
**Golfos, Punkis, Indignados:**

Subterranean Tradition of Youth (Spain, 1960-2015)

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**Abstract**

This text is an attempt to review academic work on youth cultures carried out in Spain since the transition to democracy (although some earlier work related to the subject, stemming from the late Franco period, is also brought up). The nearly 200 contributions analysed (books, papers, theses, unpublished reports and journal texts) were grouped into different academic areas such as criminology, sociology, psychology, communication or anthropology, and theoretical trends ranging from ‘edifying’ ecclesiastic post-war literature to the Birmingham school. The works are classified into five major periods marked by different youth styles which act as distorting mirrors of social and cultural changes that are taking place: the late Franco times (golfos & jipis), the transition to democracy (punkis & progres), the post-transition (pijos & makineros), the 90s (okupas & pelaos) and the present time (fiesteros & alternativos). The social context, the academic framework and the main research lines for these periods are analysed, and we also touch upon what we consider as representative of the emerging ideological, theoretical and methodological tendencies.

**Key words**

Youth Cultures, Urban Tribes, Punks, Spain.

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1 This text is based on an article published time ago (Feixa & Porzio, 2005). It is an attempt to update this article, including the evolution from 2005 to date.

2 In the paper we use some Spanish terms that correspond to different local and global youth lifestyles. See the Glossary below.
Introduction

In his classical article “Subterranean traditions of youth”, David Matza (1973 [1961]) proposed a model for exploring the evolution of youth lifestyles in the XXth century, taken into consideration several rebellious ‘youth traditions’ in the crossroad of class and lifestyle: the ‘delinquent’ proletarian tradition, the ‘radical’ student tradition, the ‘bohemian’ middle class tradition and so on. The Birmingham school updated this model in order to analyze the emergence of British subcultures in the 1960s and 1970s (Hall & Jefferson, 1983 [1975]). The emergence of Punk was a kind of hybrid synthesis of the history of the “subterranean traditions of youth” in post-war Britain, mixing-up middle class countercultural traditions and subcultural working class traditions (Hebdige, 1981 [1979]). From this point of view, the globalization of Punk in the second half of the 1970s and in the 1980s could be interpreted as a third wave in the process of hybridization of these traditions, mixing countercultures and subcultures, middle and working class, anglo-saxon and other local and cross-national traditions.

In 1975, when General Franco died, the presence of youth subcultures was something ‘unnatural’ in the Spanish political scenario. The outcome of the Spanish Civil War (1936-39), with the victory of the fascists over the legal republican government, led to an attempt to impose the logic of monolithic Youth Fronts inspired by German Hitler-Jugend and Italian Barilla, as adapted by the so-called National Catholicism. For decades, the Frente de Juventudes (Youth Front) and Sección Femenina (Female Section), [along with Acción Católica (Catholic Action)], were the sole and compulsory forms of youth citizen participation. Only after 1960, with economic development and the opening of Spain, could the international youth lifestyles gain visibility. The tourist boom and the new media (both commercial and countercultural) introduced new youth movements (mostly hippies and rockers) - albeit with some particularities: they arrived some years after their European counterparts and they settled only in metropolitan areas (like Barcelona or Madrid) and in some enclaves (like Ibiza). The normalization of the Spanish youth scene came about through the process of transition into democracy (1975-1981). All the youth styles that had been created in Europe and America during the post-war period mixed and burst upon the public scene at the same time and were christened by the media with a very popular
local term –‘tribus urbanas’: urban tribes (something similar happened in Russia in 1989, during the *perestroika*, with the so-called *neformalniye grupirovnik* - informal groups). Nevertheless, only after the integration into the European Union (1986) were Spanish ‘urban tribes’ definitively included in the global youth scene. The way in which these urban tribes developed across the country was, however, greatly influenced by the multicultural and multilingual diversity of the Spanish state (for example, the more dynamic territories for subcultures, besides Madrid, were those of Catalonia, the Basque country and Galicia).

This text is an attempt to review academic work on youth cultures carried out in Spain since the transition to democracy (although some earlier work related to the subject stemming from the late Franco period is also brought up). The nearly 200 contributions analysed (books, papers, theses, unpublished reports and journal texts) were grouped into different academic areas such as criminology, sociology, psychology or anthropology, and theoretical trends ranging from edifying post-war literature to the Birmingham school. The works are classified in five periods marked by different youth styles that act as distorting mirrors of social and cultural changes: the late Franco period (1960-76), the transition to democracy (1977-85), the post-transition (1986-94), the late 90s (1995-99), the new century (2000-04), the pre-crisis (2005-09) and post-crisis period (2010-14). The social context, the academic framework and the main lines of research for these periods are analysed, and we also touch upon what we consider as representative of the emerging ideological, theoretical and methodological tendencies.³

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³ This study is part of a larger project commissioned by the Spanish Youth Institute (Injuve), under the title *Youth Cultures in Spain. Urban Tribes* (Feixa et al., 2004). We have focused on 200 books, anthologies, articles, papers from specialised magazines and academic works (Ph.D. thesis work and theses), although unpublished papers and journal reports have also been used.

Why do you see more and more young men with long hair? This is something we have all wondered about sometime, but… Do we ever find an answer? No, we don’t, because we can’t understand that some men don’t appreciate one of qualities that we most value in them: a manly aspect. This is why it astonishes us also that they’d rather exhibit a different sweater every moment of the day. And to push their bad taste even further, they’d even hang a little chain on their arm. It wouldn’t be surprising to see them one day full of jewellery like an Indian chief. What will so many years of civilisation serve if there’s still someone into stupid showing off?. (N. Ros, ‘Nueva ola’, Magazine *Relevo*, 42-43, Lleida, 1964)

*Los Golfos*, one of the first films by Carlos Saura (1959) shows the adventures of a youth gang in a Spanish suburb still in the middle of the post-war period, though on the threshold of modernisation under the auspices of the ‘plans for development’, which were being drawn up that year. The film is the story of four young people in a Madrid suburb, progressively inclined towards a more engaged offensiveness. Inspired by Luis Buñuel’s *Los Olvidados* (The Forgotten), Saura pictures with a reportage-like style (converging with the cinéma-verité) the frustrations of youth in the beginning of this development. *La lenta agonía de los peces* (1974) [The Slow Agony of the Fish] portrays the doubts of a young Catalan man who falls in love with a Swedish girl in the Costa Brava, and discovers the countercultural movements across the Pyrenees. Each of these films shows totally opposed youth cultures (proletarian *golfos* and upper class *jipis*) that become the symbol and emblem of the process of accelerated cultural modernisation taking place in the country.

Youth cultures in Spain appeared in the middle of Franco’s regime, if at a stage that some people called ‘dictablanda’, soft dictatorship (as opposed to ‘dictadura’, the hardest times and also the Spanish for dictatorship), a period of about two decades, from the time of the development plans (1959) to the first democratic elections (1977). From

4 Look for a girl, a yeah yeah girl/ With lots of rhythm/ Who can sing in English/ With mad hair/ And colour tight/ A yeah yeah girl, a yeah yeah girl/ That understands you like I do (‘A yeah yeah girl’).
Institutionally, the Frente de Juventudes became Organización Juvenil Española, changing authoritarian schemes into more democratic models of service to youth (Sáez, 1988). Academically, the social sciences were still suspected of sympathising with democratic movements, although within the Instituto de la Juventud (Youth Institute) a modernising tendency cropped up that eventually used the techniques of empirical sociology to promote the first youth reviews (Martín Criado, 1998, De Miguel, 2000). But youth culture hardly appeared in these reviews, which offered only a very general understanding of attitudes and values.

