

Methodological reflections on the historiography of the student movement¹

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Abstract

If scientific methodology is tasked with improving the investigation of issues, the analysis of studies enshrined in the Social Sciences field shows gaps that, once filled, would expand the view on the phenomenon. There are studies that emphasize the description of narratives, actors and events, to the detriment of processes structured throughout a long period, such as the nuances of culture and subjectivism. This study consisted of a review based on publications about the student movement in 1968 in Colombia, Mexico and Brazil. The hypothesis validates the repeated analytical standard, but presumes that it is possible to improve the record of the phenomenon. The review of scientific literature identifies causes, factors and elements involved in the processes. Among the results, common variables that interconnect in political movements: actor profile, contexts, event dynamics, communicational aspects and institutional aspects.

Keywords

Social movements and education. University crisis. Scientific methodology. History of education.

Reflexões metodológicas sobre a historiografia do movimento estudantil

Resumo

Se a metodologia científica tem a tarefa de melhorar a investigação das questões, a análise dos estudos consagrados no campo das Ciências Sociais mostra lacunas que preenchidas ampliarão a visão do fenômeno. Existem trabalhos que enfatizam a descrição de enredos, atores e eventos, em detrimento de processos estruturados por um longo período, como as nuances da cultura e dos subjetivismos. O trabalho consistiu em sua revisão com base em publicações sobre o movimento estudantil de 1968 na Colômbia, México e Brasil. A hipótese valida o padrão analítico repetido, mas assume que é possível melhorar o registro do fenômeno. A revisão da literatura científica identifica causas, fatores e elementos envolvidos nos processos. Entre os resultados, variáveis comuns que se interconectam em movimentos políticos: perfil do ator, contextos, dinâmica de eventos, aspectos comunicacionais e impactos institucionais.

Palavras-chave

Movimentos sociais e educação. Crise universitária. Metodologia científica. História da educação.

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Reflexiones metodológicas sobre la historiografía de movimiento estudiantil

Resumen

Si la metodología científica tiene la tarea de mejorar la investigación de las preguntas, el análisis de los estudios consagrados en el campo de las Ciencias Sociales muestra vacíos que llenados ampliarían la visión del fenómeno. Hay trabajos que enfatizan la descripción de tramas, actores y eventos, en detrimento de procesos que se estructuran durante un largo período, como los matices de la cultura y los subjetivismos. El trabajo ha consistido en su revisión basada en publicaciones sobre el movimiento estudiantil de 1968 en Colombia, México y Brasil. La hipótesis valida el patrón analítico que se repite, pero supone que es posible mejorar el registro del fenómeno. La revisión de la literatura científica identifica causas, factores y elementos intervinientes en los procesos. Entre los resultados, variables comunes que se interconectan en los movimientos políticos: perfil del actor, contextos, dinámica de eventos, aspectos comunicacionales e impactos institucionales.

Palabras clave

Movimientos sociales y educación. Crisis universitaria. Metodología científica. Historia de la educación.

1 Introduction

Education for human emancipation and for the exercise of democracy consists of desire, utopia and reason for philosophical reflections and struggles in the political field, according to Vasconcelos, Fialho e Lopes (2018), because thinking about youth is considering their naturally revolutionary dimension, in which rebelliousness and challenge propel them to intervene in culture and act in politics (VASCONCELOS; FIALHO; LOPES, 2018). In 1968, in the face of contradictions in the dynamics of capitalist development, a big movement involved young people from different continents in a massive, ideological and radical mobilization for democracy, autonomy and freedom (ACEVEDO, 2004; FUENTES, 2008).

Student movements can be understood as the reaction of a group when faced with changes in systems' structures (ACEVEDO, 2015). The sociopolitical expression of discontent involves a set of interests, values and ideas that are converted into collective actions (CRUZ, 2016; DELGADO, 2013), but the actions comprise dilemmas resulting from the confrontation between the civilian and bureaucratic classes. In this sense, the dynamics of collective organization and action face internal dialectics (ACEVEDO, 2004)

in which divergence, conflict and confrontation are present between individuals and groups (BRAGHINI; CAMESKI, 2015).

In the 1950s, urban expansion increased the demographics of cities, decreased the number of jobs and required investments in Education (MARINI, 1970), but it was in the 1960s, in the height of the Cold War and of the advance of imperialism in Latin America, that the politicization of students in Colombia (ACEVEDO, 2012, 2015; CRUZ, 2016; HERNÁNDEZ, 2007; SOSA, 2018), Mexico (ALLIER, 2009; DELGADO, 2013; DONOSO, 2017; FUENTES, 2008; JIMÉNEZ, 2011) and Brazil (BRAGHINI; CAMESKI, 2015; MORAES FREIRE, 1989; PITTS, 2014) incorporated militance in the perspective of class struggles to demand the democratization of Higher Education, autonomy and more public funding for Education (MARINI, 1970).

The studies consider economic data (MARINI, 1970), social context (DONOSO, 2017; MORAES, 1989), cultural aspects (FUENTES, 2008) and political context (PITTS, 2014) to discuss the causes and consequences of Latin American student movements in the heart of the revolutionary global events that began with the French student movement in May of 1968. The preliminary analysis of the upheaval in Colombia, Mexico and Brazil highlights common elements, such as the interference of agencies from the USA in local educational policies and the repression of demonstrations with extreme violence, but identifies specific characteristics in each nation's movement, related to protest methods, demands and political consequences, as well as achievements for the student body and Higher Education institutions.

