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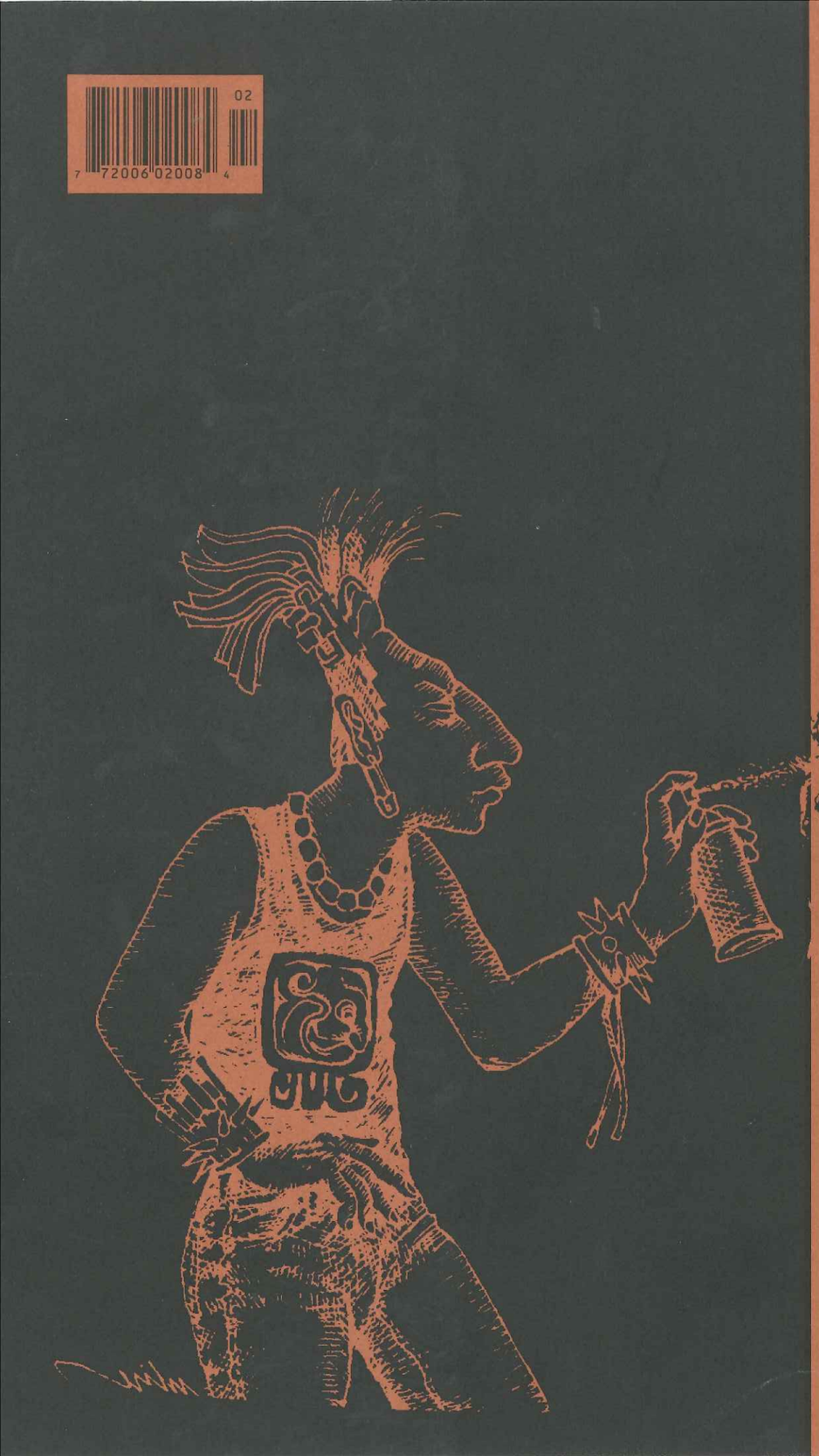

BORDER/LINES

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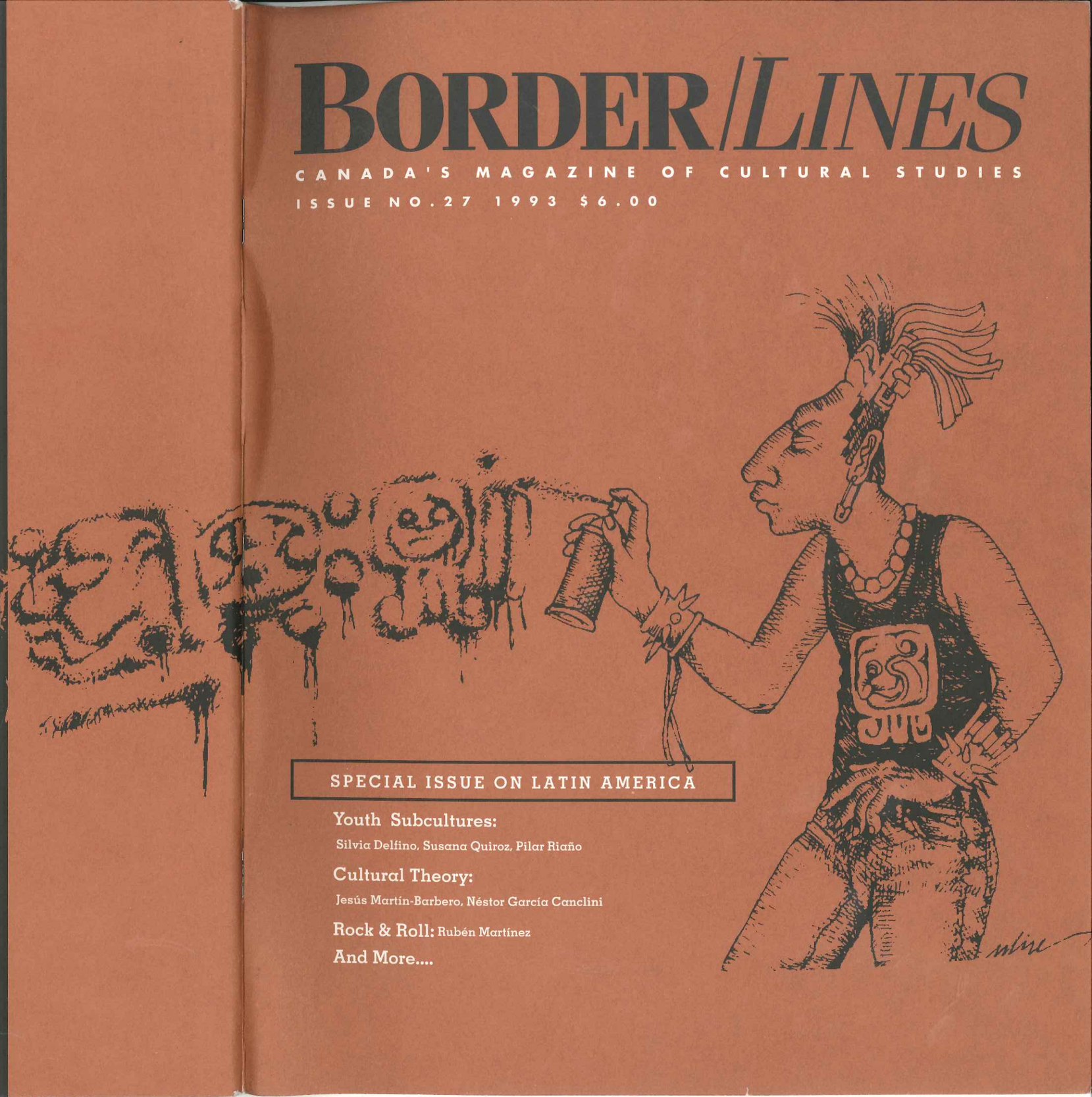
ISSUE NO. 27 1993 $6.00



