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Ana Miranda *Editors*

Youth, Inequality and Social Change in the Global South

Perspectives on Children and Young People

Volume 6

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Youth, Inequality and Social Change in the Global South

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Ana Miranda is a senior researcher at the National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET) and a professor at the University of Buenos Aires. She is the leader of the Grammar of Youth Longitudinal Research Program in FLACSO Argentina. She also runs a postgraduate program on youth in Latin America. Her research and teaching are related to youth, education, inequality, and labor. She has written seven books, the most recent being *Entre la educación y el trabajo: la construcción cotidiana de las desigualdades juveniles en América Latina* (2018, CLACSO free access), which was written in collaboration with the Latin American Network for Transition Education Work, where she takes part in coordination. In July 2018 Ana was elected deputy president of RC 34 of the International Sociology Association (ISA) for the period 2018–2022.

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Youth in the Global South: An Introduction

Hernan Cuervo and Ana Miranda

Abstract The introduction to this edited book explains the rationale and main arguments for this collection of chapters. The aim of this book is to contribute to the development of new agendas in youth research that address the roots of inequality and highlight possibilities for social change, as well as promoting a democratisation of the field of youth studies. While there is a burgeoning interest in research from the Global South, the production of scientific knowledge in the social sciences is still skewed towards the Global North. To address this issue, the authors argue for the need of a conceptual and empirical space of invention and experimentation in youth studies that moves the research agenda beyond the universal conceptualisations from the Global North to include new, and old, ideas, perspectives and stories about and from young people in the Global South. In this chapter, the authors also offer theoretical sketches of what the Global South means, and what the field of sociology of youth looks like from the Global South. The chapter concludes with an analytical explanation of each of the 17 chapters that compose the epistemological mosaic offered in this book.

Keywords Sociology of youth · Global South · Youth inequalities · Social change

Presentation

This book is the result of a collective work that had its genesis in a panel, 'Youth and social justice in the global south: Building alternative strategies to entrenched social inequalities', of Research Committee 34, Sociology of Youth, at the

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International Sociological Association Conference in Vienna, Austria, in 2016. The panel was intended as a contribution to increasing efforts to open up sociology of youth to new concepts, methodologies and stories about young people that draw from spaces and places beyond the Global North. We sought contributions to current debates about structural inequality, social justice and youth from a Global South perspective to better understand complexities in patterns of disparity in different regions and for different social groups. We were ultimately interested in illuminating the lessons that could be learned from social struggles manifesting in various forms around the Global South.

It seems that we are not alone in this quest. In the introduction to his original edited book, *The Moral Mappings of South and North*, Wagner (2017: 1) affirms that the term 'Global South' has 'entered common language in global public debate'. He shows that the term is now carried in titles for academic journals, that new research centres based on the concept of the Global South have been established in universities of the Global North, and that bibliometric studies demonstrate that the term has been exponentially more used in the social sciences and humanities in the last 15 years compared to preceding decades (see also Papastergiadis 2010). Connell and de Sousa Santos are two of the theorists that have contributed significantly to democratising the social sciences, including highlighting the challenges to theory and research through a southern perspective. In addition to Connell's (2007, 2018) and de Sousa Santos's (2011, 2016) long-term efforts to 'decolonise' sociology and introduce readers and researchers to research, theories and methodologies emanating from the Global South, we now have important volumes in the social sciences which underscore an ongoing commitment to put these principles into academic practice. Among them are the handbook of criminology and the Global South by Carrington and colleagues (2018a), Grech and Soldatic's (2016) critical handbook of disability studies in the Global South; and Wyn and Cahill's (2015) handbook on children and youth studies, which offers a more democratic balance of chapters and contributors from the Global North and South. Furthermore, the Global South has also seen the establishment a South-South programmes of cooperative research, including the programme led by the Latin American Council of Social Sciences (CLACSO).