Considering what was presented, the main objective of this study is to analyze the methodology of the historiography of important student movements. In Colombia, we emphasize the movement The Students' Minimum Program, from 1968 to 1971; in Mexico, the student movement from 1968, which culminated in the Tlatelolco tragedy; and, in Brazil, the student movement from 1968, the height of the military dictatorship, encompassing contextual elements/sociopolitical factors and verifying differences/similarities in approaching data between different studies. Furthermore, we identify possible gaps in the authors' research, noticing the relevance of fulfilling the task of systematization of student movements. Lastly, we discuss a work agenda that includes the approach, procedures and data interpretation in the historiography of student movements.

2 Methodology

The basic description with strategic ends hopes to expand knowledge in order to contribute to the processes of systematization of research for historiographic purposes. The selection of texts for the study was carried out through a systematized search in sources concerning the student movements of 1968 in Colombia, Mexico and Brazil. Among the selected texts, we highlight 14 scientific articles, a Master's dissertation (JIMÉNEZ, 2011), a monography for a graduation course in History (DELGADO, 2013) and an essay shaped as a report (FUENTES, 2008). In addition to scientific standard texts, the reflections and memories revisit contexts and expose the Latin American student movements. For the selection, we prioritized the documents that fulfilled certain criteria, as follows:

- Recent historiographic focus, except for contextual documents (MARINI, 1970; MORAES, 1989), practically contemporary to the events;
- Regarding factors and elements that intervene in the development of student movements;
- Containing journalistic sources of information (even if not exclusively);
- Verifiable (possibility of access), contrastable and referenced (cited by the literature on the theme);
- In the countries' language of reference (Portuguese and Spanish);
- Balanced among the three countries: six papers about Colombia, five about Brazil and five about Mexico, in addition to a benchmark study for Latin America (MARINI, 1970).

The preliminary reading highlights factors, elements, causes and consequences which are objectively treated as historic premises. The structures are analyzed in their communicational aspects, i.e., from the studies that record the student movements of 1968 in Colombia, Mexico and Brazil, we separate information about event contexts, situations and dynamics, such as measurable and inferable data on which the communications that characterize the phenomenon in each country are supported.

It is natural to observe that there are studies which reveal a quantitative approach (MARINI, 1970), whereas in others the analysis is carried out through figures of speech, cultural nuances and subjectivism (ACEVEDO, 2004; FUENTES, 2008). In order to

organize the discussion, the systematization sorts the results from the student movements separately, beginning with the selection of quantitative documents per country and, later, the qualitative.

To facilitate the reading of objective data, the tables inform part of the results by each author and their respective studies, communicating information from the categories most discussed in those studies, such as the expansion of enrollments and of the education network, students' profile and number of student demonstrations and confrontations with repressive forces. Further objective data are found in the exposition following each table and are recovered to support the analysis and discussion.

The historic method encompasses basically two operations: analysis and synthesis (BARROS, 2012). During the analysis, we confront the results from each study in order to compare similarities and differences between data (SOSA, 2018). The initial questions lead us to overcome the hermeneutical stage based on the compared methodology (SOSA, 2018). Confronting documents from the different student movements emphasizes environment and circumstances, according to Sosa (2018, p. 37), “[...] *con el fin de identificar regularidades y disparidades en los factores contextuales [...] donde se originó el ciclo de movilizaciones estudiantiles*”, considering the attention given by the authors.

The analysis turns to the structure that communicates student movements from each country, based on the hypothesis that there are similarities in the data about the same phenomenon in different countries, so that “[...] *las similitudes relevantes de los casos a comparar [...] sirvan como la base orientadora para determinar las diferencias entre cada uno*” (KOCKA, 2002, p. 49 *apud* SOSA, 2018, p. 38). In other words: on one hand, confronting the structures evidences the recurring pattern of data and, on the other hand, the data that are unique to each description, exposing the gaps in communication.

Comparative description implies noticing similarities and differences between the structures of the studies and results in the synthesis, stage which collects the concrete and abstract elements to form a coherent whole, restoring a path with methodological alternatives for historiographic studies.

Intending to contribute to future discussions about the phenomenon, in the end we propose a work agenda, combining approaches and procedures that aim to update and resignify the practice, considering the object with its entirety and depth.

3 Results

3.1 Quantitative approach to student movements

The analysis of studies about the Latin American student movements of 1968 in Colombia, Mexico and Brazil compels the investigation of quantifiable variables prioritized by the authors, according to the systematization that highlights the expansion of enrollments and of the education network, governmental investment in education and nuances of students and of activism.

Regarding the educational context in Latin America, what mobilizes Marini's attention (1970) is the contradiction noticed when investigating the numbers of the system expansion in the 1950s and 1960s with the allocation of resources, as shown in the data of Table 1.

Table 1 – Statement of categories and their respective absolute and/or relative numbers regarding Latin America

Category	Marini (1970)
Expansion of enrollments	Between 1956 and 1965: 60% (primary school); 111% (secondary school); 92% (higher education).
Governmental monetary investment in education	Between 1955 and 1960: primary school 90% (inputs and salaries) and 10% (infrastructure and capital); secondary school 95% (inputs and salaries) and 5% (infrastructure and capital); higher education 90% (input and salaries) and 10% (infrastructure and capital).