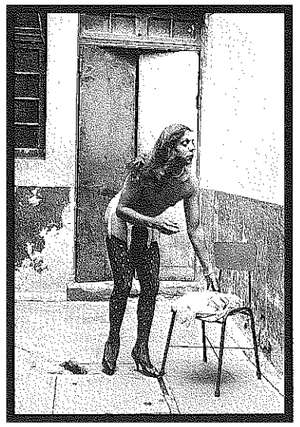
SPECIAL ISSUE ON LATIN AMERICA

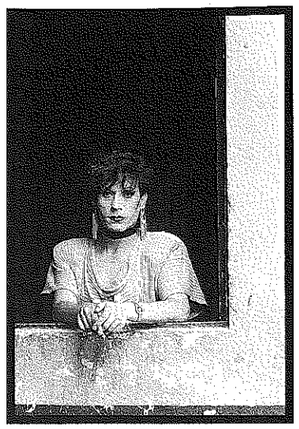
Youth Subcultures:
Silvia Delfino, Susana Quiroz, Pilar Riaño

Cultural Theory:
Jesús Martín-Barbero, Néstor García Canclini

Rock & Roll: Rubén Martínez

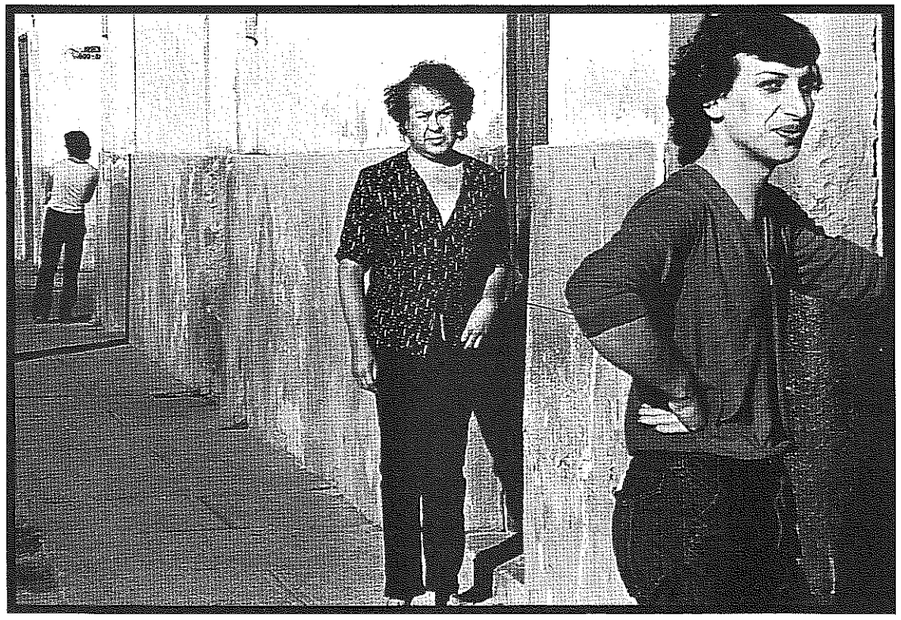
And More....

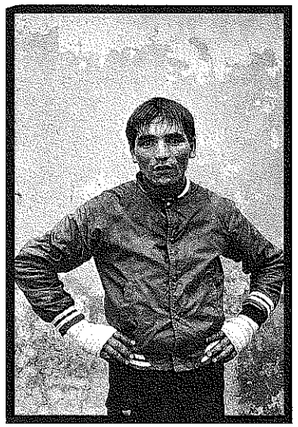


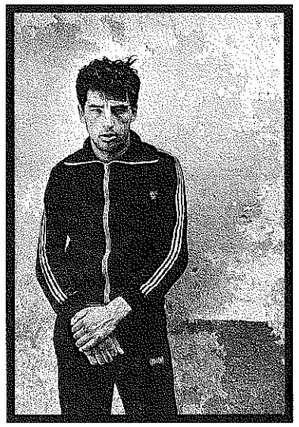


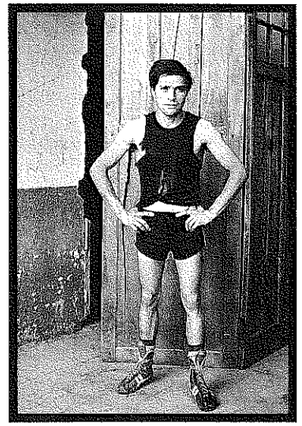
PAZ ERRAZURIZ

is a Chilean photographer whose work has been described as a social document of the realities of Chilean life. Errazuriz's photographs look at groups in Chilean society which are outside of the mainstream. Entertainers, transvestites, boxers and wrestlers, do not represent traditions out of which Chilean society grew, unlike the Indians and village people often photographed. But in the view of the artist they are parts of a whole of which she is also a part, and co-exist in determining the unique character of Chilean society. They are also among the first to be persecuted under governments obsessed with cleaning up the loose ends of society as a prerequisite to economic stability - as they were recently by the Pinochet regime. Errazuriz is interested in the peculiar combination of revulsion and fascination with which marginal people are viewed in relation to issues of class and gender and to questions concerning how social superiority and sexual phobias are established.