However, while these are all impressive and valuable efforts, the production of scientific knowledge in the social sciences is still 'heavily skewed towards' to the Global North; in particularly 'the English-speaking countries' (United States and United Kingdom) (Carrington et al. 2018b: 3). Indeed, Hogg, Scott and Sozzo (2017) affirm that 'the dominance of both the North Atlantic world and that of the Anglophone countries' can be seen, for example, in the fact that the 'United States and the United Kingdom publish more indexed journals than the rest of the world combined' (Graham et al. 2011: 14; in Hogg et al. 2017: 2). Other researchers have also stated that in the social sciences North Atlantic countries continue to enjoy an overwhelming domination of the production and organisation of knowledge (see Carrington et al. 2018b; Cooper et al. 2018; de Sousa Santos 2016).

In one of her latest efforts to decolonise sociology and subvert the 'hegemonic modern knowledge system', and provide a '*social* critique of empire, colonial life,

and postcolonial dependence', Connell continues to offer an impressive array of sources of theory and knowledge generated from the Global South (Connell 2018, 399–400, emphasis in original). For Connell, the hegemonic knowledge of system 'is not so much western science as imperial science', tracing contemporary imbalances in knowledge production to at least colonial and imperial times (399). Colonialism is also emphasised by de Sousa Santos (2016: 18, emphasis on original) as a 'system of naturalizing differences' involving the 'destruction of knowledge (besides the genocide of indigenous people)', which he calls '*epistemicide*'. Both theorists illustrate how the colonised world was foremost a source of raw materials, including data and knowledge, involving a one-way traffic route from the peripheries to the metropoles (Connell 2007, 2018; de Sousa Santos 2011, 2016). In many ways, both Connell and de Sousa Santos argue for new ways of understanding and explaining the world through the perspectives of those systematically marginalised by colonialism, empire and capitalism in order to unearth theoretical perspectives from the South (Connell 2007) and generate epistemological standpoints of the South (de Sousa Santos 2011).

These epistemological standpoints, however, are not new. The struggle for plural and alternative theoretical approaches to hegemonic systems of knowledge from the Global North in the social sciences has a long tradition in peripheral capitalist countries. During the 1960s, and within processes of decolonisation, different (now classic) studies such as *The Wretched of the Earth* (Fanon 1969) and *Dependencia y Desarrollo en América Latina* (Cardoso and Faletto 1969), emerged from the so-called 'developing world' as alternative theoretical standpoints to this hegemonic Global North. The epistemological productivity of those years, reflected in different disciplines of social sciences (e.g. geography, sociology, international relations) can be found on Prebisch's (1949, 1970) work on structural economics and early ideas on dependence theory to explain development and underdevelopment in world economies; or later in Hart´s (1973) definition of the urban informal sector, which became a productive frame to analyse processes of de-industrialisation and the loss of employment security in central economies.

In the 1990s, postmodern and individualization approaches and all-encompassing processes of globalisation contributed to homogenise or render oblivious critical perspectives from the centres of knowledge of the periphery. Globalisation was presented as an indivisible entity (Connell 2004). This Global North hegemony in theoretical approaches could be seen in the social sciences even in the number of citations, or in the circuits of academic formation, exchange and collaboration, such as the International Sociological Association (Connell 2004). Nevertheless, critical perspectives aiming to offer an alternative view to that of the Global South continue to emerge in the different disciplines. This book aims to contribute to this alternative perspective within the field of sociology of youth.

In editing this book, we seek to engage with this important ongoing project by providing a space for 'invention and experiment', in order to 'redistribute resources' in the form of rendering visible new and different voices than those already canonised in sociology of youth (Connell 2018: 399). Following Connell (2018: 403), we hope with this collection of Global South researchers' work to aid in

'reshaping' the space of sociology of youth by addressing 'what it studies', 'what it is about' and 'the object of knowledge that it constitutes' understanding of the world' (21). We also agree with Cooper and colleagues (2018: 13) that the sociology of youth theories constructed from a Global North vantage point are presented as 'universally relevant' and are in many instances offered as 'placeless', and as a unique and universal version of being young. As a way of promoting democratic communication, and the plurality of perspectives, this edited book is an attempt to address this gap in youth studies by focusing on how processes of inequality and social change shape young people's lives in the Global South. To do so, we assemble a range of international researchers addressing young people's lives in an incredibly diverse and unequal but also vibrant global region. However, the diversity within the space that we seek to address (the Global South) poses a first challenge: what do we mean when we talk about the Global South?

What is the Global South?