In order to find references during this time to the youth styles long existing in Europe and the States we have to focus on another type of work. Most are translations or adapted texts from international publications, although they are often commented upon or even censored, as happened with the Spanish version of a work about the hippies (Cartier and Naslednikov, 1974). However, other studies from Spanish researchers start to appear. First, essays linked to edifying literature or criminology, usually by ecclesiastic authors interested in the negative influence of the new trends on young people’s morality and seen through the double lens of vandalism and political and cultural dissidence (Trías, 1967; López Riocerezo, 1970). Second, works by writers or journalists, urban chronicles about the birth of a consumption culture on the outskirts of cities (Gomis, 1965; Huertas, 1969), or travel books about journeys to Europe and North America, describing the author’s impressions of countercultures in a half documentary, half testimonial way (Mellizo, 1972, Carandell, 1972). Third, more academic essays, especially by authors writing about the university protests which took place in retaliation against Franco’s regime (Tierno Galván, 1972, López Aranguren, 1973) and some studies by young researchers, carried out as a first step in basing theories on field data (Gil Muñoz, 1973, Salcedo, 1974).

In 1970, Father José María López Riocerezo, author of many ‘edifying’ works for young people, published a study entitled The worldwide problem of vandalism and its possible solutions, in which he shows interest in a series of demonstrations of youth nonconformist, offensive trends: gamberros, blousons noirs, teddy boys, vitelloni, raggare, rockers, beatniks, macarras, hippies, halbstakers, provos, ye-yes, rocanroleros, pavitos, etc., were variants of the same species: the ‘rebel without a cause’. Although he considers Spain safe from this dangerous trend (‘maybe because of historical constants, the weight of centuries and family tradition’), he concludes by
wondering whether these trends have something to do with the transformation of a rural or agricultural society into an industrial or post industrial society: ‘When this step is taken quickly, there is a cultural and sociological crisis, like an obstruction of the channels of the individual’s integration into the regulations of society’ (López Riocerezo, 1970: 244). The author, who used to be a professor in criminal law at the Royal College of Advanced Studies of El Escorial, considers gamberrismo (vandalism) one of the most pressing social problems of our civilisation:

We need to pay good attention to such an important issue; we are used to following the news from abroad and we hear about it all the time – and specially its most serious consequences. We hear about English teddy boys, Italian teppisti, the French blousons-noirs, the German halbstarker, Venezuelan pavitos, and we think the whole thing is alien to us, serious as it is. We should be able to distinguish wide different areas, beginning with the badly behaved and rude young people and ending in the criminal. If we understand that gamberro is the one that breaks basic social rules to seek his own satisfaction or his own comfort, without paying any attention to his neighbour’s concerns, we cover a wide social area, really unsuspected and impressive. (López Riocerezo, 1970: 60)

For the author, a gamberro is nothing but the Spanish variant of the foreign model being imported. He discusses the etymology, as the word is not included in the dictionary of the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language. He searches in Basque-French (gamburu: joke, somersault, open air diversion) and into Greek (gambrias: with the same meaning as our own word). This second meaning not only justifies the declaration of dangerousness ‘against those who cynically and insolently attack the rules of social coexistence by attacking people or damaging things, without a cause or a reason’, in the Ley de Vagos y Maleantes (Tramps and Malefactors Act) but also explains its origin or objective’. He starts by drawing the international panorama, based on the available criminological literature (starting by biological determinists like Lombroso), to focus later on the Spanish case from press news, papers issued in church magazines or magazines from the regime (mixing up data about simply delinquent gangs with information about trends and student movements). He ends up wondering about the causes of this wave of youth rebelliousness:

Where is the deep evil created by English and American teddy-boys, the French blousons noirs, the Swedish raggare, Italian vitelloni or Spanish gamebrros to be found? The problem is not in their external features: their odd way of living, their extravagant hair style, their taste for trouble making, their liking of rock and roll or twist, their passion for exceeding the speed limit and their gathering in gangs. The real problem lies in their lack of discipline, ideology or morals. They don’t have any self-control, and their parties reach the edge of anti-social behaviour, so they easily step into delinquency. (López Riocerezo, 1970: 17)
About the Spanish case, he insists that the phenomenon is still not too apparent. According to 1963 statistics, there were only 161 offenders per 100,000 inhabitants in Spain (the figures abroad were 852 in England, 455 in the USA, 378 in Germany and 216 in Italy).

The rate in Spain…is still below that of other countries with the same degree of civilisation, maybe due to the historical constants, the weight of centuries and the family tradition that, as we know, constitute a baggage difficult to get rid of (…) (also) due to the Spanish woman, who still has a very deep sense of maternity and accomplishes her duties with real diligence, even with sacrifice. (López Riocerezo, 1970: 9, 14)

But in the end, he accepts that

Even when the rates of youth and child offences are low compared to other European countries… offence is the fruit of a complex set of causes and objects, very tightly related to the transformation of a rural or agrarian culture into an industrial or post-industrial one. When this step is taken quickly, there is a cultural and sociological crisis, like an obstruction of the channels of the individual’s integration into the regulations of society. Spain is in a similar process. (López Riocerezo, 1970: 244)

The Time of Tribes: *Punkis & Progres* (1977-1985)

*Y yo caí*

enamorado de la moda juvenil
de los precios y rebajas que yo vi
enamorado de ti
Sí, yo caí
enamorado de la moda juvenil
de los chicos, de las chicas, de los maniquís
enamorado de ti
(Radio Futura ‘Enamorado de la moda juvenil’, 1980)\(^5\)

They grew up surrounded by the big city’s cement. They are the shipwrecked of the asphalt. Loud sounding names - punks, heavies, mods, rockers - keep themselves inside the warm security of their tribe. Sometimes, the battle commences to dye with blood a world full of music (…) Dominions, areas of transit, territories under dispute, the other map of an unknown but everyday city, where other laws other values, take over. (‘Tribus ’85: morir en la chupa puesta’, Magazine *Triunfo*, Madrid, april 1984: 31)

*Pepi, Luci, Bom y otras chicas del montón*, the first of Almodovar’s films (1980) shows the beginning of the *movida madrileña*, the more or less spontaneous youth movement that reflected in an anarchic way the effects of Spain’s transition to

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\(^5\) And I fell/ In love with young fashion/ With the prices and the sales that I saw/ I fell in love with you/ And I fell/ In love with young fashion/ With the boys, with the girls, with the mannequins/ I fell in love with you (‘In love with young fashion’).
democracy: the explosion of urban tribes. Three women of different ages and social circumstances (Alaska, well inside the punk wave, a postmodern Cecilia Roth who lives life madly, and Carmen Maura, the housewife in her forties married to a policeman) share the nights of a cool and exciting Madrid that is becoming a hub of modernity thanks to the mayor, Tierno Galvan. Almodovar would picture the subculture of la movida in a more elaborated way (but just as ascerbic) in his later work, Laberinto de pasiones (1982).

By the end of the 70s, along with the transition to democracy, a new social subject appeared in the Spanish scenario, labelled very significantly, ‘Tribus Urbanas’ (Urban Tribes). The communication media would soon devote great attention to the phenomenon, inciting campaigns of moral panic (like when a young mod was killed by a rocker) in tandem with commercial appropriation (like the reports advertising where to buy each tribe’s outfit). A teddy boy from Zaragoza wrote a letter to the director to remind him that ‘the only tribes in the world are the blacks of Africa’. But a disabled punk (‘el Cojo’) became famous thanks to television for breaking a street light with his crutch during the huge student demonstrations in 1987, which prompted this comment from a columnist: ‘Sociologists should give an explanation for this African and underdeveloped phenomenon’ (quoted in Feixa, 1988: 5). The institutional context of the time was characterised by the democratisation of the Youth Institute and the transfer of competence on youth to local councils and autonomous communities. In nearly all fields, one of the first initiatives of organizations was to promote youth studies, nearly always through opinion reviews, brilliantly analysed and criticised by Cardús and Estruch (1984) for the Catalan case. Paradoxically, during the peak of la movida, qualitative and testimonial studies that could explain the emerging youth cultures disappeared. Only at the end of the period do some studies show a shift in interest towards young people’s cultural consumption.

We can group the studies issued during this period into three fields: first, those focusing on youth countercultures in the 70s, be it for a theoretical balance (De Miguel, 1979, Moya, 1983) or historical reconstruction (Racionero, 1977, Vázquez Montalbán, 1985). In this sense, Romani’s (1982) contributions about hashish subcultures, Funes’ (1984, 1985) work on youth delinquency and the emerging cultures may be included. Second, studies based on quantitative methodologies start to highlight young people’s cultural consumption (Gil Calvo, 1985, Gil Calvo and Menéndez, 1985). The third field
encompasses some proto-ethnographical studies about the phenomenon of night
movidas and the emergence of urban tribes, like a pioneering article about the disco,
Rock-Ola, one of the wellsprings of Madrid’s movida (Muñoz, 1985), and a bachelor’s
thesis about youth subcultures in an average size city, which introduced the postulates
of the Birmingham School (Feixa, 1985).

