

# **Local Identity and Transnational Citizenship. Community-Based Participation among Paraguayan Youth and the Second Generation in Two Cities: Buenos Aires and Misiones**

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In my research, I explore the city that migrant youth “make” and the landscapes of power that shape their life trajectories. I examine the ways in which Paraguayan youth inhabit the city in Buenos Aires, as members of a long-standing diaspora affected by xenophobia and racism given the history of neo-colonial relations in processes of South-South migration.

Despite living in polluted and segregated areas, migrant youth build ways of subaltern urbanism, especially young women through dense community networks and popular feminism. My collaborative ethnography, based on Participatory Action Research, seeks to unsettle certain anthropological canons of the Global North with epistemologies of the South. In addition, my feminist research approach aims to promote change toward the elimination of social oppression by producing “knowledge practices” with and for migrant youth and their families.

In doing so, I am producing biographies with different generations of young. Some of them came to the country from an early age as part of their family’s migration, or by young adults following their own projects. Others were born in Argentina, never emigrated but share with their mothers and fathers a culture linked to Paraguay.

I build their biographies from a generational perspective of migration that consider the genealogical, age and sociopolitical dimension. I also am interested in the histories of inhabited spaces made or transformed by subjects using interdisciplinary perspectives on urban history and geography.

I find the School’s topics to be closely related with my research project for two major reasons related with knowledge production and knowledge translation. Collectively, I conducted interviews with students, teachers and women’s organizations using Participatory Action Research methodologies. Furthermore, their stories deal not only individuals but also with their communities in the places they left and the places they inhabit in the destination country. This approach offers alternatives to address the discussion of the individual/collective in the construction of biographies and in the production of knowledge from them, but also questions.

Is it the collective construction of biographies possible? Not just among researchers but together with the subjects with whom we investigate. ¿How to generate feedback between biographies built with academic knowledge and biographies based on community knowledge that is expressed in other formats, beyond writing? ¿How would that translate into academia and, at the same time, in the community?

I also wonder how that dialogue with my own anthropological analysis within the framework of a thesis that seeks to innovate disciplinary canons, when Participatory Action Research was always peripheral in general to the scientific production system at the national level and in Anthropology itself.

**Short Biography:** Débora Gerbaudo Suárez has a BA in Social Anthropology from the Buenos Aires University (UBA) and a MA in Social Sciences from the National University of General Sarmiento (UNGS-IDES) where she studied migrant youth and their transnational political practices in the global South. As a fellow from the National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET), she is currently doing a PhD in Social Anthropology at National University of San Martín (UNSAM-IDAES) where she analyzes the intersections between migrations, youth and urban space among Paraguayans living in metropolitan and intermediate Argentine cities.