Given the proliferation of academic publications, research projects, conferences and forums, and research centres and university research units around the concept of and issues pertaining to the Global South, it is becoming increasingly difficult to elaborate a clear definition of what the *South* means. In some ways, clear definitions for contested concepts, such as the South, are not useful because rather than opening a conversation they can foreclose any debate about the meaning of the concept and how it works for certain social groups and in specific social settings. In response to the multiplication of productions about, of, and from the South, Papastergiadis (2010: 142) argues 'the only constant' for those working and identifying with the term is 'a dual awareness that the Euro-American hegemony in global affairs has concentrated power in the North, and that survival requires a coordinated transnational response'. Yet, this seems a 'negative' conceptualisation of the South, based on what is lacking, and constructed in opposition to another space; that is, its meaning is derived from what it opposes rather than from its own characteristics. Papastergiadis further problematises the concept by suggesting that it 'asserts a more affirmative tone for cultural identifications', arguing 'that the movement of ideas can be multidirectional as well as bi-polar', and 'is also expressive of a cultural imaginary that looks outward from its own national base and against the grain of its colonial past' (142–143). Similar to other theorists and researchers, he is aware that in every Global South space there is a Global North space, and vice versa, 'that elements from both are embedded in each other' (Papastergiadis 2010: 142; see also Carrington et al. 2018b; Connell 2007; Cooper et al. 2018).

It could be said that the Global South is 'neither embedded in a fixed territorial context, nor floating in the realm of "unmoored" globalization' (Papastergiadis 2010: 144), and that the concept works better as a metaphor. Indeed, but a metaphor about what? de Sousa Santos (2016: 18) does not agree that the South can be a

'geographical concept' but rather believes it is a metaphor for 'human suffering' caused by colonialism and capitalism and a metaphor for 'resistance' to overcome 'such suffering'. While de Sousa Santos and other researchers (e.g. Fonseca 2018; Wagner 2017) working in this southern space recognise that even the geographical North has its own South, with its marginalised, exploited and oppressed populations, a strong emphasis on 'suffering', 'marginalisation', 'oppression' and 'poverty' can generate a deficit idea of southern spaces and people, and a view of it as a homogeneous entity or bloc (see also Carrington et al. 2018b; Connell 2018).

In fact, the concept of South initially appeared in the report of the Brandt Commission in 1980, where it was used to identify and illustrate 'countries that failed to base their economies on high added value manufactured products and, thus, to overcome widespread poverty' (Wagner 2017: 5). As Cooper and colleagues (2018) also remind us, while spaces of extreme poverty and violence exist in the Global South affecting its youth, young people in the Global North, and particularly since the Global Financial Crisis, are also currently experiencing poverty, unemployment and precarity (see also Fonseca 2018). And while we agree that some social groups of young people in the Global South 'have had to adapt and survive in precarious conditions for an extended period of time' (Copper et al. 2018: 13) we are cognisant of not homogenising young lives and that not all social groups in colonial and postcolonial southern societies have been oppressed or marginalised (Dos Santos 2000). Indeed, as Connell (2004) affirms, the Global South also offers rich and economically developed countries, while at the same time there are spaces of extreme inequality, poverty and violence.

Returning to the idea of the South as a metaphor, researchers have employed the term as signifying a 'rupture with a static view of the international order' (Fonseca 2018: 712) and an attempt at new forms of 'world-interpretation and world-ordering' (Wagner 2017: 3). We agree that we should resist uncritical conflation of geographic space—such as Global North, with conceptual signification, such as progress and modernity—and that it 'is not whether a South exists, but from and to which experiences the coining and acceptance of this term speaks and what avenues of action it opens up' (Wagner 2017: 4). Further, as Wagner puts it, in thinking about the production of sociology of youth knowledge, searching for the South might not entail 'looking for a geographical space, it may mean asking for directions' in the quest for an 'alternative' new site of conceptual and empirical 'innovation' (10)—as well as new searches for academic collaboration and production.

