

Editorial

Presentation of Vol. 7, No. 1 of the Latin American Journal of Social Studies, Childhood and Youth.

Monographic number “Latin American Research Panorama in Youth, XXI Century”.

According to our announcement in the preceding issue, the CLACSO Work Group on “Youth and new political practices in Latin America” and the research group on Youth, Cultures and Powers at the Doctoral Program in Social Sciences, Childhood and Youth, we take the opportunity to submit not only some new articles but also a new monographic number to complete the “Latin American Research Panorama in Youth, XXI Century”. It is also worth noting that the journal won the II Contest “*Juan Carlos Portantiero*” Supporting Fund to the Journals on Social sciences in Latin America and the Caribbean (2008), granted by Clacso, whose prize contributes partially to sponsor this issue.

We are then sure that Youth recovers its relevance as a study object both at the national and international scenario. A proof of that is the Ibero-American Meeting of youth journal directors and editors, that took place in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from November 18 to 20, 2008. According to the call made by Carlos Feixa, some attendees were José Machado Pais (Portugal), Mariana Chaves (Argentina), José Antonio Pérez Islas (Mexico), Silvia Elizalde (Argentina), Pedro Núñez (Argentina), Oscar Dávila (Chile), Paul Giovanni Rodríguez (OIJ), Ana Isabel Peñate Leyva (Cuba), Alejandro Ramírez (Argentina) and Héctor Fabio Ospina (Colombia) who agreed to give birth to the Latin American Journal on Youth, to be published yearly and sponsored by the Ibero-American Organization on Youth (OIJ). The first number of the journal will be coordinated by José Antonio Pérez Islas. This coordination will be rotated yearly among the directors and editors of the journals belonging to the network.

With reference to the editorial aspect, we can highlight the production of studies defining research lines and innovating approaches in this field. Among them, it is worth quoting the following:

- Juvenile Cybercultures. (2008) M. Urresti, La Crujía, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- Culturas juvenis no século XXI. (Juvenile Cultures in the XXI Century) (2008) Borelli, S., Freire Filho, J., EDUC-PUCSP, São Paulo, Brazil.

- Youth and new political practices. (2008) Revista Argentina de Sociología (RAS), No. 11, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- The interactive generation in Ibero-America. Children and adolescents before the screens. (2008) Fundación Telefónica, Ariel Ed., Barcelona, Spain.
- Theories on Youth. The Classics' Looks. (2008) Pérez Islas J. M., Valdéz, M. Suárez, M. H. (coordination) UNAM, Mexico.
- The maras. Juvenile identities at a limit. (2007) Valenzuela, J. M., Nateras, A., Reguillo, R., UAM, El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, Casa Juan Pablos, Mexico.
- Modernity in doubt. (2006) García Canclini, N., IMJ-SEP, Mexico.
- Future is no longer as it was before: to be young in Latin America. (2005) Revista Nueva Sociedad, No. 200, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

It is evident, in these journals, that the concept of youth does not have a universal meaning. Accordingly, youth is not a biological category wrapped in social consequences but a complex set of changing cultural classifications permeated by difference and diversity. As a cultural construct, the meaning of youth varies in the course of time and space, according to who defines it, or for whom it is defined. As a discursive construct it is shaped by the organized and structured way in which we speak and build the young being as a person category. The discourse on style, image, difference and identity has been particularly meaningful to scholars.

Significantly important is the way in which the ambiguous youth category articulates to other kinds of discourse, such as music, style, power, responsibility, hope, future, and so on. "What matters is not if different kinds of discourse on youth are referentially precise, but how they themselves become part of the context where youth becomes organized" (Grossberg, 1992).

We have arrived, at the beginning of the XXI century, at new practices in the worlds of juvenile life, which are coherent with the change of the epoch, from the juvenile sub-cultures and academic analyses that took place on them in the last century. It is important to remember that youth is a cultural category differentially articulated (relation-constructed) to class, gender and race. Besides, youth may be produced differentially in divergent spaces and places. Youth becomes updated in clubs, bars, schools and parks, which yields a range of meanings and behaviors.