EDITORIAL

On the quincentenary of Columbus' first American footprint, cultural theorists from the North are "discovering" Latin American cultural theory. The publication of this issue of *Border/Lines* follows closely on the heels of other releases (see B/L list) which constitute a small 'boom.' As the contestatory `moment' of 1992 recedes into popular memory, this engagement with the texts of Latin American cultural theorists comes at an opportune time for publishers and academics - who are always happy to colonize new terrain to boost sales or bolster careers - but, more significantly, for the possibility of a meaningful dialogue between intellectual constituencies North and South.

Our intention on this issue has been to clear a space for some members of the Latin American diaspora to engage a sampling of cultural issues on their own terms, to open the pages of *Border/Lines* to new ideas, new realities and new constituencies. In anticipation of response, we have included in the book review section non-Latinos whose engagement with several texts of Latin American Cultural Studies provides an example of the listening and learning that these texts demand, while speaking ominously of the impending appropriation and placement of these same texts into the pantheon of cultural studies.

But, just what is Latin American Cultural Studies? Whose invention - or discovery - is it? Does it speak to a rash appropriation or is it an appropriate coinage, apropos to the voices, texts and realities that it lays claim to?

While adopting the term cultural studies to these Latin American writings carries immediate tactical benefits ranging from mere recognition to increased legitimation on the lifeline of the fledgling cultural studies enterprise in the North - namely the university curriculum - the long term strategic interests in this naming are much more problematic. For those who weary of the social and semiotic struggles of a cultural studies made up of audiences, T.V. sets and marginal forms of resistance, the Latin American writings provide a refreshing return to the grittier realities of everyday life on urban streets familiar to the British beginnings of cultural studies. However, and here's the rub, such recognition - or self-mirroring - occludes the vital differences between works which may share many common referents and theoretical frameworks, but which emerge from radically different social and historical matrices. To put it into other terms, it may be the same game, but the round peg won't fit into the square hole - categorization is not what these writings demand.

Coordinating an issue of *Border/Lines* depends on a lot of people, some of whom are not necessarily on the editorial collective. In preparing this issue, we would like to acknowledge the help of the intermediaries, those who put us into contact with others and those who translated pieces. Thus, we would like to thank Silvia Delfino, Pilar Riaño, Sonia Riquer, Dean Brown and Cyndi Mellion, all of whom have helped us to traverse cultural, geographical and linguistic borders.

Michael Hoechsmann
Alan O'Connor

BORDER/LINES

CANADA'S MAGAZINE OF CULTURAL STUDIES ISSUE NO. 27 1993

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Jesús Romeo Galdamez: **6**
Raphael Goldchain: **8, 9, 48, 49**

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Editorial Address:
The Orient Building
183 Bathurst Street, Suite No. 301
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5T 2R7
Tel: (416) 360-5249
Fax: (416) 360-0781

Business Address:
Border/Lines
Bethune College
York University
4700 Keele Street
North York, Ontario
Canada M3J 1P3

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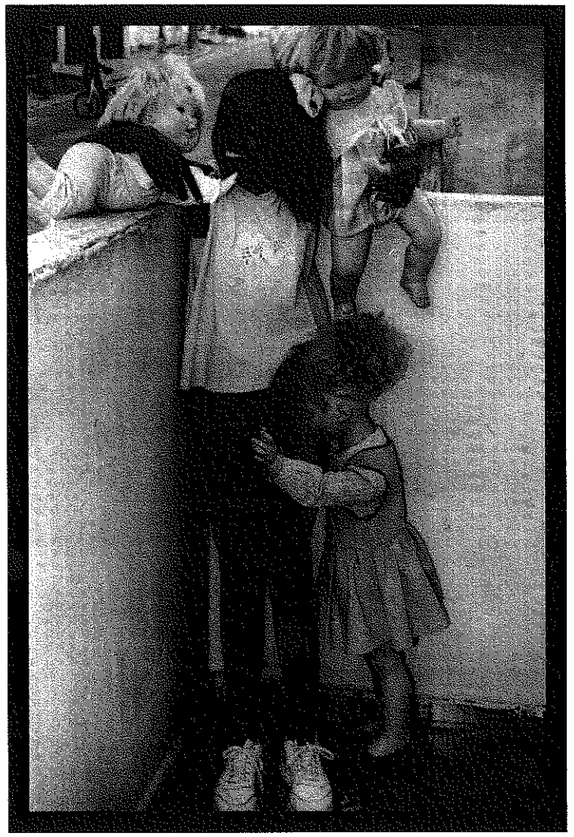
by Marcia Cruz

translated by Michael Hoechsmann

black woman, white image



In 1992, Benedita da Silva, a mayoral candidate in Rio de Janeiro and a federal delegate of the Worker's Party, narrowly missed becoming the first black woman elected as mayor to an important Brazilian city. Were it not for the colour of her skin, the situation would be considered normal; an analysis of the reality for black people in this Latin American country shows that the candidacy of Benedita da Silva is distinct.

According to the data of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, Brazil is the second largest black nation in the world with 44.5% of the population of African descent. Nonetheless, these numbers do not symbolize full participation in society, and, 104 years after the abolition of slavery, changes with respect to the identity and valorization of black people are still very slow. Abolition did not facilitate the entrance of black people into the labour market or the political arena, nor did it even guarantee the rights and responsibilities of citizenship itself. Illiteracy and lack of professional training are still a reality for black people today. In the case of women, those who were chosen to work in the house of their masters as "mucama" under slavery have now been freed up to do the same job as domestic help.

Mirror, mirror on the wall. . .

To look in the mirror and to see the ebony colour of one's skin, the thick lips and the curly locks of hair is an eternal disillusion for many black women. This is because Brazilian divas have white skin, long and straight hair - blonde, at best - and thin lips. This European model of beauty, dictated by the elites many years ago, weighs heavily upon the self-image of black people. The ideology of "whitening" (making oneself whiter by adopting the attitudes of white people) affects men, women and children. A black woman journalist comments: "The first doll I was given by my mother was large and white, with blonde hair and blue eyes. At that time, I didn't understand anything about the difference in skin colour. I was just a girl who loved her doll and

called it my daughter." Black dolls have only recently appeared.

At the 10th Conference of Black Women in Brazil which took place in Sao Paulo in August 1984, Benedita da Silva spoke of her own anguish as a black girl: "I would like to tell you something very difficult. I once bathed myself in detergent because I wanted to whiten my skin. I did this because I thought that if detergent could whiten clothes, that it would do the same to my skin." Declarations such as this one reflect the reality of black women in Brazil. There are millions of people who do not see themselves reflected in society. They are not visible on television because to become models of beauty they must look similar to Xuxa, the queen of kids in Brazil - and now of all of Latin America. Very few Brazilian black women are photographed for either masculine or feminine magazines. Almost none are executive secretaries, lawyers or doctors.