Towards a Southern Sociology of Youth

In terms of the field of sociology of youth, an alternative and new site of conceptual innovation is already being produced by researchers of the Global South. The body of work from the contributors of this edited book represents an example of this kind of work. They are, of course, not the only ones. Cooper and colleagues (2018)

identify several of these southern voices in the space of youth studies, such as Honwana's (2011, 2012) work on childhood, youth and politics in postcolonial Africa and De Souza, Kumar and Shastri's (2009) work on the challenges faced by Indian youth in experiencing poverty and unemployment. Other interesting research has been conducted by Chuta (2007) in rural Ethiopia, by documenting childhood and youth experiences; or by Wong (2014) on youth work practices in Hong Kong. These voices also include Marilia Sposito and Paulo Rodriguez Carrano in Brazil (2003) and Freytes Frey's (2018) impressive work on employment opportunities for those most marginalised in Argentina. Important work has also been done by Valenzuela Arce (2015) and her theorisation of 'juvenicidio', which influenced a generation of youth subcultural studies in Latin America, by Perez Islas (2008) and Reguillo (2000) on youth and cultural studies in México, and by Saraví's (2015) sophisticated theorising of the construction of youth marginalisation through processes of spatial social exclusion in Ciudad de México.

Our aim, however, is not to provide a list of who is who in sociology of youth from the Global South. It is also not our intention to deny relevance to any theory because of its origin in the Global North. As Cooper and colleagues (2018: 15) put it, theories should not be occluded due to their place of origin but 'these theories need to be recalibrated when used in contexts much different from the places in which they were conceived'. Furthermore, similar to other researchers, we argue against a universalisation of Global North theory, which in the case of youth studies, in many instances, is developed to address young people's concerns and experiences within a specific place but is afterwards utilised as placeless. In other words, Global North constructions of sociology of youth theory seem to be, in many instances, understood as placeless and applicable to any social setting. This not only shows a lack of recognition of epistemological standpoints from the South or other places (de Sousa Santos 2011; Wagner 2017) but also displays a hubris about the power of any social theory.

Consider the following examples. A few years ago, Standing (2011) published *The Precariat*, in which he sought to demonstrate the rise of a new, and dangerous, social class composed of individuals experiencing precarious and insecure working and living conditions. This conceptual construct has been rapidly incorporated as a useful term, and has also been critiqued by sociologist of youth seeking to explain the increasing casualisation of youth labour markets and the potential political instability spreading from this labour phenomenon (see Bessant et al. 2017; Furlong et al. 2017; Imhonopi 2015). Standing's thesis is that youth constitutes a class of its own, with a potentially significant capacity of collective action. This thesis, however, cannot be universally applied to the lives and work of young people in the Global South. First, the erosion of security and stability at work is not new from the perspective of societies in the periphery. Indeed, Munck (2013: 752) affirms that the concept is not 'novel or even relevant' to 'workers and urban poor in the Global South', and where theories of 'informality' in the 1970s arising from an African context (747–749) show how the working conditions that define the precariat have been part of the southern labour context for a long time. Further, within debates around dependency theory, notions of urban marginality and surplus of population

in the 1960s (Nun 1999) have consistently shown that it is not possible to talk in the Global South about generations or age as a categorical indicator for youth but rather of youth as a heterogeneous group (ILPES, 1971; CEPAL 2004; Miranda 2007). Thus, we believe that there is a need to contextualise and historicise theoretical debates about precarity, social structure and youth agency.

The concept of youth transition is another example of the universalisation of youth studies terms emanating from the Global North. Nilan (2011) argues against the universalisation of concepts such as Beck's individualisation and choice biographies for non-western societies. In these societies, she affirms, community and family relationships are still relevant for young people's transitions, and thus western notions of adulthood as 'total independence from family of origin' can be 'problematic' in non-western societies (22). In a similar vein, Morrow (2015) also criticises western and urban notions of youth transition that neglect the role of family and community. Researching rural communities in Ethiopia and India, Morrow reveals how in these communities children engage in agricultural and domestic labouring practices and in caring activities for family members. In these settings, notions of youth transition as independence from family of origin and concepts such as individualization and choice biographies, also become unsuitable to explain children and young people's lives. The blurring boundaries of childhood-youth-adulthood embedded in such labouring and caring practices in these rural communities of the Global South calls for new epistemological stand-points in youth studies, including taking 'family' and 'place' as serious analytical categories and not mere backdrops to a study. Several issues raised in this section are expanded in this book.