In 1982, Isaías Díez del Río, director of a college in Madrid, published an article in
the Revista de Estudios de Juventud under the title ‘La contracultura’ (The
Counterculture) although it is really about a new type of youth movement, appearing in
Spain immediately after the transition to democracy, which was commonly called
‘pasotismo’. In the 80s, the most widespread vision of youth - nearly always analysed as
a homogeneous social sector, using a quantitative methodology, or described in opinion
essays – pictured a generalised lack of interest in social problems and the loss of any
form of revolutionary spirit which, according to analysts, had marked the preceding
generations. The central thesis of the study is that pasotismo is one of the many youth
movements appearing in the West as a product of and in response to the breakdown of a
society in crisis. Díez del Río takes the loss of interest in political militancy and social
battles on the part of the majority of the youth culture at the time as contradictions
embedded in society itself. Pasotismo is a lifestyle that symbolically protests through
new means of fighting against the values that institutions and the dominant culture are
trying to impose.

In 1985, sociologists Enrique Gil Calvo and Elena Menéndez published Ocio y
prácticas culturales de los jóvenes (Youth Leisure and Cultural Practices of Young
People), which is part of the Youth Report in Spain, promoted by the Youth Institute on
the occasion of the International Year of Youth. The authors suggested the following
definition of youth culture:

The problem is not that young people are more closely related among themselves
than with others: the problem is that their relationships are closed to the outside,
sealed off, totally enclosed; and such a closure traps each young person into the
group, not letting them out, establishing unsurpassable borders that separate the
comfortable inside of the centripetal group from the outside chaos and darkness,
where the young person is horrified to venture into. This could be called youth
subculture or something like it: what’s important however, is not the name, but
the facts that we want to illustrate with data in the next chapter’. (Gil Calvo and
Menéndez, 1985: 238)

Something similar would appear in Madrid in 1978 and would last until 1983: la
Movida. By analysing the composition of the music bands that identified with la
Movida, Gil Calvo and Menéndez tried to demonstrate their definition of a youth movement. For this purpose, they used an organization chart where they showed the relationship between the musicians of different groups, which was supposed to demonstrate that youth cultures were closed, impermeable groups.

Such a movement had an exclusively musical public expression (politics, ‘culture’ or ideology were absent): it was started, composed, promoted, developed and made to succeed by a bunch of young musicians and FM djs. The organization chart of the twenty music groups that composed this ‘modern’ or ‘new-wave’ movement during those five years can be seen in Fig. 16. Something is curious about it: only 30 young people, under the age of 25, composed the twenty different groups - simply the same people, friends among themselves […] flowed from one group to another […]. The world of the Madrid ‘modern’ ‘new wave’ in 1978-1983 were 30 people: totally closed to the outside, even declared enemies of other ‘musical/youth groups’ as closed as themselves (and these other enemy worlds of the modern world, were also perfectly visible due to their own closedness: rockers, heavies, punks, hippies. (Gil Calvo and Menéndez, 1985: 238)

After a considerable amount of data, figures and graphics, the whole of Calvo and Menendez’s conclusions can be summarised as follows: young people in the eighties devoted more time and money to leisure activities. Young people’s wealth and social class ensured that their leisure behaviour was not homogeneous. Social structure determines an unequal leisure culture; in the end, economy determines differences in young people’s cultural behaviour. The most interesting part of Calvo and Menendez’s work shows the importance of the young people’s purchasing power for their leisure opportunities. From a methodological point of view, the subject of cultural consumption can be envisaged by macro approximations from the class perspective. The image the authors project of youth cultures is largely from the outside - although the search for objectivity through figures and percentages coexists with ironic comments about certain youth cultural experiences:

It is not that young people close off their groups of equals like musical groups do: musical groups close up because they imitate real groups of real young people; the social structure of music groups is only a reproduction of the social structure of young people, and young people socially structure themselves in closed groups. (Gil Calvo and Menéndez, 1985: 240)

*Historias del Kronen* (Kronen Stories), the film by Montxo Armendáriz (1994) based on the novel by Alfredo Mañas (1989) shows the life of a group of upper class young people (*pijos*), their night-time adventures, their fresh styles and their uneasy feelings about life. Other films of the same time picture the birth of other forms of youth sociability: *El angel de la guarda* (1995) presents the life of a young mod, belonging to a family who sympathise with Franco’s regime, and who is in conflict with other young rockers. It is the time of the socialist government in Spain, when the generations that had led the fight against Franco are settling into power and view with suspicion the apathetical and apolitical young people, and see their aesthetics and ways of living as purely commercial and consumerist. From the point of view of youth cultures, this period is characterized by three different processes: the segmentation of youth cultures into many styles that appear like a shopping catalogue; the revival of the *pijo* (a way to openly recover a higher class identity); spearheading the night life with the generation of a new style: the *makinero* (between the proliferation of new clubs, the explosion of electronic commercial music and the results of synthetic drugs). The International Year of Youth (1985) was a milestone in studies about youth in Spain. The hegemony of opinion surveys was in crisis for internal (a methodological criticism of their gaps and excesses) as well as external reasons (changes in youth policies brought about by integral planning). A certain myth about youth of the past arose: old *progres* (progressives), now in places of power, idealise their rebel past and criticize the young people’s lack of argument and for living under the rules of consumerism - it is the

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6 We will meet in Ibiza, Mallorca, San Luis and Mahon/ We will dance in Valencia, Alicante, Gandia and Benidorm/ From La Escala to Playa San Juan/ In Cadaques, Sitges, Playa Libertad/ We will be the chosen in the temple of the Sea God (*Mediterráneo*).
hegemony of the pijo. A sociologist even suggested that the term ‘urban tribes’ be replaced by ‘shopping tribes’:

Those rebel tribes, inorganically organized, who invented cries like songs, who knew how to make a great to-do to create social uniforms. They invented a way of drinking, a way of eating, a way of sitting down, a way of walking, a way of talking or cheering, and dressing. They don’t have sense any more... Hippies were buried long ago... Pijos, on the contrary, are unconditional kings of big shopping areas, and they are certainly the hegemonic tribe in the 1990s. (Ruiz, 1994: 192-6)

Among the studies about youth cultures published during this period, three groups can be discerned: first, different essays based on theoretical formulations and historical contributions (Ucelay da Cal, 1987, Feixa, 1993); second, a series of local and police examinations of football hooligans and skinheads (Barruti, 1990/1993, Dirección General de Policía, 1993). The third group contains some ethnographical studies that question the categories in use and suggest new methodologies based mostly on life stories. Some of the thesis works here are outstanding (Gamella, 1989, Feixa, 1990, Adán 1992) or even international studies about punks and rastas (Sansone, 1988). Outside of the academic arena, some journalistic texts that contribute to the popular use of the term ‘urban tribes’ are published. For instance, the most popular Spanish newspaper (El País) devoted several reports to the subject, like an illustrated feature called ‘Y tú, ¿de qué vas?’ (And you, what’s the matter?) (El País Semanal, 5/10 1994).