White Communication

The impossibility of fleeing from colour through the mirror leads many people to disguise their black identity. In an article for Retratos de Brazil [Portraits of Brazil], the sociologist Clovis Moure stated that non-white Brazilians responded to the 1980 census using 136 different colours to avoid being labelled as black. According to Moure, the use of terms such as "chestnut, dark brown, sunburned, mulatto, brown," among others, shows how "Brazilians flee from ethical truth, seeking through symbolism to put themselves as close as possible to the model established as superior." Helena Theodoro Lopes writes in Cadernos de Pesquisa [Workbook of Investigation] 63 (1987) that "to affirm themself as a person, the black person has to negate their identity, but because they need their own personality, they live a total contradiction. . . To be black in Brazil is one of the most cruel things on earth, because it means living in permanent conflict within the family and in social, cultural and professional contexts. It is very difficult to come to an adequate resolution of this problem at a personal, social and professional level."

The media in general, but television in particular, reinforce the ideology of "whitening." Black women, who are almost never present in advertisements or T.V. programs, play a part only when the objective is to signify sensuality and to awaken the desires of the (male) viewer. To herald the opening of this year's Carnival programs on the Rede Globo, sculpted mulatta and black beauties were chosen. They appeared totally naked on the screen with their bodies painted in bright colours. Thus, on a national network it was once again reinforced that this is what black women are good for: to drive men crazy with their bodies; they are insatiable and they dominate the arts of pleasure. They are not humans, but objects. The black militant Vanderlei Jose Maria, who also participated in the 10th Conference of Black Women in Brazil, states that: "the entire European representation of romance, of romanticism, of passion and of love was always conceived with the white woman as muse. . . How do we look at black women? We look at them as erotic fruit waiting to be eaten."

Resistance

The barriers to active participation in society, independent of skin colour, do not mean that black men and women are not struggling against discrimination in Brazil. With Benedita da Silva and Gloria Maria (reporter at Rede Globo), singers such as Sandra de Sa, Lecy Brandao and Elza Soares, as well as many others, women have representatives who will help them sing, chant and revindicate their right to appear and to be - to be who they are in all of their colours.

Resisting and organizing have enabled the black population to develop mechanisms of participation to construct their own history. Among the accomplishments of the Brazilian Black Movement it is important to emphasize the changes to the Constitution. It is now against the law in Brazil to discriminate against either ethnic or racial groups or individuals who are part of these groups. Also, changes to the educational system have addressed the inequality of the sexes, the struggle against racism and all forms of discrimination. The history of black people must now be included in school curricula.

Knowing that the Constitution has laws guaranteeing the citizenship of black people does not mean that the struggle is over. Benedita da Silva argues that it is necessary to develop the consciousness of the black community. Says da Silva: "Our work continues, and moves on to the growth of black consciousness and the recovery of Afro-Brazilian cultural memory."

Marcia Cruz is a black Brazilian journalist who is currently freelancing.

Women's Radio in Mexico City*

by Sonia Riquer
translated by Pilar Riaño

***Presentation at theUnion for Democratic Communications conference, "Feminism(s) and Cultural Resistance in the Americas," Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario, 7-10 May 1992.**

The Aliade Foppa Centre for Alternative Communication in Mexico City may be contacted by fax at (5) 559-2301.

Alternative women's communication in Mexico is integrally linked with the feminist movement which emerged in the 1970s in our country, as in Europe and North America. Those who first opened the doors to feminism in Mexico were journalists, writers and academics. The first newspaper article on feminist demonstrations appeared in 1972. This report inspired a group of women to form the first feminist organization in the nation. From the beginning it was important to create new channels of communication for the new ideas, for the new images, and to combat the traditional images of women as housekeepers, good mothers or sexual objects. In this spirit emerged the first feminist publications, the first attempts at alternative communication. And radio in Mexico, as in the rest of Latin America, was the ideal medium to reach women who often did not know how to read and who listened while doing domestic or manual work.

The first alternative radio programme for women in Mexico was produced in 1972 by Aliade Foppa. She is a very important woman for all of us, but especially for us in Latin America, who acknowledge her as one of the symbols of the Latin American feminist movement. She was a pioneer in communications and created FEM, the first feminist magazine in Mexico. She created the first feminist radio programme and taught the first feminist courses at the National University. She was an art historian and a poet. She was a Guatemalan women who was assassinated in 1980 by her government when she returned to her country.

Because of all this, the Aliade Foppa Centre for Alternative Communication was named after her. The centre has existed for three years but the work of the women who constitute it has been going on for ten years. We work for a government-funded educational radio station. The first series of programmes we made was called "The Women's Cause." The series originally ran for six months. The interest of women listeners was so great that they put pressure on the station and the series lasted for six and a half years. We also produced a weekly news report for women, and we have extended our work into cinema, video and audiovisuals. I am very interested in discussing ideas about how we could extend our work on a low budget in alternative communication. Because alternative media exists in a marginal space, what we would like to achieve is autonomy and to have our own centre funded by our work.

Recently, with women in Germany, we organized an exhibition which gives an overview of women's organizations in Mexico City. Approximately sixteen organizations were represented, among them indigenous women, domestic workers, artists, communicators, lesbians and punk girls. This exposition was shown in Mexico and is now in Europe. We believe that alternative communication may help us to live in harmony, in a more democratic way.

Photo: Jesús Romeo Galdamez

Remembering Aliade Foppa* by Bertha Hiriart

When at last I was fortunate to meet Aliade Foppa, I felt a little as if I were her daughter. Not only because I was the same age as her children, but because I was indebted, like many other women, for the spaces that she opened up for debate and to spread feminist ideas. My image of her had changed over time.

When FEM first appeared in 1976, my friends in the movement considered the women who produced it to be motherly, comfortable people. Aliade and the other women who wrote in the magazine appeared to us to be bourgeois women and the publication seemed academic and elitist. We twenty-two year olds felt that only a cheaply produced magazine, distributed by hand, had any value. For some years we did not read FEM very carefully, nor did we discuss its contents. Like most young people, we were not interested in the words of our elders. We had to say our own thing, with the fantasy that our group was absolutely different from the other groups.

But one day in 1978 we met Aliade. We were invited to a feminist round-table discussion in which she also participated. You at once had to notice her intelligence and other qualities. She left early but I met her the next day while taking a walk and we talked. A year and a half later when she was assassinated, I regretted all the conversations I didn't have with her, the meetings I didn't participate in with her, the classes I didn't take from her.