Structure of the Book

In a previous text which formed our initial effort towards contributing to the democratization of the field of sociology of youth, we argue for 'the need to open up spaces of understanding and cooperation between western and non-western, north and south researchers and ideas' (Cuervo and Miranda 2015: 450). Our contention was that a 'broader and more inclusive account of culture and ideas can only benefit those interested in understanding and addressing social inequalities' (450). And even when it is not an easy or straightforward task, we decided to believe and work towards a South-South collaboration with the aim of offering a variety of lines of inquiry that contribute to new socially just strategies of analysis. As a result, our approach to the construction of this book was kept open and democratically receptive to different ways of seeing and researching youth, social change and inequality in the Global South.

The 'call for papers' through which we searched for contributors revealed different ways of understanding the Global South and North in the sociology of youth. On the one hand, we received abstracts from several researchers from non-English speaking countries in Europe (e.g. Italy, Turkey, Russia) and from colleagues in the

United States working on Latino youth studies (which some researchers will view as a South within the North—see de Sousa Santos 2016; Fonseca 2018; Wagner 2017). On the other hand, we received no abstracts from colleagues working on Indigenous youth research. In other words, as one of the editors is based in Australia, we were interested in receiving contributions from those working in the space of Indigenous youth studies. We are aware of the very limited visibility of Indigenous issues in journals dedicated to the field of youth studies. While we contacted researchers working on these issues, we did not receive any contributions around this topic. This continues to be an important shortcoming in the field of youth studies, particularly in the Australian research landscape that is so vibrant and active in this field.

The first section of the book, 'Education, work and social structure', examines how different institutions and social hierarchies enhance or hinder social and economic opportunities for youth in Central America, India and Australia. The "Youth, Labor Market Exclusion, and Social Violence in Central America" chapter by Mora Salas and Pérez Sáinz explores the links between social violence fuelled by street gangs in Central America's deprived neighbourhoods and labour opportunities for young people in these places. The central tenet of the chapter is that these young people are discriminated against in the labour market not as a result of their employment skills, but through processes of stigmatisation due to being associated with the violence in these neighbourhoods. While describing spatial segregation in the Global South, the authors provide a compelling account of unequal life chances for young people caught up in the dynamics of structural violence and a 'cultural matrix that stigmatizes subaltern classes' (Mora Salas and Pérez Sáinz in their chapter). In the "Mobile Belonging and Migrant Youth in Australia" chapter, Khan, Wyn and Dadvand address the 'need for broadening official definitions of cultural and ethnic identification' in Australia. This need for pluralising cultural and ethnic identifications is a response to policy regimes that position multicultural youth as risky and problematic subjects. Through data collected in the first Multicultural Youth Australia Census, the authors find that despite encountering daily discrimination and negative narratives about multiculturalism, these young people are optimistic and engaged in their communities through practices of 'belonging-in-difference'. In the "Intergenerational Transmission of Poverty: Exploring Subjective Well-Being, Risks, Shocks, and Resilience Amongst Youth in India" chapter, Singh and Mukherjee draw on data from the longitudinal Young Lives research project to examine intergenerational transmission of poverty amongst youth in India. The authors place the emphasis on the impact of gender, location and caste to investigate social changes in young people's lives in comparison to their parents' lives. Their original contribution focuses on the continuous social segmentation that originates in the castes and its intersectionality with the domestic division of labour. Finally, Stahl and Young address issues of poverty, class and gender to analyse how first-in-family males aspire to Australian higher education. They place the lens of the different gender discourses utilised by teachers and boys, and the ways in which they impact on their educational imaginations of future possibilities. The chapter shows the importance of plural definitions of

masculinity by providing evidence of the role of the education system in generating gender stereotypes.

