ness that there is a branch in every neighbourhood, or the school in an institution of Seccuestro. During the debate over the creation of the "Law of Due Obedience" in 1987, exempted from guilt all human rights violatee who had supposedly followed orders, graffiti covered the walls of Buenos Aires: Rob, Kill, torture and find someone who will order you to do it. And "Military terrorism, police torture. There were no changes. Seccuestro."

Yes voted: wait two years and do it again (Seccuestro).

In conclusion, those final three graffiti slogans signal another aspect of modes of symbolic productions in youth culture. The symbolic strategies of youth design spaces which acknowledge heterosexuality within education, social class, gender and even age, and which can name forms of control under democracy. Thus, the politics of the everyday enters onto the microcosm of the neighbourhood wall. These three graffiti slogans mark the difficulties experienced by the democracy in allowing for the full participation of those sectors which were mobilized to ensure its recuperation. The initial demand for institutional transparency is set back by the inability to encounter mechanisms which will enable the courts to bring those responsible for crimes of human rights abuse to justice. At the same time, the new democracies in Latin America are stuck with the economic conditions fostered by the dictatorships.

In the context of political settlement, the incorporation of youth into education and employment has not been facilitated, and youth have rejected social mobilization as an avenue to new forms of social and political organization. Thus, the tensions of everyday life between work, school and the neighbourhood are translated into a rejection by youth of the authoritarianism of institutions, while nonetheless accepting the role of education in achieving a social standing. Aspirations of recognition and social mobility are not reduced to individual history in relation to pre-colonial origins, but rather are invested in the spaces where the everyday practices of the production and interchange of meaning take place. To analyze youth culture of the 1990s it is necessary to look at rock videos, video games and their sites of interaction in order to see how youth have organized themselves to transcend both the images of the world delineated by the crisis and the authoritarian barriers to association. Perhaps the answer was instilled in 1987 by the rock group "Los redentores de ricos" ("The little crucifix of ricko"), who would perform in the costume of the creole cleric and encourage the audience to dress up and to come on stage. The "redentors" came to be the most broadly disseminated counter-symbol in the cities of Argentina. The following is "Come on, bands" by Skry Robinson and Radio Salar:

And what's the use of sleeping under guard living clandestinely and wearing golden buttons and what's the use of being the new band and going around climbing military radars Come on, bands let's boot it...
is a photographer whose work has been exhibited in Canada, the U.S., Cuba, and Mexico. Recent and upcoming one-person exhibitions include The Photography Gallery at Harbourfront, Toronto (1992), Le Mote de la Photo a Montreal (1991), the Mannes Friedland Gallery, Toronto (1991), the Peter de Cuba (1990), and the Art Gallery of Hamilton (1995). Goldchain was a recipient of the 1990 Leopold Godowsky Award in Colour Photography from the Photographic Resource Center in Boston and the 1989 recipient of the Cansda Council’s Duke and Duchess of York Award in Photography. His work is in the collections of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, the Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography, Ottawa, the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and various private and corporate collections. Born in Santiago, Chile, Goldchain is a graduate of the Film and Photography Department of Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, Toronto. His work of the last few years has been the result of extensive travel in Latin America and part of a personal process of discovery/recovery of a cultural identity.

solved, but as challenges to theoretical notions and to schematic and automatic practices in pedagogy and research?

Along the lines marked out by these questions, I would like to "translate" - from a Latin American perspective - the debate on modernity to several issues which articulate with avenues of reconfiguration in the field of communication. I propose to examine three issues: national histories, urban sensibilities and cultural markets.

National histories: the long term.

The notion, one of the most contradictory sites in Latin American modernity, has now become one of the "spaces" most affected by the modalities of communication. This new state of affairs results both from the "universal interconnectedness" of circuits via satellite and information, and from the "liberation of difference" which accompanies the growing fragmentation of the cultural habitat. The notion finds its communication with the past, and with its own traditions, both devalued and deformed by the demands of the imposing contemporaneity of modernity. Trapped between provincialism and transnationalization and unable to communicate with its own internal diversity - the notion in tautology - or in the words of R. Schwartz "the turbulence of the notion" - signals a zone of strategic convergence between the study of communication and the new history.

In his splendid essay on Latin American historiography of the 19th century, German Colmex disconnects the seeming relating to the past, to that which was thought to have been abolished by independence and modernization, but "the features of which began to multiply as soon as attention moved from luminous exploits to everyday life."
To the extent that the incorporation into modernity of the national minorities in Latin America occurs through the mediated perspectives established by the technologies of communication - its grammas and imagens - and the new historical perspective opens the field to two important lines of work. First, the investigation must continue into how the forces of consumption enable or hinder the memory in which the long term is woven, in order to discover the traces which can enable the recognition of "problemas" (i.e., not only people and country/nation) and the dialogue between generations and traditions. Second, research is required into the changes in images and metaphors of the nation, the development, secularization, and reinvention of myths and rituals through which this contradiction is unrealized but still powerful identity is expressed and remade both from a local and transnational perspective.

Over the past twenty years or so, the population in Latin America has swung from country to city to the point where the proportion of urban dwellers in many countries is near 70%.

Urban sensibilities: the hybridizations.

Over the past twenty years or so, the proportion of urban dwellers in Latin America has swung from country to city to the point where the proportion of urban dwellers in many countries is near 70%.

