

## EDITORIAL

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#### **“YOUTH MOVEMENTS, THE YOUNG PEOPLE’S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND YOUTH PUBLIC POLICIES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN”**

In 2012 Young Magazine, published by the Nordic network of researchers on youth, which has become an international referent in this field, dedicated special issue to Latin America. In the introduction to said issue, the editors distinguished three great traditions of studies on youth in the subcontinent (Feixa-Pàmols & Oliart, 2012).

The first of these traditions regards the young as political actors, and it focuses on the study of the youth movements. The university reform movement in Argentina in 1918, which inspired a series of university reforms in the whole region, is considered as the foundational moment of the emergence of a generational change in the leadership of social movements. This was a recurrent scenario in the decades that followed, which generated a series of papers, first as philosophical and political essays, and later as social and historic research, which without a doubt have left not only a historical imprint, but also a tradition of youth movement studies as the major figures of political transformations, which is still alive in Latin America and The Caribbean.

The second tradition sees the young as a social problem, and it focuses on the study of social exclusion and inclusion. It flourished in the context of the 1980’s profound economic and social crisis, but it continues to be a current phenomenon. Groups of young people were considered both the problem and the most vulnerable victims of social unrest and the increasing urban violence. Mainly written by or for public institutions, and published as grey literature, this research corpus deals with the young as an object of public policies. After 1985 (the International Year of Youth) government and non-government organizations or cooperation agencies promoted “applied” research on youth, with the aim of integrating marginal or rebellious youth in social cohesion processes.

The third tradition sees the young as citizens, and it focuses on the study of emerging cultures and policies. It also emerged about the end of 1980 and in the 1990’s, parallel to the previous one, but instead of focusing on the problematical aspects of the vulnerable youth, it recognized the creative energy, the critical practices and the alternative ways of life promoted by the young in search of different approaches and the understanding of the youth subjectivities and the cultures. Not only in keeping with present-day tendencies in social and cultural research on the young, but also being very well-founded, these studies analyze the dynamic relation between the young and cultural changes. Influenced by renewed theoretical approaches, researchers seek an understanding of the diversity of the youth’s realities, the changes and tendencies in their collective behavior and the creative management of the tensions between the local and the global agendas.

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The present issue of The Latin American Magazine of Social Sciences, Childhood and Youth starts from a call presented in connection with the theme “Youth movements, political participation of young people and youth public policies in Latin America and The Caribbean”. Although other

contributions have finally been incorporated, which is why it has ended up being a miscellaneous issue, it is worthwhile to retake the text of the call, for it summarizes the social, political and academic context where the articles contained therein are framed.

In the last thirty years, relevant advances in the field of the public policies on youth have materialized, but they have not managed to effectively convoke the new generations, when offering exaggeratedly institutionalized spaces for youth participation and not responding with pertinent programs that were not up to the challenge of the main problems that afflict Iberian-American youth, in different measures and formats. Alternatively, different forms of youth autonomous participation have been gestating, on the margin of the corresponding public policies, which have managed to further and better channel the increasing prevailing “malaise” in the new generations, who increasingly perceive that even in the context of sustained economic growth, the exclusion that affects them does not decrease in intensity, and even though social inequalities as measured in terms of income also begin to diminish, this does not happen with other differences, mainly the ones that separate the generations.

On the international level, the protests in Greece, the Arab spring and the Occupy Wall Street movement are three representative examples of the reach these movements have, which even though they are brought on by different local and national causes, they are framed in network dynamics, in the context of a global financial crisis. In the Iberian-American context, the irruption of the Outraged Movement in Spain and other highly developed countries as well as the Chilean students in the public arena (even followed in other national contexts, such as Colombia and Brazil, among others, although on a smaller scale) has been joined by the street presence of the Mexican movement “I am 132”, showing clearly that the supposed youth “apathy” was but a myth about which a great deal was talked but it was one that little reflected the state of mind of the new generations, who were interested in citizen participation, but were unwilling to accept the “formats” that they were being offered (through political parties that do not even have the minimal level of legitimacy for such purposes, for instance). The new youth movements are not at all alike the most traditional ones, but that is no reason to believe that they lack vigor and enthusiasm when it comes to expressing their demands, centered in the claim for free and high-quality public education, and/or greater transparency in governance, along with greater plurality of approaches and points of view in the media. They are, therefore, autonomous responses, raised from the youth groups themselves, who refuse -in parallel- the youth public policies whose sole objectives have been to entertain and/or control the new generations, who, in addition, have been presented by the great media networks as the new “enemy” to fight against.