The second section, 'Identity and belonging', examines young people's efforts and the challenges that they face in constructing spaces of belonging and inclusion. It also sets identity against specific social contexts and structures that shape the possibility and meaning of being young. In the "Temporalities of 'Doing': The Over-Youth and Their Navigations of Post-violence Contexts in Africa" chapter of this section, Iwilade sets out to identify and explain new ways of 'defining youth which focusses on "doing things" rather than on "being something"' within the context of a post-violence society in the oil creeks of the Niger Delta of Nigeria. Looking at the struggles of ex-military youth, Iwilade encourages us to think about youth as a verb rather than as a noun to understand the ways in which the over-youth ('that is those who continue to circulate within the youthscape but who no longer socially fit therein') go to a great length to appropriate the category of youth in order to navigate the new societal environment. In the "Feminism, Youth and Women Who Rock: *Rocking is also a Way to Fight*" chapter, Viera Alcazar offers an analysis of the feminist punk scene in two cities of México: Distrito Federal and Tijuana. As part of a rich subcultural theory of Mexican tradition, she analysis the lyrics of punk bands led by women that challenge patriarchal society through a linguistic resignification, and thus show the empowerment of young women. In the "Femininity in Everyday Life: Experiences of Malay and Indian Women in Malaysia" chapter, Karupiah casts a feminist lens over everyday practices and the role of women in Malaysian society. Karupiah examines the everyday experiences of highly educated urban young Malay and Indian women to understand the meaning of femininity, placing the emphasis on gender essentialism and its tensions with women's empowerment and agency. She identifies two types of femininity displayed by these young women: emphasised and empowered femininity. While the young women moved between these two forms of femininity, they struggled to escape the social norms of Malaysian society in relation to what was expected of them as women, thus generating constraints in their sense of belonging and identity development. Finally, Bottrell and Pessoa address issues of marginalisation in Australia and Brazil to examine the relationship between the concept of waithood and belonging in young people's lives. Within the contexts of marginalisation, the authors analyse the political participation of Brazilian students and their views on schooling, and African young leaders' projects in Melbourne through theories of waithood to understand the different ways in which structural violence and discrimination affect these young people's experience of belonging. The chapter reveals contemporary contradictions between an expansion of youth formal rights and a lack of opportunities, framed around the concept of waithood.

The third section, 'Place, mobilities and marginalisation', examines the intersection of youth, place and mobilities with issues and processes of marginalisation and inequality. The "Carcova is Love: Becoming Youth in the Slums of the Global South" chapter by Grinberg, Machado and Mantiñan uses an ethnographic approach to understand the process of becoming youth in the slums of Buenos Aires, Argentina. The authors move beyond social perspectives of stigmatisation and

romanticism of living in the slums to identify young people's struggles in 'seeking and having a place in contemporary societies'. The notion of agency appears again from a biopolitics perspective by revealing young people as subjects of desire and agency. In the "Hope for a Better Future: Young People's (im)Mobility in Pretoria Central, South Africa" chapter, Rabe, Swart and de Beer dig deep into notions and experiences of mobilities within the South African context. Through a life course perspective, the authors aim to better understand the conditions under which some young people move from a rural or semi-urban place to the metropolis (Pretoria Central in their study), as well as their experiences once they settle in a new place. While for some youth mobility may lead to new opportunities, for others it increases their vulnerability and lack of access to education and work, including developing feelings of being 'stuck' in a place and time. In the "Mobility, Capital and Youth Transitions in Indonesia", chapter Sutopo considers the mobility of young musicians in three cities in Indonesia. The mobilities of these young musicians is triggered by the precarious characteristics of the contemporary music scene and industry. Interestingly, Sutopo argues that all these three places are treated as spaces of resources through which to gain income advantages and other forms of capital in a precarious occupational landscape. The author analyses youth labour in the cultural industry as a field of hierarchical action and struggle. In the "Children and Urban Space in Maputo" chapter of this section, Colonna examines the intersection of childhood and urban spaces in Maputo, Mozambique. She aims to provide an understanding of inequality and social change in Mozambican society through children's social practices in the public space, and as a counterpart to what she views as a domesticated and privatised childhood in the Global North. Colonna concludes by arguing that children, through their 'creativity and playfulness', show 'other possible cities' and the possibility of a different society.

