

## YOUNG PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

*Transnational Histories of Youth in the Twentieth Century.*

Edited by Richard Ivan Jobs and David M. Pomfret.

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*Transnational Histories of Youth in the Twentieth Century* is a collection of essays that addresses the ‘varied ways in which the emergence of international youth cultures and transnational globalization have been, and remain, mutually constitutive’ (16). The editors David Pomfret and Richard Jobs argue that young people and their travels, both real and symbolic, have been significant yet under-examined forces in the shaping of transnational globalization in the twentieth century. The twelve essays that form the volume feature cases from Asia, Africa, Latin America, Mexico, eastern Europe, and western Europe. These are grouped into three sections: Activities, Mobilities, and Identities. The sections address young people’s transnational encounters through formal associations; their experiences with traversing borders and initiating new mentalities by so doing; and, the meaning of youth, viewed through young people’s often societally-contested understandings of themselves as generational subjects.

The ‘Activities’ section features essays that examined young people’s encounters with transnationalism through formal associations. In Sayaka Chattani’s ‘Youth and Rural Modernity in Japan, 1900–20s’, for example, the author explores the distinctiveness of rural youth, an overlooked category in the sizeable field of Japanese youth studies. Rural youth were not simply young people who lived in the Japanese countryside, but were more specifically understood by their champions and critics as those young men who belonged to formalized village youth associations known as *seinendan*. Similarly, Elena Jackson Albarrán’s ‘Boy Scouts Under the Aztec Sun’ chronicles the separate marches of three Mexican Boy Scouts from Mexico City to New York City in the 1960s. Again, their membership in a formalized youth association like the Boy Scouts provided both a logistical framework for the continental marches and a means for understanding the marchers as being young. In effect, the four essays in ‘Activities’, which examine youth associations in rural Japan, race and the Boy Scouts organization in Mexico and the US, the impact of Marxist internationalism on British science students of the 1930s and 1940s, and the opportunities for new forms of gender expression that the Girl Guides provided to indigenous girls and women in British Malay, each look at youth in relation to activity groups and, in so doing, assign the status of youth according to the organizations for which individuals were eligible.

The ‘Mobilities’ section features essays on youth migrations and their consequences for forming new political imaginaries. David Pomfret’s study of anticolonial Vietnamese youth shows how traveling between Vietnam and France troubled certain notions of the relationship between colony and empire. Ivan Jobs’ essay examines the role of trans-European backpacking culture in the making of an idea of a shared European identity in the aftermath of the Second World War. In Valeria Monzano’s essay, ‘On the Revolutionary Road: Youth, Displacement, and Politics in the “Long” Latin American Sixties’, the author

argues that the cross-class explorations of Argentinian, Chilean, and Uruguayan youth into the worlds of impoverished South Americans were crucial to the formation of generational consciousness among Latin American young men and women. Africanist scholars may be particularly interested in Andrew Ivaska's essay, 'Movement Youth in a Global Sixties Hub: The Everyday Lives of Transnational Activists in Dar es Salaam', which features oral histories with African-American and Caribbean nationals who had been invited to serve in Tanzania when they were in their twenties and thirties. Ivaska's interviewees recalled the importance of Pan-African networks and programs like the Pan-African Skills Project in the formation of young Pan-African consciousness and Tanzania's national development agenda.

Finally, the essays in the 'Identities' section reflect on youth subjectivities, contestations around the category of youth, and the ways in which young people's self-understandings were shaped by transnational connections formed through migration, popular culture, and media. For example, Fabio Lanza's 'Deng's Children: Chinese "Youth" and the 1989 Movement' explores the proliferation of meanings of youth, some ennobling and others denigrating, that rose up around the 1989 Tianamen Square crisis. Lanza argues that just when students emerged at the forefront of political agitation in the People's Republic of China, and the category of youth held the possibility of serving to identify new political subjects, it was strategically deployed by political elites to depoliticize and delegitimize the ideas and actions of a young and critical class. Paul Silverstein's essay, 'A Transnational Generation: Franco Maghribi Youth Culture and Musical Politics in the Late Twentieth Century', considers the making of a Kabylie musical youth culture through the piecing together of transnational music forms, such as rai, hip-hop, rock, and other musical influences that mark uniquely Kabylie experiences of Arabization, colonialism, ghettoization, and diasporization.

Key to appreciating these transnational histories are the efforts of young people to seek out geographically distant others, either physically or symbolically, through marches or music, on the basis of a sense of a kind of generational identification. In various ways, the collected essays explore how youth formed generationally-grounded identifications across the borders of modern spatial units like the colony, nation, or even empire. Sometimes these identifications were one-sided; as youth reached across geographical divides towards their generational peers, there were no guarantees of reciprocation. Mexican Boy Scouts who marched from Mexico City to New York City encountered novel experiences of racialization from their US counterparts. Young African Americans in Dar es Salaam encountered a complicated reception that, despite its positive dimensions, also came to include a ban on their music – soul music – which authorities charged with adversely influencing Tanzanian youth. African Americans also faced resentment for occupying the professional positions that many had been enticed with to come to Tanzania.

*Transnational Histories of Youth in the Twentieth Century* considers implements of modernity and processes of transnational globalization, ranging from the cassette tape, the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, the Cultural Revolution, the Black Power Movement, decolonization, neoliberalism, and racial repression, all of which variously encouraged the forging of generationally based solidarities that traversed nation, colony, and empire.

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