In 1989 the linguist Francisco Rodríguez edited Comunicación y lenguaje juvenil (Communication and Juvenile Language), an anthology that gathered together some of the main contributions on youth cultures by Spanish researchers. The aim of all the essays, each one from a different perspective and academic area, is to describe and analyse the pattern of young people’s linguistic behaviour as a means of understanding their cultural expressions in general. The authors include anthropologists, sociologists, linguists, experts in communications, etc. The theoretical, methodological and thematic perspectives are diverse, although the red thread running through all the studies is the analysis of language as a system of symbols in relationship to significant and symbolic elements of youth cultures (music, clothes, cultural practice, etc.) and to other channels of communication such as fanzines, comics, graffiti, etc. Among all the articles, we want to highlight the analysis of fashion as a communication system amongst youth in the 1980s (Rivièrè, 1989). The article’s author is a journalist who analyses the transformation process that fashion followed from the beginning of the 20th century and its appropriation by young people who would radically transform its significance. First,
they broke the old pattern of fashion as a tool for telling social class; second, they desexualised it: boys’ and girls’ styles became much more similar. Another interesting element was the rejuvenating power that fashion had - and still has:

In the 80s everyone wants to look (be) young to the point that social marginalisation occurs in all cases, to the those who, for their age, cannot look young any more. The outfit is the main /.../vehicle for eternal youth. Although a juvenile outfit does not hide certain effects of old age, the young people’s trends (for our mass and communication culture’s adults) are imperatively categorical in their most generic features, both formal and mental: the compulsory physical rejuvenation brings along a certain cultural infantility. (Rivière, 1989:73)


Ya ves, mi edad es tan difícil de llevar mezcla de pasión e ingenuidad, difícil controlar...
Yo soy sólo un adolescente, pero entraré en tu muerte pisando fuerte, pisando fuerte
(Alejandro Sanz, ‘Pisando fuerte’, 1994)

The okupa movement is worrying Spain’s security forces, who are convinced that the disturbances in Barcelona on the 12th are closely linked with the Basque street fight or ‘kale borroka’ (…) Police reports indicate that these groups make decisions in an assembly that very few attend, and then the orders are passed to the rest of okupas orally… In Catalonia, okupas and radical nationalists add up to about 2200 young people, while skins and the extreme right number about 200 (La Vanguardia, 17/10 1999).

Taxi, one of the latest films by Carlos Saura (1999), depicts the life of a group of young pelaos who are manipulated by an extreme right-wing taxi driver. They attack immigrants and homosexuals, and they get as far as murder. Pelaos are the Spanish version of naziskins, Neo-nazi young people getting into the skinhead movement and carrying out some dramatic actions (somehow linked to the football hooligans) according to the Spanish press in the late 80s (although the pelaos don’t really become socially well known until the mid 90s, because of the greater social concern about the arrival of new waves of immigrants). They coincide with the explosion of okupas, the Spanish version of the squatters who appeared after 1968, linked to the occupation of empty houses and to experimenting with new alternative and countercultural ways of living together. October 12th, the festival of El Pilar, is the day to celebrate hispanity. During the last decade, extreme right groups have used this date to make their notorious
presence felt in public. The square Països Catalans has been the meeting place of extremists, although those who are nostalgic about Franco have been giving way to the new waves of skinheads. Every year there’s *movida* (trouble), but in 1999, the trouble did not only involve the skins. In the nearby neighbourhood of Sants some anti-fascist groups organised an alternative demonstration as a protest against recent attacks by skinheads. The press mentioned ‘about 600 extreme young people […] communists, *okupas* and radical independents’ (*El País*, 14/10 1999).

The presence of about 250 anti-riot policemen (who had officially appeared to prevent any contacts between demonstrators from both sides) could not stop an ‘explosion of rage’ from some alternative young people, expressed in the form of damage to public facilities, some bank offices, real estate, and recruiting agencies. During the following days, communication media reproduced the police reports about serious material damage, vandalism, organised violent groups and urban guerrilla tactics. All reports underlined the participation of the *okupa* movement, who had called for mobilization and, according to the police, had led the battle from their two emblematic ‘social centres’. These facts described the peak of the confrontations between two of the present-day youth subcultures on the urban scene: squatters (known in Spain as *okupas*) and skinheads (known in Spain as *pelaos*).

From the social point of view, certain structural problems such as the new immigration, limited access to housing for youth, and the nocturnisation of youth leisure open spaces for renewed youth culture activities. From the media point of view this phenomenon is shown by newspapers and campaigns reflecting moral panic nearly always following the same pattern: news event – media amplification – creation of a social problem – feedback in youth cultures – new news event. As regards social control, the different police bodies (state, autonomous and local) organise specific brigades, and sometimes issue reports that reach the press. In universities, ‘urban tribes’ as a subject attains status and starts to be the subject of numerous publications (a decade after the advent of the actual phenomenon). Publications vary a good deal in quality and are based on studies done previously, often with an outdated theoretical methodological approach. In spite of this, they make up a corpus of publications, theories and empirical data that will contribute to consolidate an ‘object’. Thematically, these studies have three prominent features: a non-critical concept of ‘urban tribes’ and a stereotyped
catalogue of different styles; a denial of political conflict (presented as a set of aesthetic conflicts); and a removal of differences (i.e., ‘all skins are the same’).

Among the many publications of this period, three tendencies are discernable: general essays, applied reports and ethnographic studies. Some publications try to show a general view of the different urban tribes, although they are nearly always based on very limited research in terms of time and space. By chronological order of edition, we can mention the contents of the review *Cuaderno de realidades sociales*, devoted to urban tribes, which includes monographs, general papers and others based on local studies (VV.AA., 1995; Adán, 1995, Delgado 1995, Donald, 1995); a journalist essay based on an amusing musical description (Colubi, 1997); an original sociological monograph about youth taste according to Bourdieu’s theories (Martínez and Pérez, 1997); a pseudo-ethnographic book about several urban tribes (Aguirre and Rodríguez, 1998); and finally a book based on the life stories of two punks from Catalonia and Mexico, which argues in favour of replacing the model of urban tribes with that of youth cultures (Feixa, 1998).

Public institutions and forces of order have commissioned applied studies concerning three problems caused by urban tribes and perceived as more serious: urban violence (*pelaos*), urban moods (*okupas*) and synthetic drugs (*makineros*). Regarding violence, there have been a few unpublished reports (Ministerio de Justicia e Interior, 1995; Injuve, 1998) and some attempts to understand it (Martín Serrano, 1996). Most of these publications arise from conferences about ideology, violence and youth organised by the Youth Institute (Dirección General de la Guardia Civil, 1998). Regarding *okupas*, some studies reproduce an institutional or in-group point of view (Heruzzo and Gretzner, 1998; Navarrete 1999). Regarding dance cultures, Gamella and Alvarez, (1997) published a book about synthetic drugs, commissioned by the Plan Nacional sobre Drogas. The first qualitative ethnographic research results, the fruit of serious field work and a direct knowledge of the international literature about the question began to be published. We must also mention some studies about extremists and skinheads (Adán, 1996; Casals, 1995), punks (Feixa, 1998, Porrah, 1999), *makineros* (Feixa and Pallarés, 1998), *okupas* (Costa, 1998, VV.AA., 1999/2000) and heavies (Martínez, 1999). Other research does not focus on a group but on an aspect of youth culture, like language (Pujolar, 1997), or lifestyles (Ruiz, 1998).
In 1996 Pere-Oriol Costa, José Manuel Pérez and Fabio Tropea published *Tribus Urbanas* (Urban Tribes), a book that would become a best-seller. The text is defined by its authors as an essay. In other words, it is the fruit of a piece of research, the results of which are not presented as such, but used to construct a narrative text addressed to a broader public, with the aim of spreading knowledge of the phenomenon called ‘urban tribes’. The three authors come from the Faculty of Communication Sciences of the Universitat Autònoma of Barcelona, where the theoretical perspective of this research stems from. Although the authors’ main aim is said to be disseminating knowledge about the phenomenon of urban tribes, when they list the theoretical approaches from different disciplines used to examine youth cultures, the subject of the work is defined as urban violence and tribes as a phenomenon. This places them within the tendency to see youth styles from a stigmatising perspective; for example, they quote relevant key concepts in neuro-psychiatry (syndromes, paranoids and schizoids) and criminology (deviant behaviours).