In the final section, 'Power, social conflict and new forms of political participation of youth', contributors address the different ways in which young people engage, or do not engage, in political participation and struggles. In the "Beyond the Nizam: Youth Political Practices in Egypt and Tunisia After the 2011 Uprisings" chapter, Sánchez Garcia and Sánchez examine young people's political practices in Egypt and Tunisia after the 2011 uprisings. Working with an inclusive definition of participation, the authors find that young people are moving away from formal political participation towards informal participatory forms, which in turn produced a new common political space outside traditional spaces. In the "Marginal Images: Youth and Critical Subjectivities from Art as a Resource" chapter, Cerbino, Panchi and Voirol distance themselves from views of youth as a 'transcendental category' or 'a diversity with specific limits' (i.e. as 'in stereotypes of rockers or gangs'). Drawing on ethnographic work in Ecuador, they focus on how youth in positions of marginality connect and utilise art to generate recognition and validation of their subjectivities. These arts practices generate not only a revitalised subjectivity but also new forms of political participation. In the "Young People's Constitutional Submissions in Fiji—Opportunities and Challenges" chapter, Vakaoti analyses young people's constitutional submissions in Fiji amidst political turmoil and processes of social change. Contrary to the first two chapters in this section, Vakaoti

focuses on formal processes of political representations and thus addresses a research gap in the literature about Fijian youth political activities and interests. Nevertheless, he affirms that youth participation in the consultation for the development of Fiji's fourth Constitution was low. To this effect, Vakaoti focuses on potential strategies to increase youth political participation in formal process of representation. The final chapter belongs to Jun Fu who investigates Chinese youth's online social participation through the concept of prefigurative politics. While Chinese young people have one of the highest rates of internet use in the world, research on youth digital use in China represents an emerging field of inquiry in youth studies. Fu covers this research terrain by examining young people's civic and political participation in social media and their strategies to implement social change.

It is our belief that these chapters render visible the challenges, tensions and opportunities in the interior of Global South societies, and which strongly impact on young people's lives. Within these tensions we can see social and spatial segregation, sexual division of labour, women placed in roles of caring, and conflict and violence affecting the youth. Within the challenges and opportunities we find new forms of political and social participation, emerging new femininities and the need to promote alternative masculinities, all showed through the everyday practices of young people. Thus, we believe these 17 chapters offer an epistemological 'mosaic' by bringing together 'separate knowledge systems' to sit beside each other (Connell 2018: 404). We are aware of Connell's critique of southern researchers developing a sense of 'extraversion', as per Hountondji's (1997) conceptualisation, in which they orient their theoretical understandings of their society through an authority external to it (401). While some of the contributors might exercise this kind of practice at some stage in their chapter, we were also conscious of enabling a space of freedom for them to view and explain their social world as they see fit. We thus avoid 'extraversion' in the sense of determining their 'research practices' and our 'publication preferences'. The democratic process that we undertook while compiling and editing this volume has been about redistributing resources, 'correcting the distortions and exclusions' produced by the inequality of knowledge production in favour of the Global North (402). By constructing and rendering visible new agendas of research that address the roots of inequality and highlight possibilities of social change we also hope that we have contributed to democratising the field of youth studies.

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Part I
Education, Work and Social Structure

Youth, Labor Market Exclusion, and Social Violence in Central America

Minor Mora Salas and Juan Pablo Pérez Sáinz

Abstract This chapter analyzes the links between labor exclusion, social violence, and youth living in Central America's urban slums. In particular, we discuss how the social violence that takes place in these areas helps diminish the labor opportunities available to marginalized, working-class youth. The violence that street gangs and organized crime groups perpetuate in these territories fuels processes that socially stigmatize all inhabitants, but especially young people. Employers respond to this climate of violence by implementing discriminatory practices that negatively affect young people's likelihood of finding good jobs. Additionally, disputes over the control of these neighborhoods hinders territorial mobility amongst their inhabitants, which further reduces their opportunities in the labor market. In this context, a group of young people who find themselves socially excluded turn to violence, transgression, and crime as a means of accessing economic resources and goods with high symbolic value.

