

ABSTRACTS

The Punto Fijo political model: development, exhaustion and prospects © Fidel Canelón & Franklin González

This article analyzes the political model initiated in 1958, as a result of the agreement of Punto Fijo, and consolidated with the legal instruments proportioned by the 1961 Constitution. It describes its characteristics, the principal actors and the different stages of its development until the actual situation in which its problems and limitations have provoked widespread disillusionment. The author ends up suggesting three alternative scenarios capable of overcoming what is considered a clear crisis of legitimacy.

Keywords: Political model, social actors, centralism, legitimacy.

Forty years after: the foreign policy we had and the one we need © Elsa Cardozo de Da Silva

The author analyzes Venezuelan foreign policy during the last forty years of democratic rule, in terms of two of the three dimensions which constitute the network of transactions in foreign policy: the political culture and the promotion of democracy. The analysis distinguishes two broad cycles: from 1958 to the mid-eighties, and from that point to the present. Certain sociopolitical and cultural aspects are considered, before going on to examine the recent past and culminating with an evaluation of the main tendencies in the country's foreign policy.

Keywords: Foreign policy system, political culture, strategies, Venezuelan democracy.

The delimitation process with Colombia during the democratic period, in relation to the Castilletes-Punta Espada coast of the Guajira peninsula © Rafael Sureda Delgado

This article analyzes the diplomatic negotiations between Venezuela and Colombia since the nineteen sixties in relation to the definition of marine and subma-

rine limits in the thirty-six kilometers of the Guajira peninsula coast between Casilletes and Punta Espada.

Keywords: Gulf of Venezuela, Castilletes-Punta Espada coast, diplomatic negotiations.

The Latin American State: between crisis and reform

© Marcos Kaplan

The author analyzes the central role of the State in Latin America, its traditional forms of intervention and the degree of autonomy that has characterized it in relation to fundamental economic and social forces. He argues that the crisis of the Welfare-protectionist-paternalist State has not meant the elimination of State intervention. What has changed with the application of neo-liberal policies is a modification in the objectives, the reference framework and the modalities, which are much more conditioned by external and internal economic restraints.

Keywords: Latin American State, interventionism, protectionism, neo-liberalism, crises, reforms.

Economic globalization and the consequent internationalization of the problems of social development

© Neritza Alvarado Chacín

This article analyzes the way in which the process of economic globalization and the application of neo-liberal policies are accompanied by the aggravation of problems such as poverty, unemployment and social exclusion. As this phenomenon is characteristic not only of the Third World, but also of the developed countries, the author refers to a trans-nationalization of the problems of social development. She presents the implications of this situation for the different aspects of the problem and examines some of the apparent solutions, asking whether they require a recuperation and redefinition of the role of the State, or a strengthening of civil society. In relation to civil society, attention is drawn to the potential role of the so-called "third sector" and particularly of non-government organizations.

Keywords: Globalization, social development, civil society, NGO's.

Globalization and exclusion: the two faces of the same coin

© Rubén Alayón Monserrat

The current globalization process has two faces: on the one hand, to the extent that homogeneity advances, fragmentation increases; and on the other, as the different societies are increasingly incorporated into the dynamics of the world market, broad sectors of their population are excluded from its benefits. The process of exclusion is double: it is exogenous in the sense that those excluded are eliminated from the globally dominant vision of reality; and it is endogenous, as a result of the way in which the excluded break with the norms imposed by the dominant order.

Keywords: Globalization, social exclusion, subjectivity, social practices.

Post-modernity, globalization and education

© Jonathan Alzuru Aponte

This article examines some Venezuelan education aspects within the tension set between globalization and cultural diversity, through the concept of 'post-modernity'. Analyses the unease relation between practice and normative in the educational area, approaching the spaces of subjects' action from a multidimensional complexity view and confronted ideas.

Keywords: Post-modernity, education, globalization.

Social policy and the dynamics of low-level bureaucratic power: the case of the popular economy in Venezuela

© César Barrantes

The objective of the article is to examine the dynamics of low-level bureaucratic power and pressures in the application of policies identified as a support for the "popular economy", the "associative economy" or the "solidarity economy". These policies aim to encourage small-scale production and distribution of essential consumer goods (and particularly food items) at more accessible prices amongst the poorest sectors of the society. However, the practical implementation of these policies is conditioned by a contradictory process of administrative decentralization in which low-level bureaucratic obstacles are of particular importance.

Keywords: Low-level bureaucratic power, popular economy, Venezuela.

Seven discursive approaches to poverty

© Rafael Parada

The author distinguishes seven distinct ways of approaching the phenomenon of social exclusion, some of which are clearly ideological, while others are presented as explicative paradigms. Some have served to justify institutional practices while others have been used precisely to criticize official policy. In any case, it is of interest to evaluate them all in the light of the results in the fight against poverty over recent years and within the context of the current discussion over how to overcome the crisis.

Keywords: Poverty, social exclusion, discursive approaches.

Juvenile gangs: violence and fashion trends

© Cristina Mateo & Carolina González

Juvenile gangs are by no means a new phenomenon but recently, in the larger cities, some of these gangs have adopted extreme forms of violence not common before. On the basis of research in Caracas slum areas, the article analyzes different theoretical perspectives in order to understand the meaning of the violence of these gangs, their relations with the local community and with Venezuelan culture and society, emphasizing the importance of the audiovisual media in inducing this violence.

Keywords: Violence, juvenile gangs, fashion trends.

Neo-institutionalism and the food question in Venezuela

© Agustín Morales Espinoza

This article seeks to examine the most important characteristics of that portion of the institutional complex devoted to the economic activities of food production in Venezuela. In a first section, it presents the main theoretical proposals of the New Institutional Economy; in a second one, it analyzes the principal characteristics of the State, the food sector and the trade unions; and finally, it raises the following query, ¿Is the institutional framework described capable of solving the basic problems of the food sector?

Keywords: New institutional economy, food sector, Venezuela.