The main sources for the book are both internal and external. Internal sources include the testimony of the protagonists, and external sources include the communication media, and agents of public order and the penitentiary system. All of these are considered key informants for the qualitative interpretation of youth cultures. The work methodology is therefore defined as qualitative or, according to the authors, the data were gathered by means of observation techniques and in depth interviews. Data to describe the symbolic universe and values of the youth movement and ‘the compulsive construction of identity from individuals with an evident affection-relational deficit’ (Costa et al., 1996: 17) were indeed collected through field-work. Describing the theoretical framework and designating all youth movements as a ‘neotribal’ phenomenon, and therefore, its members as ‘asphalt indigenous’, summarises the meaning of ‘urban tribes’: a set of specific rules according to which young people model their image. The tribe’s development is like a small mythology; their representative games are closed to ‘normal’ individuals; their differences from and with other young people are made evident, and their identification with the group takes the form of the contradiction of a uniform dressing up. All ‘urban tribes’ constitute a potential factor of social agitation and disorder and their aesthetics show a desire for aggressive self-expression (Costa et al., 1996: 91).
From the perspective of ethnography, the book includes an inventory of the characteristics, ethics and aesthetics, spectacular styles. Then, a whole chapter is devoted to the most belligerant of the movements: the skinheads. The description is constructed with pieces of information about the features that, according to the authors, are characteristic of the group: their aesthetics, radicalism, rituals and violence. The authors pretend to establish a reality which, according to their research, happened to be more complicated than is usually stated. But the real result of reading the ethnographical pages is even more confusing than official and media statements indicate. There are many inexactitudes in the book, among which the most remarkable, are to be found in common discourse about skinheads. The punk movement, arising in England at the end of the seventies, favoured the revival of skinheads, who had disappeared from the urban English cultural core a few years before. The commercialisation of punk, as music style and as a youth group made way for Oi! in Spain - music that gathered together all the skinheads and punks who rejected the commercialisation of the original punk message. From the beginning, both youth cultures had a tight relationship as regards music. Many Oi! gangs of were and are composed of punk and skinheads, and have their own concerts and bars where they can listen to music. Oi! and its supporters have no relationship at all with the extreme right wing or the skinheads that shared its values, which distorted the original skin vision of the universe. The book has few interesting theoretical contributions: prejudices and previous values influence the final result too heavily; theoretical frameworks are outdated and demonstrate little knowledge of the international literature. The ethnography is poor and it is not clear how the filed work was carried out or who obtained the data. Nevertheless, the book had one undeniable merit: it presented the full range of a subject that had been minor until then.


Me llaman el desaparecido
Que cuando llega ya se ha ido
volando vengo volando voy
deprisa deprisa a rumbo perdido
Cuando me buscan nunca estoy
cuando me encuentran ya no soy
el que está enfrente porque ya
me fui corriendo más allá.
(Manu Chao ‘Clandestino’, 2001)

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8 They call me the disappeared/ The one who arrives and is gone/ I fly back and forth/ Fast in a lost track/
They never find me when I’m sought/ When they find me I’m not any more/ The one in front/ ‘cause I
Mixture and union, this could be seen in el Sot on Saturday night, and the most flabbergasting proof of it was from... los perros. If bogus street tramps with scarfs on their necks and fleas on their back monopolise the canine contribution to argument, the antiglobalisation verbena of el Sot you could also see small pet dogs, little woolly ones without any fleas on, with shiny belts. Whoever wanted to limit argument to neohippies or neopunks had only to look on the floor to state such a canine variety, although it suggested just as a big human variety that would have ended with any a priorities... (‘La fiesta de la contestación’, Él País, 10/3 2002)

With the change of millennium, Spanish youth cultures’ characteristics may be generalised from three major tendencies. First, a certain activism in the public sphere is revived and reflected in the anti-globalisation movement and its cultural effects (from the singer, Manu Chao’s hybrid music to a neo-hippie trend). Second, the dance culture becomes symbolised in the different expressions of the fiestero movement (the most intellectualised around festivals like Sonar, digital publications and the techno style, the most ludic around new clubs and fashion style, and the most clandestine around rave parties). Third, internet opens a space to the generation of room cultures and virtual communities that express different styles (like cyberpunks and hackers), although the use of virtual space affects all groups. The impact of the various cultures’ distinctive elements is projected into different age groups. But what is most representative of this period is the fading of boundaries between the different subcultures, and the processes of social and symbolic syncretism (‘mixture and union’, using the terms of the journalistic report).

The number of studies published in Spain about youth cultures has been higher during the last three years than it had been during the three past decades. Different factors have contributed to this. First, the processes of cultural and media globalisation (including the broadening of young Spanish people’s access to internet) have consolidated the internationalisation of youth culture: the Spanish scene, together with the scenes of other peak places, is very heterogeneous, with a diversity of juvenile expressions (nearly all the tendencies on the planet are present in a big city nowadays, as can be seen in the photo annex below). Second, a new generation of young researchers, often trained abroad, are publishing studies about youth cultures they have lived themselves. Their research is comparable to the latest work on the international level (for instance, cultural studies are consolidated). Third, research on youth is being

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left quickly far beyond (‘Underground’).
institutionalised thanks to the creation of Research Observatories and Centres, the creation of third cycle university programs, and thanks to the consolidation of editorial collections about this subject. De Juventud, the academic journal of the Instituto de la Juventud (Youth Institute), has been re-issued, and some articles have appeared in international magazines; some specialised collections like Estudios sobre Juventud by Ariel (eds.), have been published (several books including the re-editing of classic books and anthologies of studies by Spanish authors: Rodríguez, 2002a, 2002b, Feixa, Costa and Pallarés, 2002; Feixa, Costa and Saura, 2002). The translation and re-editing of some representative international works about youth cultures (Willis, 1990/1998, Monod, 1968/2002) is important here, although the Spanish edition of a number of classic books still remains to be done – e.g. The Gang (Thrasher, 1926), Resistance through rituals (Hall & Jefferson, 1976) and Subculture (Hebdige, 1979).

We can isolate five significant tendencies in the studies published during this period. First, monographs about the two main youth groups of the previous decade (skinheads and okupas), in the form of journalist chronicles (Salas, 2002, Batista, 2002), militant denunciations (Ibarra, 2003), applied sociological analysis (González et al., 2003) and ethnographic comparisons (Feixa, Costa and Pallarés, 2001). Second, ethnographic studies about dance cultures (and their variants - makinera, techno, raver and fashion) in the form of surveys on the routes of ecstasy (Gamella and Alvarez, 2001); theoretical reflections about the process of globalization (Lasén & Martínez, 2001); anthologies about trends in electronic music (Blánquez and Morera, 2002); or journalistic features about the cathedral of the techno world: the disco Florida 135 (Gistain, 2001). Third, studies about the brand new social movements that characterise the emergence of alternative styles and antiglobos (Romaní and Feixa, 2002). Fourth, studies on specific groups focusing on some relevant thematic aspect like music (Viñas, 2001; Feixa, Saura and De Castro, 2003), gender (Martínez, 2002), communication (Tinat, 2002), tattoos (Porzio, 2002), media (Delgado, 2002), graffiti (Reyes and Vigara, 2002) or the history of youth cultures in the past (Cerdà and Rodríguez, 1999). Fifth, in depth studies on the impact of youth cultures on young people’s daily life, or in Willis’ terms, of their ‘common culture’ (Lasén, 2000; Rodríguez, Megías and Sánchez, 2002).

In 2001, Núria Romo published Mujeres y drogas de síntesis. Género y riesgo en la cultura del baile (Women and Synthetic Drugs. Gender and Culture in the Dance