Source: Prepared by the authors (2019).

Table 1 shows the expressive growth in Education availability in Latin America on all education levels, but the goal undertaken by governments to invest 4% of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) didn't come to fruition, highlighting the contrast between the number of openings and the distribution of investments (MARINI, 1970).

In that sense, Table 2 shows the expansion of the Colombian educational system throughout the 1960s and 1970s based on the categories that were prioritized in the analysis of different scholars.

Table 2 – Statement of categories and their respective absolute and/or relative numbers regarding Colombia by analyzed author

Category	Acevedo (2012)	Acevedo (2015)	Cruz (2016)	Hernández (2007)
Expansion of enrollments in higher education	In the case of the Industrial University of Santander (UIS), it goes from 20, in 1948, to 5,175 in 1977.	Until 1974, 142,000: 75,500 (public) and 66,500 (private).		
Expansion of the higher education network		Founding of 24 institutions (public and private).		Multiplication of the availability of private education between 1965 and 1975.
Students' socioeconomic data			In 1965: 83.3% (middle class); 7.6% (upper middle class); 6.7% (upper class); 5.4% (lower class or lower middle class).	

Source: Prepared by the authors (2019).

Since the 1940s, the expansion of education is a highlight in the understanding of the Colombian educational context. The Industrial University of Santander (UIS, in Portuguese) began its activities on March 1st, 1948, timidly, with a group of students “[...] *que no superó la veintena, entre tres y cinco docentes y un cuerpo administrativo igualmente reducido*”, emphasizes Acevedo (2012, p. 378). However, the analysis of students' socioeconomic profile at Universidad Nacional, based on the answers of 400 students who were interviewed in 1965, attracted the interest of Cruz (2016), alert to university meetings with representatives from 29 universities and the assistance of over 30,000 students in Bogota. The author also highlighted the left-leaning tendencies of the young people and their preference for Marxist authors (CRUZ, 2016). Colombians who went to Cuba to practice guerilla warfare, according to Acevedo (2012, p. 384), “[...] *De las decenas de jóvenes que se fueran, regresaron siete estudiantes para fundar la guerrilla del ELN, varios de ellos egresados del Colegio de Santander y estudiantes de la UIS*”.

Table 3 – Statement of categories and their respective absolute and/or relative numbers regarding Mexico by analyzed author

Category	Donoso (2017)	Delgado (2013)	Hernández (2007)	Allier (2009)	Fuentes (2008)
Expansion of enrollments in higher education	From 30 thousand in 1950 to 270 thousand in 1970.				
Governmental monetary investment in education	From 10% in 1950 to 30% in 1970.				
Number of students at demonstrations		In June and July of 1968, two demonstrations, around 10 thousand participants in each one.			March of the 100 thousand muzzled.
Number of confrontations with police forces		In July 1968: two dead, hundreds arrested, and 43 sued. On October 2 nd , 1968: from a couple dozen to several hundreds dead or wounded, and over one thousand arrested.	400 dead, according to missing person claims.	On October 2 nd , 1968, there is inconsistency in sources: 30 dead, 53 severely wounded and over 1,500 arrested (<i>Excelsior</i> daily); 150 dead (CNH); 150 to 200 dead (George Washington University archives); 350 dead (archives from the United States Embassy in Mexico).	On October 3 rd , 1968: Díaz Ordaz forbade 500 funeral processions in Mexico City.

Source: Prepared by the authors (2019).

In Mexico, Table 3 shows the reflex of investments on enrollment expansion in only two decades, contrasting with the average schooling: fewer than four years, Donoso (2017) observes. Delgado (2013, p. 58) – “[...] *Para 1968 había nueve países latinoamericanos sometidos a los Estados Unidos, para 1973 se sumarían Chile y Uruguay [...]*” – worried about quantifying the advancement of imperialism and of the resistance by the Mexican Communist Party (PCM, in Portuguese), with between two and three thousand members. Regarding the numbers by the *Consejo Nacional de Huelga* (CNH), it began with 222

delegates, representing 74 schools, but decreased to 148, two for each school, and “[...] *los jóvenes comunistas sumaban cuarenta delegados, es decir, entre el 17 y 25 por ciento [...]*” (DELGADO, 2013, p. 81). Fuentes (2008, p. 148, our translation) corroborates Hernández (2007) on the silent protest against inequality: “[...] sixty people have more money than 60 million citizens”. The historiographic dimension of the Tlatelolco slaughter is emphasized by Jiménez (2011, p. 57, our translation): “[...] 55 reprintings of the first edition of *La noche de Tlatelolco* by Poniatowska and 10 of the second edition, from 1998, as well as the 612 reports that support the writing of the historian”.

Table 4 – Brazil: statement of categories and their respective absolute and/or relative numbers regarding Brazil by analyzed author

Category	Moraes (1998)	Pitts (2014)	Reis Filho (1998)
Expansion of enrollments in higher education		In 1945: 27,253, then in 1960: 93,202, and in 1968: 278,295 (LANGLAND, 2013, p. 72).	Around 200 thousand young people, about 0.5% of the population.
Number of students at demonstrations	In June 1968, march with 100 thousand.	In June 1968, march with 100 thousand. On August 29 th , 1968: 300 students marching through campus with machine guns pointed at their heads.	
Number of confrontations with police forces		On August 29 th , 1968: 200 military police officers invaded the University of Brasília (UNB) to arrest Honestino Guimarães and four other activists. On October 2 nd : hundreds of student activists were arrested.	

