's actions through creation, reinterprets and refigures them. This gives the story its performative dimension: when the *self* in the story finds an identifying reference, it becomes a *refigured* self. In our case, we can imagine a self that identifies with the narrative that points out the cause of injustice is the colonial process, its imposition of hierarchical differences, its process of dispossession that continues to operate today. Such identification would lead to the appropriation of the story by a self now refigured as *decolonial*. Ricœur then points out something curious: in the path of self-identification, the identity of the other, informed by the story, becomes a part of the process. Critical of a notion of authenticity with respect to identification, he proposes a hermeneutic of recollection, where constructing oneself is becoming what one is not. The identification of oneself through the other is of interest to us, because then the story not only manages to characterise, deepen and add nuance to the identity of a narrative politics: it also opens the possibility of a refiguration of the identity of those who are alien to a certain story or to a certain social experience. It promotes the

19 Referring to this as a 'narrative' does not imply that it is fiction, but rather alludes to the narrative nature of historical representation. Hayden White, *The Historical Text as Literary Artifact*, in Brian Richardson (ed.), *Narrative Dynamics: Essays on Time, Plot, Closure, and Frames* (Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 2002), 191–210.

20 Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (London: Verso, 2002); Lugones, *The Coloniality of Gender*, 1–17.

identification of others with the story, which adds political power to the act of narrating.

The discursive and narrative dimension of narrative identity understands that every material and practical dimension of social redistribution must be legitimised discursively. We propose here a decolonial narrative politics that emphasises the value of labour and access to property but from an unorthodox discourse of unity that accounts for the decolonial critiques of Marxist analysis.²¹ In it, the social matrix of hierarchical subject positions includes all of us, and dismantling it requires everyone. What, then, is it that unites the subjects in the case we explore here? A critical, feminist and decolonial understanding of the world that, in its narrative function, can produce identification. Such identification is fundamental when it comes to political involvement. The 'I am' that leads those who are under that identifying umbrella to invest time in political manifestations that refer to a common political horizon is not linked to an 'objective' social position (as it would be for identity politics), but to a vision of the world, to a collective and community horizon. This also is at the basis of the assemblage strategies that we will propose in the next section: in both cases, the basis of the emancipatory impulse is not an essence or a preexisting core, but a collective, contingent, and dynamic configuration from which we seek to intervene.

3 Political Agenda: Problem-Based Assemblages

In identitarian approaches, the constitution of a community articulated around an identity can function as a vehicle for the design and development of an agenda of interventions in the political realm, while the commitment to this agenda reinforces identity belonging. Our understanding of identity politics highlights the role of identity in the choice of priority issues and in how they will be handled, that is, what kind of concrete strategies will be promoted. For example, in Argentina, our country, in the last decade the agenda of hegemonic feminism has been taken up by two issues: access to voluntary ter-

21 Aníbal Quijano, *Colonialidad Del Poder y Clasificación Social*, in *Cuestiones y Horizontes: De La Dependencia Histórico-Estructural a La Colonialidad/Descolonialidad Del Poder* (Buenos Aires: CLACSO, 2014).

mination of pregnancy and gender-based violence.²² In both cases, the problem was identified as a ‘women’s’ (implicitly cis²³) issue, its contours were defined (distinguishing the struggle for abortion from other causes linked to reproductive injustice, such as forced sterilisations; and characterising gender-based violence with a focus on the one exercised against women within or after a heterocisexual relationship), and it was carved out from a broader background: growing socioeconomic inequalities, the dismantling of the welfare state, the persecution of female guardians of the land and other activists, structural racism or cissexism, among others. This then served as a basis to determine the most adequate strategies to address such issues, and to establish an agenda of interventions, which in this case generally meant legalism and parliamentary lobbying: legislative changes for the legalisation of the voluntary interruption of pregnancy (yielding on some points to facilitate its approval), and for the reinforcement of criminal punishment against gender-based violence (almost exclusively within a heterosexual couple).

This case taken from recent Latin American feminism serves as an example to understand how identitarian approaches affect the issues included in the agenda, the terms in which they are posed, and the kinds of strategies adopted to tackle them. Other views imply, of course, other agendas, priorities and strategies. In line with what we have proposed somewhere else as an “uncodified political praxis”²⁴,

22 Ana Laura Rodríguez Gustá, The Women’s Movement in Argentina: Much Ado about Everything, in Simone Bohn/Charmain Levy (eds.), *Twenty-First-Century Feminisms: Women’s Movements in Latin America and the Caribbean* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2021), 180–201. For a contrast with the previous decade’s prevalent themes, when ‘equality and non-discrimination’ and ‘economic rights’ received more attention than sexual and reproductive rights, see Ana Laura Rodríguez Gustá/Nancy Madera, When Some Rights Matter More than Others: Recent National Legislation on Women’s Human Rights in Latin America and the Caribbean, *Canadian Woman Studies* 33 (1–2), 2019, 117–125. In any case, in our opinion, an analysis like the one we are doing here could be applied to an agenda dominated by those other issues.