Cultural marketplaces: integration and difference

According to J.J. Branner, modernity in Latin America is linked more to the development of communication media and the formation of a cultural marketplace, than to philosophical doctrines or political ideologies. Rather than being an intellectual experience, modernity becomes a collective reality and a social experience in the continual dispersal of the sources of community cultural production to specialized dimensions and genres of power. One final ingredient to the cultural matrices of these youth: the Andean music of narco and salsas combine "music" with values of the body which transform the old Christian ascertainment of death into its acceptance as part of life and even as part of the party!

Cultural hybridization corresponds to the heterogeneity caused by the disintegration and dein-urbanization of the city, the form of identity with which one survives. The anarchic growth of cities is expanding the periphery, thus dispersing and isolating youth groups to the point where the different cities which make up the city are almost without connection. The dissolution of the traditional spaces of collective encounters, the re-urbanization of everyday life - as Garcia-Concini et al. point out about Mexico City - and the city becomes of lesser use.

It is precisely this sociocultural disengagement of the city which will be compensated for by the consumption of new objects, a search for roots and to conserve cultural identities, not in the education systems which are dedicated to denouncing cultural confusion.
Post-Marxist Post-Modern Cultural Populism From Birmingham to Bogota?

By Nick Witherford


The translation of this work by one of Latin America’s leading communication theorists has a twofold importance, for it not only opens a richly informed perspective on the relation of media and cultural movements to the South, but it also makes a provocative contribution to encounters within current cultural studies in the North.

According to Martín-Barbero, Latin America’s crises of the ’70s and ’80s—including the rise and fall of military dictatorships, triumphs and defeats for revolutionary socialism, and the appearance of new forms of popular culture—have compelled its left-intellectuals to rethink the role of mass communications in social change. Focus has shifted “from media to mediations.” Theories of “media manipulation” which saw the controllers of the mass media unilaterally imposing ideological domination on passive audiences “without the slightest indication of seduction or resistance” have now given way to an “emergence of more complex sense of “mediations,” stressing the articulation between practices of commercialization and social movements,” and the possibilities for resistance and reappropriation in the reception of media messages.

To grasp these processes, Martín-Barbero develop a theory of the interaction between “popular” and “media” worlds. In their place is emerging a more complex sense of “mediations,” stressing the articulation between practices of commercialization and social movements, and the possibilities for resistance and reappropriation in the reception of media messages.

To grasp these processes, Martín-Barbero develops a theory of the interaction between “popular” and “media” worlds. In their place is emerging a more complex sense of “mediations,” stressing the articulation between practices of commercialization and social movements, and the possibilities for resistance and reappropriation in the reception of media messages.

However—and this is Martín-Barbero’s crucial point—mediation cannot wholly succeed in the destruction of popular cultures for “There is no imposition from above which does not imply, in some form, an incorporation of what comes from below.” The mass culture aims to win consent for development by “covering over differences and reconciling tastes.” But this is possible historically only to the extent that it simultaneously “deforms and activates” the content of pre-existing knowledges and traditions. The mass media is caught up in an intricate interplay of submission and resistance, opposition and complicity, because “Contrary to the predictions of social implosion and depoliticization, the masses still contain—in the double sense of control and conservation within—the people.” There is thus a sense in which “subversion is imbedded as integration.”

Martín-Barbero stresses that in affirming the reliance of the popular he is not seeking a nostalgic rescue of “authentic” archaism, but rather tracking a living process in which popular memory interacts with communicative innovation to generate “new combinations and syntheses.” That reveal not just the racial mixture that is coalescing them to a model of progressive rationalization in the name of the nation state and then of the global market. In this project the mass media has been allocated a major role as an instrument of enculturation.

Further Readings

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symbolic order in which they are nurtured and sustained by the logic of the marketplace. Loss and gain are thus able to withdraw from modern information and iconography, or from the disenchantment with their self-given world, and the re-enchantment which is offered by the spectacles of the media.

There is a third border zone to explore jointly by communication and sociological perspective, the situation of hegemonies: in a time when the State can no longer command on a cultural field. The State is limited to defending its autonomy, guaranteeing the freedom of its actors and ensuring opportunities of access to diverse social groups, while the marketplace assumes the role of coordinating the cultural field and ensuring that it remains dynamic. At the same time, cultural experiences have ceased to correspond exclusively and linearly to the sites and practices of ethnic, race and social class groupings, as neither modernity nor tradition delimits exclusive social or aesthetic boundaries. While there is a tradition of the latter eddy—which has nothing to do with that of the popular sectors, there is a modernism in which the greater part of the upper and middle classes “get together” with the majority of the popular classes, brought together by the tastes molded by the cultural industries.

The integration and reorganization of differences play a part of the reconstruction of social relations. But while in the countries where the center of postmodern allegory of difference is leading to a growing narcissism about any type of community, according to N. Lechner, the ascension of diversity and heterogeneity to social values in our countries will only be possible if it is articulated with a collective order, one that is linked to some notion or form of community. This is at the basis of the challenge and on the horizon of our work: the research and teaching of communication, in which the advancement of knowledge of the social transmedia, not only into a resolution of problems and methods but also into projects which can link the development of communication to the strengthening and growth of forms of urban coexistence.