Source: Prepared by the authors (2019).

Soares and Petarnella (2009, p. 340, our translation) reinforce Jean Pronteau: “[...] the phenomenon of quantity is of fundamental importance”, in accord with Henri Lefebvre (1968, p. 15-18 *apud* SOARES; PETARNELLA, 2009, p. 340, our translation) – “[...] We were 50,000 when I was a student, they are now over 600,000 and there are 1,200,000 students in the courses who march in the same direction [...]” – and data by Carlos Fuentes, 2009, p. 346, our translation):

[...] In 1945, there were around 120 thousand students in French universities; today that number amounts to over half a million, and in Sorbonne alone there are

160 thousand. We don't fit in the classrooms [...]. Over 30 thousand students want to use the library, but it can only accommodate five hundred readers.

The occupation of Nanterre by 142 students, on March 22nd, marks the prelude of the symbolic “May of 1968”², but not to Moraes (1989, p. 138, our translation): “[...] it is evident that mass student mobilization took place first in Brazil – and not in France”. The *Correio da Manhã* of March 23rd, 1968, informed about the student movement that closed the Philosophy College of the University of São Paulo (USP), after “spares” from the entrance exams invaded the university to demand more openings, and Table 4 shows the expansion of the system.

The students directly confronted the politicians, as in the episode involving Roberto Costa de Abreu Sodré, governor of São Paulo. On May 1st, 1968, he tried to make a speech at Sé Square for 10 thousand workers and students, but people threw stones at him and called him “Murderer” and “Intervenor”. Since the student Edson Luís was killed by military police on March 28th, there were several marches. On August 29th, at UnB, police cars were flipped and burned, police officers kicked down doors and destroyed labs with truncheons, machine guns, rifles and tear gas. From the National Congress, “[...] at least twenty state representatives and three senators from both parties³ went to the campus [...]” (PITTS, 2014, p. 50, our translation). In the repression outcome, a student had a bullet in the head, another had a bullet in the knee and some broken bones. Read at the tribune, the letter signed by 175 mothers and wives of at least 30 representatives and senators repudiated the government violence. It is true that 80% of the representatives had attended the university, but there was little in common between university students and politicians (PITTS, 2014), and the “democratic students” refused to be represented by an “extremist minority” (BRAGHINI; CAMESKI, 2015).

² The May 1968 Movement became the icon of an age due to its representativity, gathering young people from different parts of the world and due to its revolutionary characteristics of values and habits, with countless artistic, political, philosophical and cultural expressions.

³ In 1966, the parties dissolved in the previous year were forced to reorganize in two groups: Aliança Renovadora Nacional (Arena), aligned to the military dictatorship, and Movimento Democrático Brasileiro (MDB), the accepted opposition.

3.2 Qualitative approach to student movements

The mutual cooperation strategy against the communist threat in the West got new ideological framing since the Cuban Revolution. In the 1960s, the “Alliance for Progress” reformed the educational systems of the countries. The program’s axes structured the policy of financial aid and technical support for the modernization of education systems, following the North American cultural model. Rudolph Atcon’s document appears in Acevedo (2012, 2015), Cruz (2016) and Sosa (2018). In addition to reducing higher education to a technical and vocational degree, the plan defended a corporate logic of education privatization (HERNÁNDEZ, 2007).

Acevedo (2015) analyzes philosophical, structural, curricular, administrative, teacher training and disciplinary changes in the Colombian educational system and Acevedo (2012) revisits the history of UIS since its creation, aimed at technical education, until the conflicts, during the reforms. In addition to the Marxists of Acevedo (2004) and Cruz (2016), the anti-imperialists of Acevedo (2015) and the young business leaders of Sosa (2018), studies refer to anarchists and Camilista Commands⁴, according to Cruz (2016). The “[...] *actos para subvertir el orden o intentos revolucionarios*” (SOSA, 2018, p. 53) constituted the conspiracy theory common to Latin American governments at the time, who saw, in the student movements, the communist threat and the danger of the internal enemy, according to Acevedo (2015), Cruz (2016) and Sosa (2018). The student culture is in Acevedo (2004, p. 164): “[...] *Ser joven ya no era una fase preparatoria para la vida adulta, sino la fase culminante del pleno desarrollo humano [...], ningún movimiento revolucionario en la historia haya tenido más personas que leían y escribían libros*”. The revolution of culture, thought and behavior is shared by an entire generation, with humanitarian thoughts, transformative ideals and similar buying habits, in different parts of the world:

[...] solo hay que pasar una rápida mirada al joven rebelde mexicano de 1968 para entender que no se distanciaba casi nada del colombiano, norteamericano o europeo [...]. Ésta fue una generación que no solo respondió a las identidades de la izquierda, sino de lo psicodélico, lo hippie, la marihuana, la televisión. (ACEVEDO, 2004, p. 164; 173).

⁴ “Uno de estos colectivos del campo del socialismo revolucionario en Colombia” (ACEVEDO, 2019, p. 128).