When I left behind the spirit of adolescence and became a member of the FEM group, I came to appreciate the value of the early issues of FEM. They are a storehouse of information, reports and investigations. The first contribution by Aliade should be included in highschool textbooks. It is a discussion of the origins of sexual discrimination which everyone should read. You could say the same about all her other contributions: on the family, women writers and many other themes. But the most important thing about Aliade is that she opened up spaces which we today occupy.

In spite of the tragedy of her death most of the spaces she opened remain alive. This is the case for FEM and for university courses on women. Here we are in university radio where there is space for all of our struggles. Her radio work continues in Michoacan and Oaxaca and in eight years of feminist programmes at Educational Radio in Mexico City. This particular work, now suspended because of the economic crisis and lack of interest by the authorities, is being continued by the Aliade Foppa Centre for Alternative Communication. In this way we remember her.

***From a radio program produced by the Aliade Foppa Centre for Alternative Communication and Radio UNAM to remember the 10th anniversary of the assassination of Aliade Foppa.**

Studies of

Communication and Consumption:

Interdisciplinary work in neoconservative times*

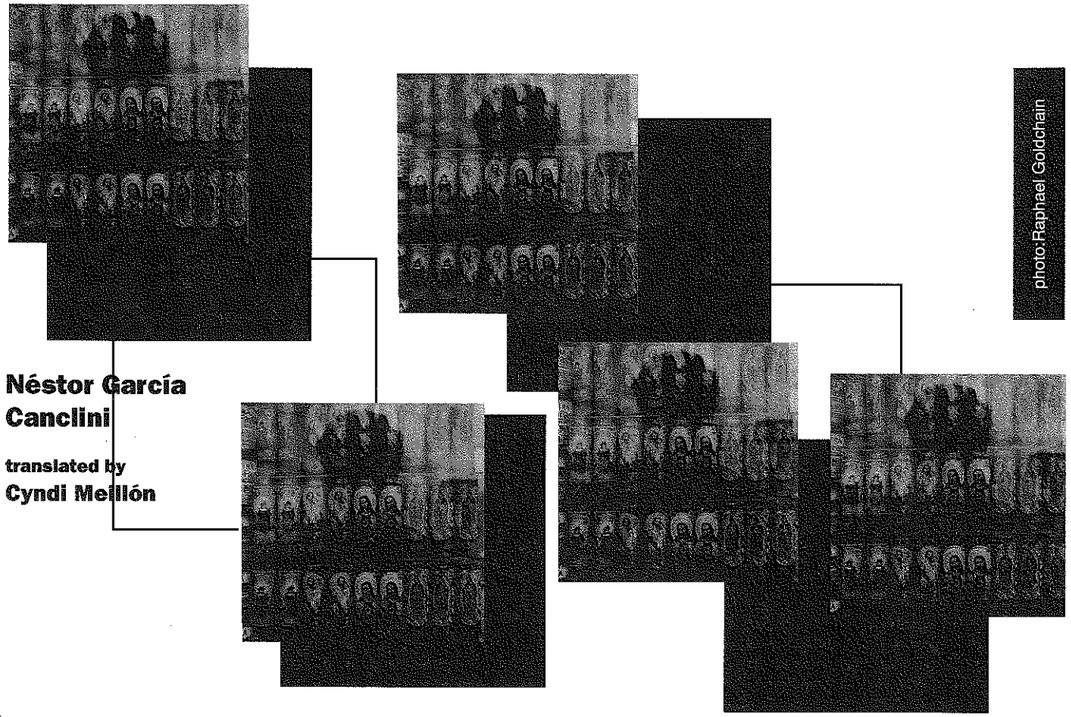


photo:Raphael Goldchain

Néstor García Canclini

translated by
Cyndi Mellón

*This is a shortened version of an article which first appeared in *Dia-Logos de la Comunicación* no. 32 (March 1992), published by FELAFACS (Federation of Latin American Faculties of Communication Studies), Apartado Aéreo 18-0097, Lima, Perú.

People consume in different social scenes and in different ways, from the corner store to the neighbourhood market and from huge shopping centres to television. Nevertheless since activities on a massive and anonymous scale are intertwined with interactions that are intimate and personal it becomes necessary to think about them in relationship to one another.

We have learned in recent years that the massive and anonymous organization of culture does not inevitably lead to uniformity. What we observe with mass consumption is not the homogenization of consumers but rather interactions between distant social groups through a very segmented communication link. The major commercial networks provide heterogeneous offerings which relate to disparate habits and tastes. In Mexico City we find very differentiated groups among consumers. To speak of musical preferences alone, it is among older people and those with a low level of education that we find the greatest number of followers of *ranchera* and tropical music. Classical music and jazz mainly attract middle-aged professionals and upper-level students. Rock listeners tend to be young people and adolescents. People tend to locate themselves in certain musical tastes and different styles in accordance with generation gaps and economic and educational differences.

Does so-called cultural consumption have a specific set of problems? If the appropriation of any good is an act that symbolically differentiates, integrates and communicates, objectifies desires and ritualizes satisfactions and if we say that to consume, in fact, serves as thinking, then all acts of consumption—and not just those related to art or learning—are cultural acts. Why then separate out what happens in connection with certain goods or activities and call them "cultural consumption"?

This distinction is theoretically and methodologically justified because of the partial independence gained in modern times in the areas of art and communications. Art, literature and science have been freed from the religious and political controls which previously imposed a variety of standards on them. Independence was achieved, in part, by a global secularization of society, but also by radical transformations of distribution and consumption. The growth of the bourgeoisie and the middle classes, as well as the general increase in education seemed to form specific publics for art and literature in which works are differentiated and selected according to aesthetic criteria. A set of specialized institutions—art galleries and museums, publishing houses and magazines—offer independent circuits for the production and circulation of these goods.

Products that are deemed to be cultural have use and exchange values. They contribute to the reproduction of society and at times to the expansion of capital. But in them the symbolic values prevail over utilitarian and mercantile values. A car that is used for transportation includes cultural aspects, but it is inscribed in a different register from the car that the same person—an artist, let's suppose—places in an exhibit or uses in a performance. In this second case, the cultural, symbolic and aesthetic aspects predominate over the utilitarian and mercantile ones.

What happens with radio, television, film? In spite of the economic pressures that strongly influence them in their style and the rules of communication, these mediums possess a certain autonomy from other types of production. A television editor or producer who only takes into account the mercantile values and forgets about the symbolic merits of what she or he produces (although this may occasionally be good for business) loses legitimacy with the public and with specialized critics. There are groups of consumers with expert knowledge of the history of each area of culture—more so in the case of science, literature and art, but also in the case of soap operas and musicals—who select what they consume according to exact rules of taste and specifically cultural criteria.