The management of youth public policies has been gradually choosing relevant “learnings”, assuming that the approach prevailing so far, focusing on the creation of specific spaces for the young (youth houses, young cards, etc.) has failed, while -at the same time- the women movements have achieved more and better impacts, operating on the basis of building the “gender perspective” into all the public policies, which has led to propose an alternative model in the field of youth policies, centered in the objective of bestowing a “generational perspective” on the set of public policies, giving the necessary continuity to the efforts that unfold in relation to children, teenagers and young people, also seeking the corresponding connections with the public policies destined for adults and the elderly, following the cycle of the corresponding ages.

But there are clearly visible distances between theoretical definitions and effective realities, which are different according to the national cases in which these particular dynamics are revised. This fact justifies and invites to deep reflection on the core and formal implications that such variants imply, revising the efforts that are being made in the different countries in the region, especially taking into account the various contexts (economic, social, political and cultural contexts) in which such public policies operate. In said frame, some questions that used to be essential in the recent past no longer make much sense (are there or are there not youth policies?; Do the governments have the political will to face responses different from the traditional ones in this field?) And in their stead others more fertile emerge in the search for alternative models (How to respond proactively to the increasing

violence related with young people?; How to achieve more and better effective labor insertions for the new generations?; How to construct healthier environs for the development of youth?; How to better channel off the evident youth energy toward human development in our societies?) and they are beginning to guide specific studies and research.

In comparative terms, we should be able to answer -for example- whether in the frame of countries with “progressive” governments better results are achieved in this field than in the frame of countries with “conservative” governments, or whether in the framework of dynamic economies more or less equitable impacts are achieved in the different population sectors, as compared to those countries where the effects of the crisis have been felt to a greater extent. As to the new forms of political participation, this very compared perspective may allow us to highlight the different tactics and strategies used in the above-mentioned youth movements, which unite old forms of collective mobilization (as heirs of the student, urban and counter-cultural 20th Century movements) with new forms of protest (which are born and expand virally from the social networks and the cyberspace, under the influence of movements for an alternative 21st Century globalization). The pertinent research questions can be: What causes the young to participate in these movements? What is the role of the Internet and the social networks in the social organization of protest? How do the institutions react before the requests of the young? How do said movements influence public policies, especially youth policies?

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The thirteen articles included in this issue can be grouped in the three great traditions pointed out in the beginning. Firstly, the vision of the young as actors is present in several articles that discuss the relation between youth and political participation in arenas such as the anti-austerity movements, accountability at the local level, politicization at a national level, and electoral participation. Anna Planas-Lladó, Pere Soler-Masó and Carles Feixa- Pámpols present and discuss the situation of youth policies in Spain in the present-day context of austerity and drastic social cutbacks; they start from the parameters of the magic triangle that unite policies, research and social work with young people, pointing out the risks that this may become a Bermuda Triangle that may cause the young to become invisible and excluded from power. Rubén Alejandro Rosas-Longoria and Víctor Daniel García-García evaluate the youth public policies implemented in three municipalities from the State of Mexico, Mexico, concluding that the municipal administrations did not manage to approve citizen exercises of transparency and accountability, as advocated by the comptrollership, which conditions the necessary synergy between public and young powers. Miriam Kriger studies youth politicization in contemporary nations, from the Argentinean case, questioning the passage from de-politicization to politicization of the young in the last few decades. Gonzalo Contreras-Aguirre and Maurice Morales-Quiroga study the effect of voluntary vote in Chile, discovering the paradox that instead of stimulating the youth vote, during the last presidential elections the participation was reduced to historic levels and the young continue to be the group with least predisposition to vote.