Marini (1970) evaluates the success according to the alliance with farmers, the middle class and the urban subproletariat, but Acevedo (2004) and Hernández (2007) emphasize the university assemblies: debates, confrontation and oppositions, an authentic “show”. During the strike of UIS students, the protest against budget cuts, according to Cruz (2016) and Hernández (2007), discontent regarding the “*Cuerpos de Paz*”, the USA missions to investigate natural resources and knowledge from indigenous communities. The Ford Foundation was banned from the Sociology Department of the Universidad Nacional (ACEVEDO, 2015) and Peace Corps at the Universidad del Valle were accused of being Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) spies. At Universidad Nacional, the students went on strike for the right to repeat a year (HERNÁNDEZ, 2007).

About 1968 in Mexico, Jiménez (2011) highlights the political importance of the 19th edition of the Olympics and the unrest agenda appears in Delgado (2013, p. 58): “[...] *el tres de febrero de 1968 se inició en Dolores Hidalgo La Marcha por la Ruta de la Libertad*”, with the National Center of Democratic Students (CNED, in Portuguese) and the Communist Youth, but the army dissolved the march and arrested the leaders three days later. On March 10th, PCM denounced the governmental repression and was accused of subverting order, in diaries from Mexico City; on May 7th, there was the first meeting between president Díaz Ordaz and the PCM, seen as “[...] *a conspirator group* [...]” (DELGADO, 2013, p. 61, our translation). The communists defended democracy, an end to repression and more political participation. The confrontations, since July 22nd, between students from Vocacionales 2 and 5 from the National Polytechnic Institute and the private school Isaac Ochoterena (preparatory for the Universidad Nacional Autónoma del México – UNAM), were repressed through the use of force. The authoritarianism of president Díaz Ordaz is at the root of the student protests of 1968, according to Allier (2009), Delgado (2013), Donoso (2017), Fuentes (2008) and Jiménez (2011). Jiménez (2011) endorses the protagonism of the communists and narratives indicate that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) “[...] *apoyó el PCM con alrededor de 25 mil dólares*” (DELGADO, 2013, p. 65). Allier (2009, p. 293) mentions the “*teoría de la conjura*”, which grounded student persecution. The July 26th marches, against the violence of the Grenadier Corps and in praise of the Cuban Revolution, are highlighted by Delgado (2013) and Jiménez (2011), including their repression. Thanks to the support of the press, public opinion adopted the communist threat theory, but the narrative by Alma

Silvia Díaz Escoto refers to “[...] *diferentes formaciones políticas* [...]” in Delgado (2013, p. 79), including right-leaning students, “[...] *los grupos anticomunistas como el MURO (Movimiento Universitario de Renovadora Orientación) e el PUM*” (DELGADO, 2013, p. 87), who agreed with the autonomy agenda, but accused communists of conspiracy. July 30th events appear in Delgado (2013) and Donoso (2017), when the military shot high caliber weapons at an educational institution and the dean from UNAM hoisted the University City flag at half-mast, heading the August 1st student march. On August 2nd, the *Daily News* highlighted Fidel Castro’s participation in the Mexican unrest, according to Allier (2009) and Delgado (2013), citing “occult forces”, or the CIA, who took advantage of students’ rebelliousness to destabilize democracy. The Tlatelolco massacre, on October 2nd, occupies the third chapter of Fuentes (2008). The author narrates the tragedy relying on a photographer’s memories, since the “[...] presence of police troops shaking the door of the Preparatory to take the University City for the army” (FUENTES, 2008, p. 145, our translation), what she saw, felt and believed. Marini (1970) evaluates that systematic and, often, brutal containment didn’t allow students to consolidate with workers a mass movement able to resist governmental repression. Donoso (2017) gathered documents from primary sources: speeches, manifestos, printed material and flyers, in addition to eleven semi-structured interviews with historians, among them Acevedo (2011 and 2012) and Allier (2009).

Direct action from the USA on educational matters in Brazil appears in the agreement of the United States Agency for International Development (Usaid)⁵ drafted by the military after the 1964 coup. A factor in major student mobilizations, it restricted public investments and stimulated the private sector in higher education, according to Rudolph Atcon: “[...] *La Universidad es una gran empresa, y no una oficina pública* [...]” (MARINI, 1970, p. 115). Workers’ political organization was forbidden, but students still had an independent organization, the “[...] *Unión Nacional de Estudiantes (UNE)*” (MARINI, 1970, p. 119), but even the student Right retracted: “[...]only the most radical action was left, grouped in the Communist Chase Command (CCC) and similar groups” (REIS FILHO, 1998, p. 30, our translation).

⁵ United States Agency for International Development (Usaid), a North American office founded in 1961 through the Foreign Assistance Act by president John F. Kennedy. The agency was responsible for the distribution of foreign help of a civilian nature and with strategic purposes.

Immediately after the dictatorship was established, the student movement was fragile and molecular: booing, protests and small marches repressed through shots and arrests; the activism was left to the means of communication: “[...] Newspapers still, but already, and moreover, television [...] informing, educating and awakening” (REIS FILHO, 1998, p. 31, our translation). Clandestinely, students generated revolutionary vanguards and armed conflict. Vladimir Palmeira, as a leader, defended the end of the military regime and a government aligned with Cuba, according to Moraes (1989), who mentions, among the first massive mobilizations of 1968, the occupation of the Philosophy College of the University of São Paulo, on March 22nd, and the crisis of the restaurant that served underprivileged students in Rio de Janeiro.