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9 When this paper was in press, the book of Hebdige (1979) has been translated into spanish (25 years after its original publication).
Culture). Romo is an anthropologist and this publication is part of a wide analytical and descriptive effort. The research is located in the second half of the 1990s, when the dance culture related to drugs and car accidents became an omnipresent paradigm in institutional and media speech. Her primary aim was to analyse the drug consumption in the ‘fiesta’ and electronic music context for both men and women, later to focus on the interpretation of the women’s specificity from a comparative perspective: in other words, find out whether there were any differences in drug consumption between boys and girls. Examining the state-of-the art reveals that there is no research about the female role within youth cultures in relation to electronic music and synthetic drugs. This research was done to contrast different hypothesis under the form of open question to which the author tries to find an answer: what is the role of women within the youth culture associated to the consumption of ecstasy and other synthetic drugs; are there any gender differences in their perception or in the limiting strategies; what are the ‘style’ features of the female consumers; what are the differences in the strategies of obtaining substances and what is the role of women within the illegal synthetic drug market. The methodology was qualitative, although quantitative methods were used as well. The chief ethnographical locus was Costa del Sol, Andalucía, but also Madrid and Valencia. In order to deepen her knowledge of the phenomenon itself, Romo completed the field work with visits to other European countries like England or the Netherlands. This kind of observation technique allowed the researcher to introduce herself into the environment and become a group member. Her role within the youth culture was as an ‘active member’, taking part in their main activities, until she reached the status of ‘complete member’ like the rest, sharing their experiences with the same level of intensity and feeling (Romo, 2001: 46-47). This closeness to her informants allowed her to collect data not only from party environments, but in other circumstances, sometimes intimately related to the girls’ daily life (walking round, shopping, going to the cinema, meetings at home, etc). The researcher stated how her age, similar to that of the subjects under study, made it easy for her to approach them and to be accepted into the group. The main data base was obtained by the chain reference sample. This method, also called ‘chain ball’, consists of choosing a reference sample of informers in a small ‘group’, in respect of the general environment of the research, and chain contacts with the necessary informers to complete the table. Romo selected a few disk jockeys and party organisers in discos or rave parties. They became key informers who helped her to complete her network of contacts (Romo, 2001: 50).
Romo’s most interesting contribution is her description of intersubjective relationships from inside the group. The author describes elements of cultural consumption (the body, music, focal activities) through the concept of style, emphasizing not only material and immaterial elements in themselves, but in the ways they are used. The gender perspective must be evidenced too. The whole work is based on female specificities in relationship to synthetic drugs and parties. The author claims that all the literature devoted to female drug consumption describes them as doubly deviant: ‘Their experience is usually analysed as a deviation from the rule, an altered version of what would be considered as a ‘normal woman’ or ‘normal feminity’. Most of the specific research about women and use of drugs focus on heroin or cocaine consumers (Romo, 2001: 282). The stigmatisation that both academia and communication media reserve for this sort of research is reflected in the female perception of risk and the resources used to make their ‘transgression’ invisible. Such a strategy is totally opposed to men’s behaviour: girls usually take synthetic drugs in private, far from the gaze of other consumers, and avoiding public places like dancing venues, where male consumption increases. Finally, the anthropologist defines the phenomenon of the ‘de-virtuation’ of the youth dance culture, which permits us to talk about two different stages in the identity expression of the movement:

The popularisation and vulgarisation of the youth movement allows it to get to other sectors than the first ‘fiesteros’. A series of elements get into youth culture that affect relationships between the sexes and the role of women in youth culture. The increase of violence or the change into a more sexual environment makes women refrain from participating in these festive elements and establish new strategies of control to minimise risk situations. (Romo, 2001: 283)


*Young Mill:*

*We are family united as one Unidos por el Flow specialising*

*In locating talent and growing upcoming youth*

*They found me, groom me up from grass to grace*

*Queen Melody:*

*No hay horizontes ni fronteras que nos separen*

*No hay diferencias de creencias ni de mensajes*

*Unidos por el mismo sueño en una canción*

*(Unidos por el Flow, CD, 2008)*

They came for a better future to escape the ghosts they left behind. (Case of the prosecution during the trial in the case Ronny Tapias, 2005).
In search of respect, a documentary film by José González Morandi (2012) shows the stories of a group of migrant young boys and girls, members of different latino gangs present in Barcelona but with its roots in the United States, Ecuador, Central America and the Caribbean: Latin Kings & Queens, Ñetas, Mara Salvatrucha and Black Panthers. The film, produced by Luca Queirolo Palmas and Carles Feixa in the context of the European project YOUGANG, mixed-up reality and fiction: the story of an imaginary gang conceived by themselves is mixed with the process of producing this film in a workshop, discussing the script and the scenarios. The title of the film, proposed by the protagonists, evokes not only the classical book by Philipe Bourgois about the drug subcultures in New York (1995), but a concept explained by the American leader of ALKQN (Almighty Latin King and Queens Nation), King Tone, in an interview conducted in Stockholm (Queirolo 2012; Feixa, 2014): for marginalized youth, deprived from a political and material point of view, discriminated in daily life, searching respect in and through the Gang is one of the only ways to became adult in transnational settings.

La segunda mitad de la primera década del siglo XXI está dominada por un revival del primer prototipo juvenil estudiado en los 60s: las bandas. Pero en este caso no se trata de un actor local vinculados a procesos de migración interna, sino a un actor transnacional vinculado a migraciones internacionales, en concreto procedentes de América. Nos referimos a la temática de las denominadas “bandas latinas” (aunque en realidad su origen sea Norteamérica), que tratamos con más detalle a continuación. Significativamente, el término “banda” se convierte en paradigma de nuevas forma de socialidad juvenil, aplicándose desde este momento sólo a jóvenes de origen migrante, y limitándose en la mayoría de los casos a su vertiente criminal, mientras el término “tribus urbanas” se identifica sólo con jóvenes autóctonos, se convierte en algo vinculado a la moda o desaparece. La investigación académica va detrás del interés mediático y a menudo reproduce los mismos estereotipos, que en 2010 se trasladan al código penal, en el que se introducen las figuras de “asociación criminal” y “grupo criminal”, con menos garantías probatorias que la de “asociación ilícita”. Además de libros basados en fuentes policiales (Asociación de Jefes y Mandos de la Policía Local-Comunidad Valenciana, 2010; Botello y Moya, 2005), podemos citar varios estudios fruto de encargos de administraciones locales o autonómicas, algunos con visiones más
cercanas a la perspectiva criminal y otros más centrados en su dimensión cultural y de sociabilidad (Aparicio y Tornos, 2009; Feixa et al., 2006; Martínez y Cerdá, 2009; Scandroglío, 2009).\textsuperscript{10}

On February 2, 2013, one 16 years old teenager has been killed as he was leaving a park in Puente Vallecas, a suburb in Madrid. According to the subsequent police investigation, the murder was an act of revenge between the two major Latino gangs in Spain (Latin Kings and Ñetas). Two days later, another fight in Hospitalet de Llobregat, a suburb in Barcelona, resulted in four adolescents wounded and many arrested. These cases take us back to another assassination occurred ten years ago, on October 28th, 2003, when the Colombian adolescent Ronny Tapías was killed by a group of young people as he was leaving his school to go home in Barcelona. According to the police investigation at the time, the murder was an act of revenge by gang members (the Ñetas), that allegedly confused Ronny with a member of another gang (the Latin Kings) with whom they had fought a few days before in a disco. After a month, nine young people of Dominican and Ecuadorian nationality were arrested. Three juveniles were tried and convicted (including the perpetrator of the crime).

Following this event and others that took place later in Madrid and Barcelona, the Spanish Ministry of Home Affairs and the media alarms resulted in an increasingly stigmatized image of Latin American youth, and aroused a wave of "moral panic" that has not eased since. After the ghost of gangs, an unknown presence, the thousands of boys and girls arrived in Barcelona after 2000 (thanks to various processes of family reunification), exiled from their homes and social networks in one of the most critical moments of their lives (the always difficult transition to adulthood), and dealt with frightened adults (fathers and mothers, teachers, neighbors, policemen, ecc) because its legal and institutional borderlines. Following this disturbing presence, a spectrum: the new forms of sociability that cross geographical boundaries to rebuild global identities, and that we mistook with traditional gangs.

The Webster Dictionary defines “flow” as “a smooth uninterrupted movement”. Another meaning given is “a continuous transfer of energy”. In the hip-hop culture, the word is used to express movements and blend in a musical and bodily sense and, by
extension, also in a social and cultural sense. This is why the young Latin Kings and Ñetas, two immigrant collectives in Barcelona who were considered as dangerous “Latin gangs” until a few years ago, chose this term to name their project of conflict resolution through music. Their project was presented in January 2009 after two years' hard work in a youth centre in Nou Barris (a Barcelona working class neighbourhood with a long tradition in hosting immigrants). The presentation took place in the CCCB (Centre for Contemporary Culture of Barcelona) the city's laboratory for cultural creativity. About a hundred Latin Kings, Ñetas and other youngsters participated in the project, with the aim of producing a hip-hop, rap and reaggueton music CD and a documentary video about the experience, a book about their lives and their vision on the program and a theatre play. In words of Xaime López, Chispón, promoter of this initiative: “We've got to keep on creating life, but life from the life, 'cause otherwise it's starting over and over. It's an urban art project. The whole idea is that all young people participate, not just Latinos and Ñetas, but there's other ones: gipsies, Nigerians... Other people in the neighbourhood who fancy singing with them” (VVAA, 2008).