23 See Blas Radi, Reproductive Injustice, Trans Rights, and Eugenics, *Sexual and Reproductive Health Matters* 28 (1), 2020, 396–407; Moira Pérez/Blas Radi, El Concepto de ‘Violencia de Género’ Como Espejismo Hermenéutico, *Igualdad, autonomía personal y derechos sociales* 8, 2018, 69–88.

24 Soledad Tuñón, *Approches Queer-Décoloniales: Dialogues Entre les Féminismes dDécoloniaux et les Pensées Queer* (Master’s dissertation, Université Paris 8 Vincennes Saint-Denis, 2021).

the approach we advance here is that of a politics of *assemblages* organised around *problems* and *demands*, rather than by each affected identity. Instead of building on ‘what I am’ (whether or not it is essential), “the assemblage is characterised by the event (it answers the questions of how, where, when),” it is open to recombinations, and is made up of “complex, heterogeneous, impure, and strategic encounters.”²⁵ This perspective not only sheds light on some shortcomings of identitarianism, but can also guide us towards other modes of organisation, more suitable to confront the problems that mobilise feminisms. Let us look at some of these advantages and some examples to illustrate them.

In the first place, we understand that the problems that identity politics seeks to address are *structural* and *transversal*, that is, they originate in the very structure of the social order, allow it to sustain itself as such, and cut across different orders of life (professional, affective, institutional, spiritual, etc.). Therefore, they reach various subjects and groups (although in combination with other factors they can be instantiated differently) and require a *joint approach*. Consider, for example, the issue of the unequal distribution of care work. This problem cannot be solved by only attending to the ways in which it affects women in that visible/‘clear’ side of gender to which Lugones referred, without at the same time dismantling its expressions in other social groups: capitalists and neoliberal state institutions that benefit economically from unpaid care work, migrants and/or people marginalised due to their racialisation or caste, on whom these tasks usually fall,²⁶ elderly people or those with disabilities who depend on informal support networks, etc. A problem-based approach can achieve more effective solutions (as it addresses the problem holistically and at its root), and it also enables

25 Itziar Gandarias Goikoetxea/Marisela Montenegro Martínez/Joan Pujol Tarrés, *Interseccionalidad, Identidad y Articulación: Hacia Una Política de La Agregación*, *Feminismo/s* 33 (6), 2019, 35.

26 Various authors have analysed the long history of racialised, apart from gendered, care work. Looking only at the gendered dimension of care work is a gross concealment. See Rita Laura Segato, *El Edipo Negro: Colonialidad y Forclusión de Género y Raza*, in *La Crítica de La Colonialidad En Ocho Ensayos: Y Una Antropología Por Demanda* (Buenos Aires: Prometeo Libros, 2015), 179–210.

the formation of a critical mass, by enabling assemblages with shared goals and transformative potential.

Secondly, and inversely, identity politics starts from the assumption of a shared identity-based experience, but in doing so it obstructs the identification of problems that are not transversal to the entire group thus identified, but that affect some sectors specifically. These, in turn, may coincide with sectors of other identity groups, that are also affected by it. Thus, *internal differences* are flattened behind a single way of understanding that identity, which will in turn serve as the basis to determine the problems to be addressed, something that is easily prey to elite capture:²⁷ the procedure by which the agenda of a collective is left in the hands of the most privileged spheres within that collective, understood intersectionally. In our example, we see how white, European, bourgeois feminism intends to take the lead on which problems and strategies will be prioritised by feminism as a whole.²⁸ A problem-based political approach, on the other hand, allows for assemblages between sub-groups within women and sub-groups of other identities affected by the same oppressions, perhaps even alongside identity-based articulations.

Finally, specifically in relation to *strategies*, each political approach includes a number of decisions and assumptions regarding the best ways to address demands or processes of social transformation. In line with the two previous points, when the target group is carved out in a one-dimensional perspective (choosing an identity as the basis of politics), important differences may be hidden that will affect the repercussions of these strategies in different sectors of the collective. In our case, a strategy designed based on a certain conception of what 'a woman' or even 'a feminist' is, and conceived for a positive impact on their lives, can be detrimental to another person who falls under that identification, but whose social location is different due to other social variables. The most obvious example

27 Olúfémí O. Táíwò, *Elite Capture: How the Powerful Took Over Identity Politics (And Everything Else)* (London: Pluto Press, 2022).