Keywords Labor exclusion · Precarious jobs · Social violence · Urban neighborhoods · Central america

Introduction

For Central American youth living in urban slums overrun by social violence, finding a good job is beset with challenges. This paper seeks to reflect critically on these difficulties and shed light on several sociocultural explanations that are often

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overlooked when using analytical approaches focused on human capital deficiencies, labor market mismatch, and public policy failures related to job training.[1]

We argue that the job opportunities available to these young people are not only affected by their limited employability skills but, more importantly, by sociocultural factors that restrict their entry into labor markets. These access barriers limit the employment prospects of youth and aggravate the labor market exclusion they face for other reasons. This exclusion exacerbates young people's sense of social deprivation by blocking their access to an income stream and, therefore, marginalizing them from spheres of consumption. When faced with these realities, some youth resort to illicit means of generating an income such as forming violent street gangs or joining organized crime groups linked to drug trafficking. These groups propagate violence in the territories they control, and their actions socially stigmatize all youth living in low-income urban neighborhoods as being violent and dangerous. This stigma is generally reproduced through metonymy, and the resulting typologies create social, symbolic, and spatial borders, which block social interaction with youth in general and deepen the social exclusion they face.

Analytical Contexts

Our analysis focuses on two marginalized urban neighborhoods in two Central American capital cities. Both neighborhoods are located in the periphery of their respective city's metropolitan area and are commonly referred to as urban slums given their high concentration of poor households, infrastructure deficiencies, and lack of educational and health care facilities. In El Salvador, the study centers on three neighborhoods located in the municipality of Soyapango, which is on the outskirts of the capital city of San Salvador. In Costa Rica, we focus on the district of Los Guido, located in the municipality of Desamparados on the periphery of the capital city of San José.

The three neighborhoods in Soyapango grew out of the urban expansion the municipality has experienced over the past few decades. Two of these areas emerged in the 1970s, and the third was settled at the end of the 1990s. These three neighborhoods are in the same area and constitute a sociospatial unit. On the other hand, Los Guido—in San José—formed during the second half of the 1980s is the product of the housing battles led by poor, working-class sectors during the external debt crisis. At one time, this township constituted the largest urban slum in San José (Mora and Solano 1993).

Soyapango is commonly considered to have an industry-oriented economy, and its industrial base dates back to its participation in import substitution industrialization during the second half of the twentieth century. The industrial presence in Soyapango has dwindled in the last decade as a number of companies have moved to other parts of the country, and the erosion of its industrial base is often attributed to the crisis of violence that afflicts this particular municipality. In fact, the violence index estimated for Soyapango shows it to be one of the most violent municipalities in San Salvador's metropolitan area.

In comparison, Desamparados is an overcrowded residential area, and most of its districts are small localities lacking local employment opportunities. Los Guido is a typical commuter town mainly populated by the urban working class and only boasts a few small commercial businesses and repair shops.

In terms of social climate, social violence is an inescapable reality for both municipalities. In spite of this commonality, the level and type of violence to which their inhabitants are exposed are quite different.

Soyapango is affected by a kind of generalized violence, and its homicide rate makes it one of the most violent municipalities in El Salvador. Youth street gangs locally known as "maras" are at the center of this violence.[2] (Soyapango Municipal Government 2015: 15).

In Soyapango, like most of El Salvador, this violence occurs for many reasons. These include violent disputes between gangs over socioterritorial control, using violence as a means to settle scores, extorting residents, "taxing" businesses and small enterprises, and controlling residents' daily lives through intimidation, physical coercion, and contextual violence. Gangs also regulate the people, goods, and services that enter and circulate within their territories. They do so by charging "tolls," restricting people's ability to move about freely, limiting which merchandise is allowed to circulate, and controlling which public services are provided. Daily surveillance is strict and takes place at all hours of the day. "Elements" from outside the neighborhood are considered potential threats, and gangs often unleash a string of violent actions against "intruders." All public services, private initiatives, and non-profit interventions must be "authorized" and are constantly monitored by

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[2]The "maras" initially appeared in El Salvador following the United States' massive deportation of young gang members during the second half of the 1990s. Upon arriving in El Salvador, these gangs began gaining turf at the neighborhood level in urban areas, and eventually extended their presence to the whole country. These youth gangs currently operate not only in El Salvador, but also in Honduras and Guatemala. The two most famous organizations are the Mara Salvatrucha and the Eighteenth Street Gang (also known as Barrio 18), although Barrio 18 split into two separate factions six years ago, known as Revolucionarios and Sureños. For an analysis of how Central America's youth gangs originated and how they evolved, see: Argueta (2016), Murcia (2015), Saveninje (2009).