Consumption and Communication in Multicultural Societies

photo:Raphael Goldchain

The Public is summoned but groups, families and individuals respond

photos: Paz Errazuriz

As such it is possible to define the particularity of cultural consumption as the combination of processes of appropriation and uses of products in which the symbolic values prevail over the use and exchange values. This definition takes the particular character of cultural consumption into account. Not only does it take into account those goods that have greater autonomy, such as the type of art found in museums, concert halls, and theatres. It also includes those products that are conditioned by their commercial aspect (television programs), or by their dependence on a religious system (native crafts and dances), the development and the consumption of which requires a prolonged training in relatively independent symbolic structures.

At any rate, it should be pointed out that the peculiar character of modernity in Mexico and Latin America (where art and communications markets only attain a partial independence from religious and political conditioning) generates structures of cultural consumption that are different from those of the metropolis. The difference is notable, above all, in relation to European countries that have a more compact and homogeneous national integration. The subsistence of vast areas of traditional production and consumption craftwork, festivals, etc.—that are significant not only for their traditional producers, but also for large numbers of modern consumers—reveals the existence of a *multi-temporal heterogeneity* in the present-day constitution of our societies. This heterogeneity, resulting from the coexistence of cultural formations that originated in different eras, favours the types of cross-fertilization and hybridization that show up in Latin American consumption practices with greater intensity than they do in the metropolis.

It is not surprising to find that, within the tastes of consumers of all classes, there co-exist goods from different times and groupings. In a home collection of records and tapes we often find salsa next to rock and tangos mixed in with Beethoven and jazz. Around them, Colonial and home-made furniture make up sets that nobody finds inconsistent with modern pieces of furniture and electric appliances and posters announcing concerts of *avant-garde* music and posters for bullfights. The inhabitants of the dwelling are equally attached to all. These elements (which appear odd if we look at them from a perspective of historical evolution, in which progress substitutes new aesthetic tendencies for old) function as cultural and social reproduction, and serve as integration and communication for the ordered ritualization of practices.

Certainly, these frequently found mixtures do not eliminate the diverse and unequal appropriation of cultural goods. The hybridization of consumption is not homogeneous. Social differences manifest themselves and reproduce themselves in the symbolic distinctions that separate consumers (for example, those who go to museums and concerts and those who don't; those who watch cultural television programs and those who watch only entertainment programs).

How is it possible that a nation can exist—one with an integrated, analyzable system of cultural consumption—in a segmented, multicultural society, with various time frames and levels of tradition and modernity? The inevitable question can also be formed: how do we explain the fact that this cultural diversity persists after five centuries of colonial integration and independent modernization and the homogenization of academic, mass media and political life? It is convenient to ask the two questions together, because the answer is the same. The history of consumption demonstrates a dynamic, open and creative interaction between (various) projects of social modeling and (various) styles of appropriation and use of products.

We have seen in the studies of "live audiences" that theories of vertical and unidirectional domination by the senders of messages over their receivers, are incapable of explaining the complex processes of interdependence between these two entities. Contrary to the passive connotation that the notion of consumption still holds for many people, actions of assimilation, rejection, negotiation and re-working of what the broadcasters are proposing do take place. Among the television programs, political speeches and the things that consumers read and use there intervene the family, *barrio* or group culture, and other microsocial events. Each object destined for consumption is an open text that demands the co-operation of the reader, the spectator, or the user, in order to be completed and have meaning. Each good is a stimulus to thought and, at the same time, an un-thought in which consumers, when they insert it into their daily network, generate unexpected meaning. It is known that cultural goods are produced with more-or-less hidden instructions, practical and rhetorical devices that encourage certain readings and restrict the activity of the user. The consumer is never a pure creator, but neither is the transmitter omnipotent.

We can come to various conclusions from this. The first is that communications studies cannot only be studies about the process of communication, if we understand this to be production, circulation and reception of messages. The need also to include the structures, scenes and social groups that appropriate and re-elaborate the messages calls for the collaboration of communication theorists with sociologists and anthropologists—specialists in social mediation that cannot be reduced to communication processes.

At the same time, the plurality of codes and mediations in which messages are processed can help us to understand how so-called national cultures are currently constituted. How do we explain the fact that societies and nations exist, in spite of the conflictive diversity of consumers and consumption - Only because each nation is, among other things, the result of what the specialists in the aesthetics of reception call "reading pacts"—agreements between producers, institutions and receivers about what is communicable, able to be shared and credible in a given era. A nation is, in part, a hermeneutic community of consumers. Even those goods that are not shared by all are meaningful to the majority. The differences and inequalities take place in a regimen of transactions that makes possible coexistence among ethnicities, classes and groups.

Underconsumption and Incommunication in Neo-Conservative Times

I have avoided, in this definition of the national, the territorial and political conceptualizations that are prevalent in the bibliography on this issue. I do not forget the importance of these factors, but by referring to the nation as a hermeneutic community of consumers, I am alluding to ways of experiencing the national in daily life, which perhaps have become central in its post-nationalist re-definition: cultures become de-territorialized and many political practices are subordinated to the commercial rules of mass communication. Here I see a promising area of interaction between communication theorists and political sociologists.

In order to understand current consumption processes in Latin America it seems important to understand the tension that exists between the national structure, historically consolidated in our societies, and the trans-nationalization generated by modernizing policies. The integration, communication and differentiation between classes and ethnic groups, that seems to be resolved by the institutionalization of the nation, are shown to be in crisis in the face of the multiplicity of internal and international processes that challenge this institutionalization. The national becomes diluted, first, by being invaded on a daily basis by foreign messages, and second, by the presence of regional movements of affirmation that *question* the centralist distribution of cultural goods to which this gives rise.

A new conception of the role of the state can be seen in recent governmental policies which hand over a large part of the national integration function to multinational communication companies. The critique of the populist state and the privatization of those areas that have been considered to be of public interest suggest the idea of new pacts that are not just economic agreements, but cultural agreements as well. New rules about the reproduction of the work-force and the expansion of capital, new models of competition among groups that wish to appropriate the social product, new norms

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CONSUMPTION

of symbolic differentiation; these generate a restructuring of consumption. Will these changes bring new forms of integration and communication, or will they accentuate inequality and differences in the access to goods?

The answer to this question lies in an analysis of how priorities about necessities are established in the stage which is governed by the supposed self-regulation of the market. Hegemonic neoliberalism, acting within the old concept whereby the "objective" laws of supply and demand are the healthiest mechanism for ordering the economy, is promoting the concentration of production—and consumption—within continually more restricted sectors. The privatizing and selective reorganization that is taking place is, at times, so severe that demand is descending to the level of biological survival. For large sectors of the extremely poor, the needs around which people are organizing are those of food and work.