What it is important is not only to comprehend youth but to understand its place in culture, not to see it as a theme of rooted places but as hybrid and creolized paths in the global space. Youth cultures are not pure, authentic and locally limited; rather they are syncretic and hybrid products resulting from spatial interactions. Even better, they are "temporal coherence constellations (among which we can identify local cultures) located internally in the social space resulting from relations and interconnections ranging from local to intercontinental aspects" (Massey, 1998).

In this issue we find the section devoted to theory and meta-theory in the article by *Zuleika Köhler* and *Neuza María de Fátima Guareschi* about the notion on "juvenile protagonism" as expressed in the Brazilian Youth National Plan. The discussion is based upon the Foucaultean category on "governmentality", which explores the contemporary and hegemonic forms of subjectivation. Another article on this section is presented by *Jairo Hernando Gómez Esteban* in which, he assumes "romanticism" audaciously as a youth foundational myth, understood as an aesthetical-political movement that has succeeded in its positioning and

survival not only in imaginaries and rituals but also in the political and cultural practices of both male and female youths in the last two centuries. Finally, there is an article that approaches us to the contemporary sociological theories and to categories such as “panoptic time” and “chronotope”, issued by *Sara Victoria Alvarado*, *Jorge Eliécer Martínez Posada* and *Diego Alejandro Muñoz Gaviria*. They develop their thinking on juvenile dynamics such as social proscription and moral anticipation and they also devote some lines on the ways to comprehend the young subject.

In the second section, there are thirteen articles that have been subdivided in five great themes:

A) There are two articles devoted to Health. *María del Carmen Vergara*, based on her doctoral dissertation, reflects about the representation of youths in the city of Manizales, Colombia, thus listening to the male and female youths’ voices in order to define a whole perspective of their problems and attention demands. The Mexican researchers *Teresa Margarita Torres López*, *Rosalba Alejandra Iñiguez Huitrado*, *Manuel Pando Moreno*, *Jose Gpe Salazar Estrada* focus their attention on describing the contagion risk with STI and HIV/AIDS, from the migrant adolescents’ perspectives in Jalisco, Mexico.

B) Two articles deal with Critical Social Matters. *Pablo Christian Aparicio* makes a critical reading of educational reforms in Latin America and Argentina. These reforms have been propelled by the introduction of a new hegemonic economic and social model at global scale, characterized by a neoliberal orientation, which generates disastrous effects in the work market, the social organization and the political and institutional life. *Elisa Guaraná de Castro* contributes to the debate about rural youth in Brazil, making an emphasis on the social exclusion condition and on its political actor aspect.

C) With reference to Education, first *Hilda Mabel Guevara* tries to recover the meanings about the academic experience from a personal and subjective dimension, the student identity incarnated in the voices and autobiographical narratives from a group of university students. She also aims at defining the most prominent perceptions about the relations that these youths may have with knowledge, within a cultural context endowed with multiple transformations. Then, *Napoleón Murcia Peña* presents the university as a social institution and, from its own dynamics, indicates how the definition of policies on higher education must depart from the recognition of the imaginaries constructed by educational communities, as the actions and interactions at university life are defined from them. Finally, *Patricia Helena Jaramillo Marín* examines the phenomenon about the integration of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) to university life. His case study corresponds to a research conducted to know in more detail about this phenomenon and to identify the learning experiences made by the students participating in it.

D) Under the of Subjectivities and Cultures headline, there are three articles, as follows: *Andrés Vélez Quintero* deals with the construction of subjectivity around the rap experience, a complex phenomenon characterized by the variety of experiences accumulated in a multiple social interaction and, the variety of scenarios where these meetings and exchanges take place. The mass media are an important scenario and a promoting agent for the nearing between cultural

subjects and objects. *Horacio Espinosa Zepeda* reflects on the connections existing between the style and identity strategies that permeate the context of the *indie* culture in Guadalajara, Mexico. This is the result of a series of virtual meetings with creative male and female youths who create images in the context of the *tapatio* culture. He observes, through those images, the elements diverging from the essentialism of classical juvenile cultures. And finally, *María Cecilia Guerra Lage* analyzes the phenomenon concerning the proliferation of street stencils in Buenos Aires, as one of the cultural viewpoints of the general process of economic globalization, with the internet access as a defining factor in the way these images are produced and circulated. Through the Web, the stencil-producing groups make up a trans-frontier horizontal communication network that interconnects various central and peripheral cities without converging in a common center. Through this Web, the groups exchange their templates, which are linked to a contra-hegemonic discourse and to local vindications that become global ones very rapidly.