Pitts (2014) remembers that the protests were directed toward academic demands: more openings at universities and a more democratic management, but the struggle was radicalized on March 28th, when the high school student Edson Luís de Lima Souto was killed during the protests of the “Calabouço” (MORAES FREIRE, 2008; MORAES, 1989; PITTS, 2014; REIS FILHO, 1998). Outraged, society took to the streets in several cities to protest the violence of repression. The March of the Hundred Thousand is a highlight for Moraes (1989), Pitts (2014) and Reis Filho (1998), who includes the praise of the Cuban Revolution during the 20th National Congress of the Brazilian Union of High School Students (Ubes, in Portuguese) and the boldness of the students who elected Che Guevara as an honorary *post mortem* president.

From that vanguard, emerged the revolutionaries for direct confrontation with the dictatorship (MORAES, 1989). For Reis Filho (1998, p. 25, our translation), 1968 is a stage: “[...] Let’s observe the scene, while the actors prepare to take to the stage [...]”. On one side, the military armed with machine guns and decrees to forcibly impose the regime, closing institutions and repressing any opposition through acts and violence; and on the other side, the support of the Catholic Church, ruralists and business owners, with metaphors, metonymy and symbolisms: “[...] There gathered the sword, the cross, the property and the money [...]” (REIS FILHO, 1998, p. 26, our translation). The revolutionary student was seen as “petty bourgeois”, but Reis Filho (1998) mentions some “supporting actors”, the intellectuals, journalists, artists and religious people, as well as the protests in concerts and festivals.

Secondary supporters, the workers had their unions closed, their leaders exiled and their right to strike forbidden, being left with salary cuts, the loss of stability and the doors to the palace closed. Abreu Sodré, the governor from the dictatorship, failed in the Sé Square speech on May 1st, 1968, banned by the more important and decisive actors (MORAES, 1989; REIS FILHO, 1998), the students. Neutral or in favor of the regime, the right-leaning youth appears in Moraes (1989) and is an object of study in Braghini and Cameski (2015). The research, in the “Opinions of the month” section in *Revista de Editora do Brasil S/A*, in daily news, in laws and minutes from education committees, emphasizes the “right/left” dichotomy and the cultural confrontation between good (good students) and evil (subversive).

4 Discussion

Historiography is the art of describing facts and human achievements throughout time. Historiographer Álvaro Acevedo is a reference in the study of student movements in Latin America, but he warns: “[...] *el historiador ve solo lo que quiere ver [...]*” (ACEVEDO, 2004, p. 163) and chooses to understand student mobilizations through cultural aspects of global society in two moments – in 1968 and four decades later. The search for numbers from those contexts is irrelevant when there is a universe of subjective data, among the political, “[...] *Tal vez 1968 pueda marcar el primer quiebre binario de la Guerra Fría [...], una Internacional de estudiantes, avalada por un ‘conspirativo’ para socavar los cimientos del Occidente capitalista [...]*” (ACEVEDO, 2004, p. 163); the cultural productions that revolutionized the field of the Arts and “[...] *trascienden las fronteras nacionales para inscribirse en una experiencia global [...]*” (ACEVEDO, 2004, p. 163).

Acevedo (2012) relies on the institutional archive to discuss the history of UIS, between 1953 and 1977, since its conception until the student movements, with the dynamics of the events during modernization and the conflicts surrounding student mobilization. The archive, with reports, official documents and journal publications, offers a basis for the institution’s historical record, but, corroborating the author, among “[...] *los vestigios de la organización universitaria*” (ACEVEDO, 2012, p. 373), there is a gap of documents and information that could represent the dimension of the sociopolitical experience and the intricacies of university culture and student protagonism.

Acevedo (2015) reviews the bibliography to investigate the political, economic and social context in Colombia during the implementation of the Atcon Plan. A quick view of the 1968 events justifies the brevity with which he analyzes the representation of the cultural identity of that youth, their lifestyles and buying habits, in the face of the magnitude of the revolutionary experience, characteristic to the years that moved the generation: culturally, artistically and politically. There also remains curiosity about the subjectivism involving the students who opposed or eschewed the protest movements and how they manifested in the correlation of forces.

Edwin Cruz is dedicated to the study of political theory and practices. Cruz (2016) analyzes the formation of the left-leaning Colombian youth, the students' discontent, the organization of assemblies and collective actions against the Basic Plan of university reform. The factors of student protests of 1968 are listed, followed by the text that scrutinizes the mobilization against foreign interference and the advancement of the privatization of higher education, including student registration during the demonstrations. The analysis of the student phenomenon in the 1960s quickly passes by the revolutionary 1968, “[...] *fueron las organizaciones de izquierda, impregnadas de la transformación global que en esos años se presentaba [...]*” (CRUZ, 2016, p. 229). We long to know if/how the left-leaning youth was impacted, since their political attitude until their identity and languages.

Isabel Hernández was dedicated to the study of one of the most expressive student movements in Colombia and states that it is necessary to understand the phenomenon considering the context in which it took place, “[...] *las circunstancias políticas, económicas y sociales de las décadas de los años sesenta y setenta [...]*” (HERNÁNDEZ, 2007, p. 31). Given the relevance concerning the study of the forerunners of the Minimum Program Movement of Colombian Students, the representations regarding the revolutionary 1968 are brief and superficial, “[...] *los vientos de la primavera francesa de mayo de 1968 también se sintieron en las universidades colombianas [...]*. *Más cercano, el Movimiento de 1968 en Tlatelolco – México [...]*” (HERNÁNDEZ, 2007, p. 35). After years under the influence of European and North American standards, the Colombian university seeks to fill the systematized archive with the traits of academic culture that denote its own identity.