Secondly, the vision of the young as a problem is present in several articles that explore the economic, social, sexual and emotional barriers that make their social inclusion difficult. Nicté Soledad Castañeda-Camey tackles the youth imaginarium of migration, from a case study on the Guadalajara, Mexico emigration to the United States, showing how it takes shape from labor, economic and educational expectations, as well as desires, illusions and expectations from the affective and emotional perspective. Marina Medan evaluates the impact of programs for the young from underprivileged sectors, starting from a case study in Buenos Aires (Argentina), pointing out that state dependence can serve to protect the users from the surrounding risks. Marta Ceballos-Fernández explores the construction of the homosexual identity of young people in the hetero-parental family framework, from a case study in Spain, pointing out that the family acts as a risk factor. Two other studies from the perspective of psychology go from the classical pathologizing vision to another that

prioritizes positive and resilient aspects in teenagers' attitude. María Julia Raimundi, María Fernanda Molina, Mariel Giménez and Claudia Minichiello analyze the subjective significance of "challenges" in the process of social maturation of teens in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Luciana Flores-Battistella, Márcia Grohmann and Caroline Iuva de Mello, try to evaluate the perceptions in respect of the public welfare policies, starting from a quantitative study with students from the Federal University of Santa Maria, Brazil.

Thirdly, the vision of the young as citizens is present in several articles that discuss creative ways of youth participation through graffiti, the new technologies and music (the so-called "youth cultures"). Jesús Gómez-Abarca approaches graffiti as a political- cultural youth expression, starting from a case study in San Cristobal de Las Casas, Mexico, showing how through these cultural practices the young (re) appropriate the public spaces, they question the socio-spatial establishment and generate disputes for the definition of the cityscape. Héctor Rolando Chaparro-Hurtado and Claudia Maritza Guzmán-Ariza analyze how the new forms of identity are built and rebuilt in relation to the media culture in young urban schooled subjects in the city of Villavicencio (Colombia); showing processes of youth subjectivization in which digital technologies enable new forms of self-identification, as well as identification with the surroundings and with each other. Alexandre Bárbara- Soares and Lucia Rabello de Castro address the underground music scene in the city of Rio de Janeiro, exposing some of the contemporary aspects of domination and the possible exercises of resistance in the cultural space. Maria Natália Matias-Rodrigues and Jaileila de Araújo-Menezes discuss the experience of young women rappers, from a case study in the city of Recife, Brazil; through their music, they access visibility spaces, they can defy the gender codes of the Hip Hop Movement, proposing new ways of thinking and new ways of having a say, in a society that is marked by macho values.

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This issue of the magazine is based on research from several disciplines (anthropology, sociology, psychology, economics, education, communication, political science, etc.), it combines quantitative and qualitative methodologies (opinion polls, tests, case studies, in-depth interviews, participating observation, etc.), and it applies to six different countries (Argentina, Chile, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Spain). Most of the studies cover the last five years; therefore it is possible to make out indirectly the context of the international financial crisis and the emergence of really new social movements, of new modalities of youth culture and renewed forms of youth subjectivization. It is important to remember that the monograph is the fruit of the work done by the Iberian American Network of Postgraduate Courses on Childhood and Youth, RedINJU from Clacso, the work group Clacso "Youth, Childhood: Latin American policies, cultures and social institutions" and it has had the cooperation of some of the most important Latin American magazines on youth, such as Última Década from Chile, Estudio from Cuba, Revista de Ciências Sociais-Política & Trabalho from Brazil and the magazine of Estudos sobre Juventudes from Argentina, an editorial collaboration initiative that is intended to be continued in the future.