E) Finally, Politics is also an important matter in this issue. *Silvia Helena Simões Borelli*, *Rose de Melo Rocha*, *Rita de Cássia Alves Oliveira* and *Marcos Rodríguez de Lara* present their partial results (1960 and 1970's) of the research developed in Brazil and articulated to Clacso research on youth and new political practices in Latin America. *Cristian David Soto Ospina*, *Johanna Vásquez Jaramillo* and *Yudi Bibiana Cardona Loaiza* show how politics transversalizes the daily practices of the human being at their social, institutional, community and familial contexts. They also recognize the meanings granted by both male and female youths to politics, as well as their incidence in the way to relate and act in the family and at school. *Melina Vásquez* analyzes the emergence of autonomous unemployed organizations in Argentina, that have favored the formation of new militant experiences, where juvenile participation plays a relevant role, in a context of unemployment, de-institutionalization and questioning of the channels and traditional forms of political participation and representation. The unemployed organizations are a fertile ground for the development of political militancy aiming at structuring new ways of life and novel modalities of political socialization among youths.

The third section presents, in first place, the institutional announcement with reference to the prize conferred to Clacso and to this journal on "*Juan Carlos Portantiero*" *Supporting Fund to the Journals on Social Sciences in Latin America and the Caribbean II Contest* (2008). Secondly, there is a Call for Volume 7 Number 2, July-December, of the Latin American Journal on Social Sciences, Childhood and Youth (a special monographic issue on childhood), that will be on circulation in September 2009. Thirdly, there are two important resources for bibliographic search: the Cumulative Author Index and the Thematic Index. Finally, the meeting of the "Youth, culture and power in cities" 23 Group Work, in the framework of the VIII Mercosur Anthropology Meeting to be held in Buenos Aires from September 29 to October 2, 2009, is announced.

The fourth section includes the Bulletin Number 32 from the Organization of American States with information about the disjunctive ¿Financial crisis or global crisis? Green economy as a need and an opportunity.

We are aware that in Latin America and particularly in Colombia, youths' life conditions have deteriorated enormously. The most important factors are poverty, unemployment (they double the national tally) and violence (both intra-familial and social); implicit policies affect their rights severely: "the false positives", the "curfew" in various cities, the persecution to students in public universities, the search-warrants in cultural centers... A few youths have access to higher education and most of them devote to "live on their own wits". CEPAL has warned that the world financial crisis will have a negative impact on the factors that trigger juvenile violence, as youths live in a flood of frustration concerning social mobility expectations.

We are sure that this publication is an effort that contributes to the comprehension of a number of other factors, and is also a form of political action that approaches us to various solutions to the problems mentioned in it.

As a final comment, we iterate the invitation to participate in the calls from Cendi in Monterrey, Mexico; the Department of Education and Culture of the Organization of American States and the Center for Advanced Studies in Childhood and Youth at the University of Manizales and CINDE, to participate in Volume 7 Number 2 (a monographic issue on research in childhood) that will be published in September 2009, parallel to the World Meeting on Childhood that will be held in Monterrey, Mexico. This publication is co-financed by Cendi, an entity that will be sponsoring financially a yearly permanent monothematic issue on childhood. The deadline for the call is April 20, 2009. At <http://www.umanizales.edu.co/revistacinde/index.html>, Novedades window, you will find all of pertinent information.

An extraordinary issue with open themes will be published in December 2009 as a result of the great flow of articles that have been sent to the journal.

The journal was also included in Carhus that is a Catalan Index and the most important one in Spain. We have been also advised that our journal has been indexed in Scielo, that is the most important regional generalist Bibliographic Index, which selects scientific journals on the basis of very strict scientific and editorial conditions. This feat also indicates that we can be promoted to the A category, a process that we have been developing following the requirements stated by Publindex and Colciencias in Colombia, according to its call for re-indexation in the first semester of 2009.

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