The story started in the same place, the CCCB, in November 2005, when our study about young Latin groups was presented under the auspices of Barcelona City Hall (XXX et al., 2006). The study revealed that although only a minority of Latin American youngsters belonged to gangs, the social imaginary had established a strong identification between Latin youngsters, gangs and hip-hop culture (the rapper look -“baggy clothing”- started to be mistaken as “being in a gang”). The study also revealed the capacity of cultural creativity among these transnational young people who were rediscovering “latinness” in Europe. The study presentation allowed Ñetas and Latin Kings to become exposed and to meet each other. This gave place to what was known as the “peace process”. As a result of the study, Barcelona City Hall and the Catalan Institute for the Human Rights, fostered a process of dialogue between the two main groups which gave rise to two new youth associations recognised by the Catalan Government: the Cultural Organisation of Latin Kings and Queens of Catalonia (established in August 2006) and the Ñetas Sociocultural, Sports and Music Association (established in March 2007). Once legalised, the associations wanted to show that, beyond the violence problems that had stigmatised them before, they were able to generate social and cultural projects for the whole of the city. The most successful one was Unidos por el Flow (United for the Flow). In the words of King Manaba, one of the
participants in the project: “Now we're together, not as enemies, but as if we'd known each other for ever, y'know? You just don't walk around as a Latin King, and a Ñeta just doesn't walk around as a Ñeta, we're all together with the flow, we're all for what I really like. I joined this project 'cause I'm also creatin' and I also have my own group, so, I like music and I'm into music production. It's the project from the base point, from creating a track to the artists' actually singing and rhyming the lyrics’. And in words of Julio Bravo, a Ñetas representative: “The important thing for me is that the message gets through. I want the message to get through for the whole world. I want everyone to see that we're together, that it's not all about war and fighting. All immigrants fight for the same purpose. The message is that there isn't any difference between us.”

The project was based on the principles of participative research including a group therapy technique -called refleaction- which approaches conflict resolution through music (appeared in the favelas in Brazil around the intercultural hip-hop). The process matured with the interaction of the educators that believed in it and who drove it at first, the young people in the Ñeta and King associations, some organisations that gave their material and moral support to it and other people that cooperated at given times, such as some academics, artists and political militants. The turning point was a massive concert that took place in June 2006, where about five hundred Latin Kings and Ñetas participated and ended up dancing together and rapping “peace, peace”, and the whole thing happened with no incidents. This showed that a group project involving both supposedly rival groups was possible. The project took shape by the end of 2006, but paradoxically didn't get any institutional funding, so the leaders had to seek for private funding from a record label (K Industria Cultural), where well known alternative artists like Manu Chao and la Mala Rodriguez cooperated. The record label took charge of the trainers (audio technicians, musicians, dancing and drama teachers), and of the technical process of producing the record and all the products. The songs were created through a complex process of interaction between the young participant's imagination in the different workshops (they're the authors of all the lyrics) the technical resources from the trainers and a process of production and masterisation carried out by the record label. Some professional musicians participated in some of the songs. The young people found it hard to understand that accomplishing an objective involved hard work, with weekly classes and rehearsals, and many of them gave up. But many others continued, and new enthusiastic young men and women from different origins joined in.
In recent years, coinciding with the dramatic effects of the financial crisis, which affects more strongly young people and migrants (and doubly young migrants), the so-called Latino gangs have become the protagonists of the crime news, although the magnitude of police interventions have spread, the names of the groups involved have expanded, and social rejection has become chronic before them. The Spanish media have reported extensively lurid details and images of a dozen massive police raids at major gangs, performed by different police forces, with hundreds of arrested, many of them teenagers or young, appearing always as ‘decommissioning’, ‘beheading’, ‘eradicating’ and ‘dismantling’ such groups (although these are quick to reunit and news almost never realize how many detainees are eventually tried and convicted).

Another collateral effect of the crisis was the increase of conflicts within the so-called “Latin Gangs”, the reduction of most social programs aimed at their members, and a change of the political-police discourse, going back to “zero tolerance”, considering these groups as “criminal organisations”, the end of mediation and the reinforcement of the “penal state”. In 2009 we gathered biographic narratives of migrant young people in 2009 within the framework of the project Eumargins, about inclusion and exclusion in seven different European cities. In 2011 we started the project Yougang, which had the aim of evaluating public policies on gangs in Barcelona and Madrid. The first results showed the stagnation of big groups that had participated in the constitution of the associations (Latin Kings and Ñetas); the emergence of smaller groups, some of which presented higher doses of conflict or were linked to organized crime groups; the increase of arrests, fights, murders and convictions; and the increase of the prison population linked to these groups (Bourgois, 1995; Queirolo, 2012).

The Time of Social Movements: Ninis & Indignados (2011-15)

The current crisis affected us disproportionately as young people and we began to see a very uncertain, if not excluded, future. Some media said we were the Lost Generation or the Ni-Ni Generation. I did not see it that way. At twenty-three, I’m a yes-yes. I study and work. (Gallego, 2011: 24-5)

(We advocate) a revolt of young people against youth (...) We had underestimated the desire of young people to enter adulthood against an entire social, political and cultural structure that wants to keep them in childhood (...) Capitalism deprives them of their own home and work, two things that children do not need and that, moreover, should not have (Youth Without Future, 2011: 10).
El 15 de mayo de 2011 Basilio Martín Patino, veterano cineasta español con obras relevantes sobre el franquismo, tanto de ficción (*Nueve cartas a Berta*, 1966), como documentales (*Canciones para después de una guerra*, 1976), había regresado a Madrid desde su Salamanca natal y escuchó desde su casa a los manifestantes que acababan de ocupar la céntrica plaza madrileña de Puerta del Sol. Sin pensárselo dos veces, bajó a la plaza, donde se encontró con el fotógrafo Alfonso Parra, colaborador habitual. Martín Patino convenció a técnicos de su equipo y empezó a filmar lo que se sucedía ante sus ojos, sin ser todavía muy consciente de qué repercusión tendría el movimiento y qué haría con las imágenes filmadas. Permaneció allí durante los dos meses que duró la ocupación hasta la marcha popular indignada que la clausuró, documentando el día a día de la sugestiva y fugaz utopía fundada en Sol. El resultado es *Libre te quiero*, una película emotiva y transparente sobre la #acampadasol.

Tras la ocupación de las plazas por parte del movimiento 15M, los estudios sobre culturas juveniles experimentan una triple transformación. En primer lugar, se politizan, volviendo a conectar los estilos de vida con las formas de participación en la vida pública, lo que en el plano teórico supone conectar los estudios culturales de raíz británica con las teorías sobre los nuevos movimientos sociales.11 En segundo lugar, se focalizan en el ciberespacio, explorando el uso de las TIC por parte de las nuevas generaciones y las formas emergentes de activismo en red (Feixa, 2014). En tercer lugar, se amplían a ámbitos de la vida cotidiana alejados de la visibilidad y la espectacularidad, abordando el estudio de los estilos de vida, que dejan de ser estrictamente juveniles y pasan a ser intergeneracionales. Las etnografías de las plazas indignadas, que abordamos a continuación, remplazan a las bandas latinas como objeto de estudio dominante. Significativamente, la *REJ* no dedica ningún número durante este periodo a la cultura juvenil, pero sí se incluyen varios artículos sobre el tema en los numerosos monográficos sobre los jóvenes en la red (Espín, 2011; Galán y Garlito, 2011) y en las pantallas (Muela y Baladrón, 2012; Chicharro, 2014).12

At the end of 2008 the international financial crisis exploded. Spain was one of the worst affected countries, with some social categories such as young people and