28 Yuderkys Espinosa Miñoso, 'Ethnocentrism and Coloniality in Latin American Feminisms: The Complicity and Consolidation of Hegemonic Feminists in Transnational Spaces', trans. Lia Castillo Espinosa, *Hypatia* 37 (3), 2022, 498–509; Mary García Castro, 'Engendering Powers in Neoliberal Times in Latin America: Reflections from the Left on Feminisms and Feminisms', trans. Laurence Hallewell, *Latin American Perspectives* 28 (6), 2001, 17–37.

of this seems to be feminist punitivism or “carceral feminism”²⁹, which invests on the state criminal system as a way of responding to problems prioritised by feminism, such as violence against women or human trafficking for sexual exploitation. The decision to follow these strategies comes from people who share the fact of being a woman and/or articulate their activism around that identity, but are not affected by other aspects of the criminal system, such as selectivity, or do not have expertise in its specific mechanisms. Thus, the power and legitimacy of the punitive arm of the State are increased, which will then hit the same historically marginalised groups, including women: people marked by their class or race, migrants, trans people, neurodivergents, among others.³⁰

4 Conclusions

In Latin America and in the world, the current context presents enormous challenges for any emancipatory project, including feminisms. The new right seeks to place the ‘culture wars’ at the centre of political discussions, while implementing reforms that increase the concentration of wealth and the destruction of land, and push larger and larger portions of the population to mere survival. In the face of these deeply interconnected challenges, which cut across different social groups and affect women differently according to their social location, identity politics has proven insufficient and even distracting. Continuing to focus on pre-established identity axes not only loses valuable opportunities to build critical mass with other oppressed groups and people mobilised by this critical view of the world. It also consents to placing the dispute in the sphere

29 Elizabeth Bernstein, Carceral Politics as Gender Justice? The ‘Traffic in Women’ and Neoliberal Circuits of Crime, Sex, and Rights, *Theory and Society* 41 (3), 2012, 233–259.

30 In the case of Argentina, for example, a femicide that had enormous repercussions in 2017 led to a criminal legislation reform, reducing guarantees for some types of crimes, including those related to drug trafficking, which are the main grounds for the incarceration of cis and trans women and *travestis*. See Gisela Santangelo, Reforma de la Ley de Ejecución Penal: Respuestas Demagógicas Frente a las Demandas Feministas, *Revista de Derecho Penal y Criminología* 9 (11), 2019, 147–157.

of the 'culture wars', thus contributing to covering up oppressions that affect life itself and its conditions of possibility. We believe that the two alternatives presented here can, taken together, fulfil important functions that are usually deposited in identity politics, while avoiding some of its greatest drawbacks.

Even beyond these concrete proposals, it is important to remember that political strategies must consider the different dimensions of the political, and of the forms of oppression that affect whoever is defined as 'the subject of feminism'. In Laclau's terms,³¹ we could say that this includes both a vertical dimension, related to the production of hegemony (in our case represented by narrative identities), and a horizontal dimension, regarding the logic of equivalence (here covered by the politics of assemblage). It is also vital to work simultaneously on different temporal scales: the urgent or immediate, the mid-term, and a horizon of the emancipation and dignity of all people and of life, as the ultimate goal of any radical political project. A movement that fails to attend to these different dimensions tends to exhaustion and dispersion, or stagnant bureaucratisation, or resigned pragmatism. Movements that were once emancipatory renounce the imagination of a different future, while losing adherence in the hands of right-wing politics that promise immediate solutions to pressing problems.

We do not propose a politics without a subject. On the contrary, we advocate a politics open to the participation of numerous and diverse subjects, independently of their social position, who embrace a decolonial feminist conception and vision of the world. At the same time, critically reflecting on the role of identity in politics does not imply denying the usefulness of resorting, in some practical scenarios, to a kind of political identitarianism, for example to generate non-mixed spaces to discuss problems and strategies. Non-mixed spaces fulfil important functions in emancipatory processes: they build strength in contexts of epistemic violence, facilitate the generation of symbolic resources towards hermeneutical justice, and allow internal critique and restructuring while protecting the group from external attacks. Still, non-mixed practices must remain alert to the danger of solidifying in a static identity politics that prevents

31 Laclau, *Los Fundamentos Retóricos de la Sociedad*.

articulation with others and can be counterproductive for the very ends proposed by the movement.

As an answer to the question 'who are we?' we can thus focus on the narration and denunciation of the processes of oppression, and on the constitution and reconstitution of resistance on the way to the creation of a different political horizon. What is shared is not a pre-established and flattened identity, but that critical reading of oppression, and the processes of imagination and resistance that derive from it. Far from constituting a horizon in the sense of a point of arrival in which everything is resolved, the politics we propose shapes the horizon from a narrative identity that is always rewritten, always in dispute and in collective construction, attentive to the immediate but without resigning the realistic utopia of a different world.

Further Readings

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