Some groups are organizing their response to this hegemonic policy by seeking the restoration of the previous social contract and the type of state it represents. Other see possibilities for resistance in the strengthening of traditional, craft-based, small-group forms of life that may still have validity for the reproduction of some sectors of society, but which have shown themselves to be ineffective at providing global alternatives. It is possible that these options still have considerable capacity for organizing and promoting significant mobilizations, but any such project should consider the state as a key objective, if it aspires to intervene in the modernizing and reorganizing that is taking place. I say this, not because the state is a good administrator or because it might be possible again to expect populist largesse, but because it is a space which might have value in terms of gaining public interest to counter the reduction of consumers to the level simply of consuming senseless objects.

In this sense the multidisciplinary study of communication and consumption could be a resource for understanding the meaning of modernization and for promoting the participation of broad sectors of society. For one thing, the collaboration of communications theorists who have specialized in learning about the structures of industry and cultural markets with sociologists and anthropologists dedicated to understanding the mediations and the processes of daily resignification can help the analysis of consumption to transcend the simple consideration of the commercial aspects of products. But it would also be useful if we could manage to come together to discuss the new mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion with regard to goods and strategic messages in the current modernizing stage.

As far as cultural consumption is concerned, since it continues to be necessary to seek the democratization of art and classical knowledge, modernization is confronting us with new demands. The global vision that we had proposed for the role of the consumer as the site of social reproduction, the growth of the national product and of competition and differentiation between groups leads us to ask what restrictive policies around the consumption of new technologies mean for the future. How does one confront a process of modernization that requires a more highly trained labour force while the drop-out rate from school is growing and access to specialized information is limited? We must assess what the growing unequal segmentation of consumption means for political democratization and the participation of the majority. On the one hand, there is an information model that permits one to act, if one has a personal subscription to exclusive television networks and data banks. Privatization has converted these networks into resources for a minority. On the other hand there is a communication model for the masses, organized according to the commercial laws of entertainment, which manage to reduce even political decisions to the level of the spectacle.

Confronting this dualistic organization of Latin American society is a major challenge which requires the collaboration of social scientists. By situating the growth of communication studies in the context of reduced consumption and information for the majority, we will be making visible the contradictions of this regressive end-of-the-century.

Néstor García Canclini is a researcher and theorist of Latin American cultural studies. His most recent book is Culturas híbridas: Estrategias para entrar y salir de la modernidad (Mexico City: Grijalbo, 1990).

Cyndi Meillón is a Chicana writer, translator and communications student. She is currently editing a Spanish language critique of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

HERE COME THE PUNK *CHAVAS**

by Susana Quiroz
trans. Dean Brown

* Translator's note: chavas does not easily translate to chicks, girls or female teenagers. In this case it best stands as is, implying young women with street smarts.

Here in the streets of the *Insurgentes* district the shop windows gleam with beautiful prostitutes. People at taco stands are shocked by the sight of a homosexual, who first stopped to buy a condom from the pharmacy in front of Sears, walking along after being fucked. Every Saturday, the drivers on the "100" bus put up with gangs of youth scrambling aboard at the plaza without paying. "I'll make myself respected, I give a shit about the society that watches me. I'll be a delinquent, a killer, and the worst that people want to add to that. I'm only a PUNK!"

In the Metro, chavas and chavos mingle, passing on addresses, telling of the latest fuck-up or clearing the air of bullshit. Rebellion in *Tianguis del Chopo (El Chopo* Marketplace): exchanges of friendships, betrayals, loves, suffering, ideas. They live lives full of repression, yet nobody gives in. Not one is willing to put up with the depressions of an *agachado* (trans: a person prostrated by the system).

Here in the city one breathes more lead than anything else. I love Mexico City, where there are more dogs than in other cities; here one still dreams and drinks poison in nightmares.

ARTICLES

When will humankind become conscious of the violent growth of the world's population in this century? This human concentration is focussed, above all, in Mexico City. The crisis goes far beyond any historical balance; it is impossible to find equilibrium, and who knows if measures taken will leave anything for future generations. It's idiotic to duplicate campaigns that nobody pays any attention to anyway, those who want papa government to do it all, and who like nothing more than SHITTING ON THE SYSTEM.

Here in the city one breathes more lead than anything else. I love Mexico City where there are more dogs than in other cities; here one still dreams and drinks poison in nightmares.

In the punk movement, Mexican punk *chavas* find a place to express and share their ideas against the system, urban repression and oppression. These women with beautifully coloured hair or shaved heads invent surrealistic coiffures. They hold on to jobs because they have to survive, and they persist in studying not as a social obligation but because they need to defend their voices. They hold on to truth, justice and to the movement. They value simplicity and authenticity, but sometimes they also turn to drugs... they're not saints. Only a few allow themselves to be swallowed by the system or to become baby-making machines. Some work the streets selling their bodies to feed the children some irresponsible guy didn't want to acknowledge or support.

"He ripped off my clothes with uncontrollable lust. I looked at him, helpless with the pain of his cruelty and blows... He dug deeply into my body with his nails, fiercely bit my lips and slid his disgusting tongue over my skin. His saliva was acid that seeped to my bones. He then penetrated me so strongly that it still feel his rhythm pounding inside of me. His savage male rhythm... He sweated with satisfaction, I sweated with terror."

Many screams lingered and then died in the silence of pure anarchism. The punk *chavas* savagely stopped being girls. Now they are women who shout, even if it hurts, because their bodies have been wounded by street violence, cowardly rapists, pollution, hypocrisy, marginalization, authority and the coldness of death. They hide tenderness behind aggressiveness. In the Metro and on the buses they demand respect from all. They are young now and they don't regret their mistakes. In the *barrios* they have many friends and enemies, and in the *barrios* there are always more parties.

In the lost cities there is no other way - you have to take the risk and you won't always lose your life. Cascades of sewage, garbage, rats and cockroaches. The poor wait for the garbage truck to bring rotten vegetables to choose the best for themselves. In the surrealism of a pigsty, of misery, the *chavas* race in to choose the rags that fit them best. They forget all that when they meet with friends at the *Tianguis del Chopo*, on the streets or in houses. People make fun of them, attack them, insult them, flee from them, fear them, respect them: here come the punk *chavas*!

They create their own heaven and hell; the earth doesn't exist anymore. They lie on asphalt and their hell is part of their unreality. They flee because in asphalt one cannot plant flowers; they are slaves of their own schizophrenia. They are owners of their death, judges of the inquisition, who upon seeing themselves in a mirror are witches sentenced to the evil of their unconscious power.