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11 Sobre la dimensión política de estas culturas emergentes, ver el artículo de Benedicto y Morán en este monográfico. [Nota de los Editores]
12 Se publican también varios estudios sobre ciberculturas, entre los que podemos destacar uno coordinado por Néstor García Canclini en el que se comparan las formas de creatividad juvenil digital en la ciudad de México y Madrid, con estudios de caso innovadores sobre trendys, músicos en red, coolhunters, VJs, hackers y autofotógrafos (Cruces, Fouce, Durán, Sama, González, Lasen; en García Canclini, Cruces y Urteaga, 2012).
immigrants being hit with special intensity (young immigrants were affected twofold). This can be summarised in two media archetypes that became research objects: on the one hand, the *ni-nis* (neet): young people that are supposedly not in education, employment or training: a metaphor of the dramatic consequences of unemployment. On the other hand, the *indignados* (indignant), young activists of the 15-M movement, who in May 2011 occupied the squares of most Spanish cities protesting against the political class, opposing the image of the neet to that of yeeep: the young person who is not only getting an education and is working in some sort of job -a precarious one-, but also finds the time to engage in a solidarity endeavour to find a way out of this social unrest. Before the crisis exploded some voices had raised concerns about the vulnerability of large groups of young people regarding employment, education, housing and reproduction. In spite of Spain being one of the European countries with the highest rates of economic growth, the booming housing market and the high immigration rates experienced since the mid-1990s caused educational and employment conditions for young people or their access to housing not to improve, and birth-rates to fall. This gave place to a generational stereotype called the *mileurista* (the well prepared young person who earns less than 1000 Euro per month and therefore has difficulties to emancipate from his/her parents) (Soler, Planas and XXX, forthcoming). The most visible effect of this situation is the evolution of youth unemployment. Between 2008 and 2012 unemployment rates increased exponentially, although unequally according to age and migration. In 2012, 2 out of 10 adults, 5 out of 10 young persons and 7 out of 10 adolescents were unemployed. Regarding immigrants, rates were worse: 3 out of 10 adults, 4 out of 10 young adults and nearly 9 out of 10 adolescents were unemployed. Unemployment affects especially young immigrants and their families, especially those that arrive at a working age and can't find a job, and have no resources for education (not compulsory after the age of 16) (EPA, 2012).

The other side of the Ni-Nis coin are the young Indignant, also known in Spain as the 15-M movement. The former nickname refers to the title of a book by Stéphane Hessel (2010), a veteran French human rights activist, considered to have inspired the movement. The latter refers to the date of the occupation of the Plaza del Sol in Madrid (May 15, 2011). From the beginning the Indignant presented themselves as an alternative to the Ni-Nis, rejecting this label as stigmatising and abusive.
Following the initial surprise, the Indignant became a media image which, by contrast with the Ni-Nis, gained strong popular support, as some of their claims (such as foreclosure on mortgaged homes, criticism of the banking system, of political corruption and welfare cuts) were shared by large segments of the population. As with the Ni-Nis, the nickname came to refer to an entire generation, which was recognisable in those who camped out in the squares from May 15 to the end of July 2011. On the first anniversary of the movement, 15 May 2012, which had gone back to local neighbourhoods and initiatives, various studies began to appear, often conducted by young activists or participants in the protests, which addressed issues such as the role of social networks and communication technologies, new forms of political participation, cyberactivism and its connections with similar other movements, such as the Greek protests, the Arab spring and Occupy Wall Street (Trilla et al., 2011; Feixa et al., 2012; Fernandez-Planells, Figueras, Feixa, 2012). Last but not least, a further effect of the crisis has been the sharp decline in publicly-funded youth research: at a time when it is more necessary than ever to have real data on youth development, the institutes and observatories dedicated to promoting such research have suffered well above average cuts, affecting the number of studies commissioned and publications produced.

Final Remarks

[PAULA: It would be better that you write a new Conclusion replacing or updating this one]

Since the 1960s, the emergence of youth cultures in Spain is one of the signs of the intense transition processes within the country: the economic transition from scarcity to wealth; the social transition from a monolithic to a plural model; the political transition from dictatorship to democracy, and the cultural transition from puritanism to consumerism. The academic studies on the youth culture aspect of the transition process have to be linked to the ideologies and media messages that are built around the discourse, ‘youth as a problem’. Dominant discourses express, in each one of the stages, the changing tendencies that affect the whole of society, and the process of cultural modernisation and opening, as well as the fears and restrictions that this process causes in more conservative sectors (see Fornäs and Bolin, 1995, Nilan, 2004). Social reality is always far ahead of academic reality (academics usually analyse styles nearly a decade
after their historical development). The scientific production about youth cultures in Spain in this period has risen in quantity and quality. Although the increase is steady, the boom happened during the second half of the 1990s and continued after 2000, which can be seen in a spectacular output of books and articles. This demonstrates the consolidation of not only a critical mass of researchers (most of them belonging to young generations who do not always find a place in the university world), but also a group of readers composed of academics, educators, communication professionals, youth technical staff, parents or even members of youth subcultures (subjects under study are usually the first to read the books published about them).

We would like to end by commenting on some of the content, theory and methodology gaps in the studies on youth cultures in Spain. As regards content, the female presence is still largely marginal and authors are too influenced by media discourses about ‘youth as a problem’. For instance, most of the studies about the partying world are focused on drug consumption; very few approach electronic culture as a whole. Most of the studies about skinheads deal with neo-nazis and violence, while very few of them approach anti-racist skins or girls. Most of the work on okuapas (squatters) focus on the political and urban dimension, at the expense of the daily and affective dimension of the occupied dwellings. Most of the studies about immigrants concentrate on gangs and violence, often disregarding the cultural identity of these new citizens. Theoretically, studies still lack connections with emergent research tendencies on an international level. This is partly due to the scarcity of translations, but also to the marginalization of this sort of research (still considered a ‘minor’ subject by the academia). Besides, most authors still refer to urban tribes as separate units, without analysing their interactions and the processes of cultural hybridisation that they lead to. From the methodological point of view, in spite of the progress made in ethnography, its confusion with journalism is still too evident. In public discourse superficial chronicles by sensationalist journalists are more valuable than academic works based on long field work (but it’s also true that some professors write about youth cultures without doing direct research on the topic). The absence of studies based on life stories and biographies is surprising. Studies that define the relationships among minority

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13 The Revista de Estudios de Juventud (Spanish journal on youth studies) has recently devoted a ‘special issue’ to youth cultures, coordinated by Feixa (2004), with several contributions about different youth lifestyles based on field work by the new generation of young researchers: punks (Fouce, 2004), pijos (Tintat, 2004), heavies (Martínez, 2004) ultras (Adán, 2004), skinheads (Porzio, 2004), techno (Romo, 2004), okuapas (Costa, 2004), among other contributions (Gutiérrez, 2004, Reguillo, 2004, Nilan, 2004).
movements with more general tendencies within the world of youth are also scarce (and research about the digital world is another piece of unfinished business).

In 1968, Jean Monod (1968/2002) discovered that youth gangs constitute the central core around which the contemporary myths about youth have stuck their paper stars. A third of a century later, the dominant styles, class affiliations, gender composition and hegemonic discourses about youth cultures have changed, but the fascination and fear caused by the multicolour paper stars remain unchanged. These stars continue to fight to get free from the social myths about youth, which block the understanding that, as Erik Homburger Erikson said (1968/1980), youth crisis is nothing but a faint reflection of every adult generation’s crisis (the difficulties of parents to understand their children’s apparent extravagance, whether it be long hair or skin heads, short skirts or long dreadlocks).

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Glossary

Alternativos: Mixture of grunge style and antiglobalization movements.

Fiesteros: Young people that like dance music and attend discoteques, clubs and raves.

Golfos: Hooligans, spanish version of working class gangs.

Jipis: Hippies, spanish version of countercultures.

Makineros: Young people from working class origins, who like electronic music.

Movida: Night routes through leisure spaces in spanish cities.

Okupas: Spanish version of squatters.

Pasotas: Young people disenchanted with politics and moral values.
**Pelaos**: Spanish version of naziskinheads.

**Pijos**: Upper-class, conservative, fond of consumption young people.

**Progres**: Middle-class, leftist, politically engaged and culturally dissident young people.

**Punkis**: Spanish version of punks.

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