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The Third Section contains the cumulative authors' index and the thematic index followed by comprehensive information on the I Latin American Biennial on Childhood and Youths: Democracies, Human Rights and Citizenry, which will be held from November 17th to 21st this year in the city of Manizales, Colombia. Then, the Mariana University located in the city of Pasto, Colombia, announces the International Research Groups Congress whose pre-registration is active since April 25th. At the end of this section the magazine gets together and supports the development of a new scientific domain that is inscribed in the manifesto: "The Science of Sustainability: A scientific revolution", by means of which the Latin American Magazine of Social Sciences, Childhood and Youth joins the call

addressed to the scientific community and the social movements for the development of a Science of Sustainability that would contribute to the necessary and urgent overcoming of the current situation of global emergency, making the transition to Sustainability possible.

The Fourth Section presents two interesting interviews made by Lorena Natalia Plesnicar to two Latin American researchers: Martin Hopenhayn and Sara Victoria Alvarado. The interviews were made in the context of Postdoctoral Program of Research in Social Sciences, Childhood and Youth, held in May of this year in Tijuana, Mexico, where the interviewees worked as professors.

Right in this section and as a contribution to the I Latin American Biennial on Childhood and Youths: Democracies, Human Rights and Citizenry, there is a creative exercise with narratives by children and young people published in The Latin American Magazine of Social Sciences, Childhood and Youth. This testimonial, ludic choreography was made by Carlos Alberto González-Quitian and Gloria Patricia Quintero-Serna.

Two bibliographic reviews are part of the corpus of this issue: "Senses of social exclusion", written by Marina Medan based on the homonymous work by Valeria Llobet. From the book "Shades of globalization in the environs for early childhood. Points of view from India, South Africa, Canada and Colombia", published by Concordia University, University of Alberta and Cinde with the authorship of Ailie Cleghorn, Larry Prochner, Luz Marina Vivas-Hoyos and Leonor Isaza-Merchán, we include the presentation made by Alejandro Acosta, General Director of Cinde.

Resulting from the work commission "Democracy, Human Rights and Citizenry: Childhood and Youth in Latin America and The Caribbean" that operated during IV Postgraduate School, organized by the Clacso RedINJU in the city of Tijuana, Mexico, in May of the present year, we published the systematization: "Young people in Latin America and The Caribbean. Axes and reflections for research and action, from Tijuana, Mexico" by the authors Gloria Alcocer, Óscar Bueno, Jhonnatan Curiel, Jesús Cárdenas, Fabiana Espíndola, María Victal, Natalia Galeano, Antonia Garcés, María Clara Márquez, María Nelcy Muñoz, César Nureña and Cinthia Wanschelbaum,.

Lastly, a bibliographic list of theses articles and books on childhood and youth from the data centers from the three regional Cinde chapters (Bogotá, Medellín and Manizales).

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June 30th this year is the deadline for turning in articles aspiring to be published in the call Childhood, social institutions and political contexts in Latin America and The Caribbean, Volume 13 Issue 1 January-June, 2015.

In the context of the I Latin American Biennial on Childhood and Youth: Democracies, Human Rights and Citizenry, a meeting will be held among Editors of magazines on Childhood and Youth with the participation of several Latin American, Caribbean and Spanish publications, (web biennial: [Http://bienal.clacso.redinju.umz.cinde.org.co](http://bienal.clacso.redinju.umz.cinde.org.co)).

In May the magazine was re-indexed into the A 2 Publindex Category, Colciencias, Colombia, with validity up to June 30, 2015. We are expecting Scopus's and Thomson Reuters' answer in this second semester of the year to be included in the Social Science Citation Index.

In this first semester of the year 2014 the magazine was received in Left Index (the) Ebsco Host (bibliographic data base with a selection committee) and in the following Data Bases and Libraries: Sherpa/Rome, Base Bielfeld Academic Search, Engine, Unam Autonomous National University from Mexico, BDCol: Digital Colombian Library, Academic Google, OCLC WorldCat, Copac, Recolecta-Recolector from Ciencia Abierta, DC Creative Commons.

The actions undertaken by the human team involved in the magazine's edition are aimed at the permanent advancement of the production of knowledge generated in the universities and research centers from Latin America, The Caribbean, Spain and Portugal, with the end of making an impact on public policies, programs and projects, which allow a better quality of life for our children and young people; that is our main objective.

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