Yeison Sosa, in his study, carries out a comparative reading of student movements in that university, between two periods: 1968-1971 and 2007-2011. The investigation of conditions for the emergence of protests anticipates that, beyond educational reforms and the political regime, cultural aspects also contributed to the critical situation between students and government. From that point of view, the researcher observes the privilege given to specific studies, “[...] *como los años 70, dejando de lado otras temporalidades [...]*” (SOSA, 2018, p. 36), lacking depth of detail in the 1968 events. That was the year when students from Universidad del Valle mobilized to ban from the institution the members of the “*Cuerpos de Paz*”, giving up their English lessons, guidance and assistance. He digs the raw material for his work from the scrutiny of time and, certainly, the content of assemblies, meetings and mobilizations precede the compulsory removal of foreigners from a higher education institution. The reproduction of the Universidad del Valle Student Federation statement, in Sosa (2018), repudiates the Basic Plan for education reform, but doesn’t explain in depth the problem involving the interaction of the community with the young people from the Peace Corps.

The 1968 Mexican movement is the theme discussed by Andrés Donoso, from Universidad de Playa Ancha, in Chile. Secondary sources and interviews with experts expect to transcend the October 2nd massacre and broaden the spacetime horizon of analysis. The study observes social interactions, describing the action of brigades: “[...] *grupos de cinco o seis estudiantes que se desparramaban por las principales ciudades del país para informar sobre los pormenores del movimiento [...]*” (DONOSO, 2017, p. 144); like what happened in Chile, in 2011, Mexicans were ingenious in obtaining population’s support and “[...] *el movimiento mexicano de 1968 logró ser, para muchos de sus participantes, una verdadera fiesta [...]*” (DONOSO, 2017, p. 144). The effort of examining deeper the nuances of the culture fostered by the relations between individuals and groups and by the expression of subjectivities can enrich the historiography of student movements – because it is important to know the beliefs –, the nature of dialogues and the forms of expressions and languages of art in interactions.

Kevyn Simón Delgado researches the history of the Mexican Communist Party (PCM, in Portuguese). The pages with the historiography of 1968 student movements contain documents of narratives, news and official files, describing the annual facts, since “*La Marcha por la Ruta de la Libertad*”, with the democratic students and the communist

youth, on February 3rd, 1968, until the “[...] *campaña 68: un millón al PCM [...]*” (DELGADO, 2013, p. 122), which began on December 11th, to raise funds for the party. However, the historiographic source will grow with the input of an ethnographic description, from which we can surmise the subjectivism of Left and Right militance, the knowledge of life experiences and cultural products consumed by the students: books, music, art and cultural spaces.

The article by Eugenia Allier brings results from two projects developed with her team: one involving the investigation of memories of political violence in Mexico and Uruguay and another with a deeper discussion about political memory in Mexico, analyzed here. The article travels between the memory left by the sociopolitical events from 1968 to 2007. About the 1968 movements, the researcher dedicates herself to the bibliographic review and consultation of documents, including several sources, among files and reports that point out contradictions (DELGADO, 2013; FUENTES, 2008; JIMÉNEZ, 2011) regarding the number of dead in the October 2nd massacre. With the mystery involving the exact number of young people tragically deprived of life, missing or arrested, this investigation effort in Allier (2009) stands out, notwithstanding the option for a brief discourse, on the margin of facts.

Since 2011, Héctor Jiménez, in an extensive thesis on the Historiography of Mexico at the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana Azcapotzalco, carries out a deep review of a set of works, files and documents and makes historiographic criticism of the 1968 events in the country. Faced with the great number of previously published studies, Jiménez (2011, p. 140) refers to the “[...] *problemas para construir una historia sobre el movimiento estudiantil, que trasciendiera la visión anecdótica y testimonial de dicha experiencia [...]*”. Certainly, the historiographer privileged the perspective of the communist youth, broadly envisioning the actors and the script of that narrative. If anything further was possible, it would be the artistic legacy: works, expressions and languages. In a better question, how did the wave that globally revolutionized the culture impact the repressed, violated and censored Mexican intellectual and artistic production?

Fuentes (2008) dedicates 11 pages for the horrors of the fatal confrontation between students and police forces. Meanings and emotions of the Tlatelolco tragedy appear in the memories and testimonies of the massacre of dozens or hundreds of young people at the Three Cultures Square. He narrates with the senses, recording the

subjective universe of Laura's experiences: the experience, the expectation, the longing, the admiration and the ultimate pain of losing the young Santiago III. Although it seems small, literally, the text grows huge, complete and unforgettable in meaning.

Ruy Mauro Marini studied social, economic and political variables to formulate the Theory of Dependence, in which the delayed progress of countries is explained through the dependence on the capitalism of central countries, an agrarian-exporter condition and their position in the international labor division. His analysis of Latin American student movements of 1968 is focused on the objectivity of the phenomenon. From a statistical view of the context, he reaches the root of the protests, a contradiction: the insufficient funding to meet the increasing enrollment demands: “[...] *después del golpe militar de 1964, el gobierno [...] no solo restringió el gasto educativo público [...]*” (MARINI, 1970, p. 116). The author chose not to contemplate subjectivism.

Silene de Moraes Freire is a sociologist and her theoretical-interpretative analysis of the history of the student movement in Brazil anticipates: “[...] We don't aim to offer [...] an interpretation of the historic 'singularity' of the Brazilian student movement” (MORAES FREIRE, 2008, p. 133, our translation). The research presents the campaigns at the Calabouço restaurant and the articulated action with the Students National Union (UNE, in Portuguese), “[...] a small group organized a dramatization of the complaints in front of the restaurant” (MORAES FREIRE, 2008, p. 136, our translation).

The record of social phenomena is enriched when considering details: languages of popular revolt and art forms that express outrage and affirm demands. Translated by Alexandre Fortes, Pitts (2014) visits bibliographies, journal libraries, public archives, the House of Representatives publication, in addition to a documentary (movie), to understand how the democratic revolution in 1964 took on a dictatorship face, radicalizing repression in 1968. In this sense, the professor states that it is necessary to seek “[...] in behavior and [...] words of the politician class” (PITTS, 2014, p. 41, our translation) answers for our questions.

João Quartim de Moraes contributes to the study based on a bibliographic review of the 1964 coup (MORAES, 1989). The author focused on the revolutionary vanguard that embraced armed conflict in 1968, in the occupation of the Philosophy College of the University of São Paulo (USP) and in the big protest marches against the murder of the student Edson Luís de Lima Souto. Since the 1970s, the historiographic line denominated

New History values the expansion of sources (BURKE, 2003). The memories and narratives of protagonists and witnesses of events in the moment they took place are valuable sources of historical documents and cultural values that enrich researches.

Reis Filho points to issues that remain unanswered regarding connections and links between the institutional rupture of March 31st, 1964, and the radicalization, in 1968, regardless of the aspect of regime toughening as imposition of repressive force. The scientific point of view of the phenomenon can't relinquish exploring the underground of facts and events that problematize the subjective universe and gaps that arise between questions and contradictions. When the gaps are filled, new perspectives on the object arise.

Katya Zuquim Braghini and Andrezza Silva Comeski are educators and bring the activism of the group that "[...] approved the political direction of the military regime, after the 1964 coup d'état and opposed the action of their colleagues, peers, considered 'communists' [...]" (BRAGHINI; CAMESKI 2015, p. 946, our translation). The social contradictions of the phenomenon were analyzed through the content of a publication that supported the regime. The published texts were based on government publications, laws and minutes from education committees and the teachers sought the stereotypes in common sense and the production of culture that represents the "good" student and their subversive peer, the "evil". Except for the fact that it is possible to directly access the documents, researching the original source enables diversifying, furthering, ratifying or even denying the interpretation given by others to cultural representations and socio-historic facts.

5 Final considerations

Reviewing the studies detailed factors, causes and consequences present in the results, highlighting aspects that reoccur and prevail in scholars' analyses, in addition to gaps in hypotheses and problematizations. The critical effort led to the reflection of a work agenda that aims to help investigate the phenomenon.

Regarding the numbers of the contexts in which socio-historic events take place, we agree with Ramos and Monsma (2012) when they warn about the misconception of reducing the quantitative approach to a mere quantification technique, because there is a universe of meanings that aren't always evident. We suggest the use of statistical

methods to support the discussion about causality, “[...] meaning structures embedded in different social representations and in the answers from interviewees” (RAMOS; MONSMA, 2012, p. 15, our translation).

Sovereign in investigation in the fields of Human and Social Sciences, the qualitative research shouldn't be limited to a simple descriptive discussion of facts, events and individuals that are part of historical phenomena. Chizzotti (2003) calls attention to the pedagogical side of researches and suggests to the researcher the exercise of creativity, densification of hypotheses and flexibility of outlook, seeking in time the problems related to individuals and classes, such as the issues of gender, ethnicity, race, sexuality, aesthetic-artistic and ethic-political.

Through the research intentions, the actors' voices and silences have equal significance when understanding the meanings, significance and values given in contexts. The dense and deep approach to people, facts and places that constitute the object, in the sense of “[...] extracting from that interaction the visible and latent meanings that are only noticeable with sensitive attention [...]”, according to Chizzotti (2003, p. 221, our translation), is possible through sharing and when there is a strong engagement.

Problematizing student movements transcends the reformist and anti-imperialist content to encompass, at least, three other dimensions of social actors, according to Acevedo e Samacá (2011, p. 114): “[...] *la generacional, la adscripción socioeconómica a los sectores medios y la condición de jóvenes creadores de códigos y referencias culturales*”. This is possible through dialogue interspersed with socioeconomic history, the history of social movements and cultural history and adding academic and non-academic experiences of different generations of students and ideologies (left, right, anarchist, nihilist), political experiences and cultural consumption in and out of academia, in addition to social interactions in spaces of political, cultural and leisure organization.

The renovation of investigations of student movements takes part in understanding the different languages used by individuals to communicate, disseminate and inform the practices and experiences. In this sense, the digital technologies represent a considerable source of data collection, among websites, social networks and different media for interaction and dissemination of information. The study can expand subjective space and include the representations of teachers and administrative staff, besides the political struggle of other employees and outsourced staff in the institutions.

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