The *chavas* love to shout, to adorn their chests with chains, and their breasts with coloured tattoos. Their eyes fill with love for men, eyes lined in blue and black pencil. These women resist domination and now have no fear: "We're against violence against women, against rape, the violation of HUMAN RIGHTS..."

Nostalgic artists create a wardrobe of scraps that defy fashion and danger, between sighs and sorrows, and take FOR THEMSELVES THEIR OWN DESTINY.

The are companions and friends overcoming difficulty and enemies of apathy, routine and boredom; they do not keep quiet. They invent poetry and theater, and they shape their realities to the rhythm of music. It is a rude noise full of energy; in their heads they hold the Zen of creativity, revealing daily their courage in the streets, avenues, dead-ends and alleyways. With their heads up they flaunt their valour and nonconformity, and defend their dignity. They discover the attraction of struggle, continuing to seek liberty, not tiring in the search.

In the well-off suburbs, nobody can explain anything to the *chavas*. Nobody cares to know why injustice is always committed by the powerful - who reek of expensive lotion to mask the stench of their corruption. These mutations conform to what the system gives them; they are the powerful who have buried their conscience with no autopsy. On the outskirts of the city, the *chavas* debate and discuss the next gathering of punks, where they can enjoy organization and disorganization while unleashing their energy in the slam.

The *chavas* spit on prejudices and false taboos around sexuality; they were very attentive in sex education classes. Now they know of infections, AIDS, abortions, pregnancies. In the theaters, at parties and in the streets, they understand that the world is phallocentric. They have elected to reject the condition of sexual object, to take the reins of their own sexuality, and to let the imagination run free with their nude bodies, free from slavery, fear and fallacies. They keep their distance with their looks; their faces which express hostility against everything unjust and established are the shells which protect them.

"In the collective we never said 'no men.' It was simply a necessity for us. It was they who said 'why only women?' and then took on this idea that we were anti-men. Some *chavas* even left because of that, but we only separated in order to organize ourselves.

Radical or fickle, good or bad, everybody takes it up the ass; nobody's perfect. Alcohol is like the devil; drugs are like mother. They suckle her, they don't want to leave her, they can't leave her. Their Oedipal destruction in the midst of the high prevents them from abandoning mother drug. In the *barrios* of San Felipe and the north there are always parties, raids, confrontations and death.

The *chavas* love, hate, laugh, get drunk, work, study, and fight. The city plays with them among buildings, streets, houses, avenues, cars, people, dogs, rats, lunatics, drunks, drug addicts, peasants and servants. The *chavas* know that death is everywhere, and, when the reaper gestures, the good and evil spirits take you with them. Death is in our bones, hidden only by our flesh which waits for the coffin to shed itself like a suit and be eaten by worms. Then the reaper reincarnates in our skeletons to leave our souls in peace. In the end, no matter who you are, death is always with you.

Why is there death when there is no war?
There is death because there is AIDS
There is death because evil exists
There is death because somebody chose to throw life away
There is death because it's not convenient for you to struggle for liberty
There is death because you refuse to be manipulated
There is death because you acted wrong
There is death because you didn't notice the truck coming
There is death because you were carrying a lot of money
There is death because you wouldn't allow yourself to be raped
There is death because you are in a *chavo-chava* gang

Teenagers, *señoritas*, girls, chicks, adolescent *chavas*, punks, rockers, thrashers, metalheads, hardcores, musicians, snotty Yuppies, intellectuals, workers, secretaries and professionals, all enter the streets daily and leave the slavery that stays on the avenue in their footsteps, in the potholes and in the particles of lead. By the light of the moon, daring *chavas* paint words of truth and anarchy onto walls. The zombies don't pause to look at them in the morning, because it gives them shivers - their mediocrity increases their conformity and they endure the purest repression.

The *chavas* cry, pained by a reality that confuses emotion. They don't know what meaning their lives have and so they cross forbidden territory. In the night they breathe their own air, in the darkness they invent and tell their own truth, tired of the repression in the family, at work, in the city, in school and in the streets. Illusions are only remembered, while this shitty world reminds them that they will only continue to rot.

WHAT PEACE? WHAT SOLIDARITY?
WHAT JUSTICE? WHAT HUMAN RIGHTS?
WHAT CONSCIOUSNESS ABOUT POLLUTION, POVERTY AND INJUSTICE?

What can you do if some are born in silk diapers? Privilege, money, power, education, knowledge, travel, influence, ambition, avarice, egoism, machismo, misery, hunger, malnutrition, vagrancy, part-time studies, the work of labourers. Drug addiction, alcoholism, rebellion, talent, victory and corruption.

The *chavas* fly like vampires that, upon turning into women, clutch a miniature paradise in their black gloves. You will see them in the city, but, whether you walk alone or accompanied, nobody will bother you. In the night the worst companions - let us say the only ones - are the street dogs: bathed, perfumed, wearing a sweater, police dogs, narco-dogs, killer dogs, nouveau riche dogs, political dogs that pass the choicest bones amongst themselves.

Popular songs in the garages and in rotten fruit markets. How delicious the shellfish and head cheese tacos are in Mixcoac, close to the funeral homes that sell caskets at modest prices and elegant boxes that will cost you a handful. The parks of Tacubaya. Love between servants and labourers in the Metro every Sunday. This riot of colour, people who never before questioned their roots, corrupted by the city and bothered by the name "Indian." Being an Indian is not a shame; on the contrary, it's something to be proud of. Who do these people, ashamed of being dark, think they are? Spaniards? Foreigners?

San Angel, Polanco, Lomas de Chapultapec, San Cosme, Santa María la Rivera, Insurgentes Norte, the south of Mexico City - these are the most fucked-up neighbourhoods, without drainage or pavement, where one admires a scenery of garbage and sewage and where shacks give way to mud slides. In Perisur, the rich buy, while the middle class look and the poor feel uncomfortable. In Tepisur you can trust the

black market goods. Theaters, bars, *cantinas* and discotheques where the rich think they are such hot shit. The poor beg a few beers, and in the brewery past the *Tianguis del Chopo* they sometimes pay for a few, sometimes scoff a few. They rip off those with healthier hobbies, guilty or innocent, for walking the straight line and following the system.

There are those who write the cultured lies, who present truths that are not so, because the vanity of their fame blocks out the talents and desires of the rest. They see themselves as perfect artists, as the only ones with any culture. Yet wait a minute! In these classes there is hypocrisy and a lot of shit in disguise. Indifference towards those thought to have no culture: urban, indigenous and subterranean cultures, street cultures.

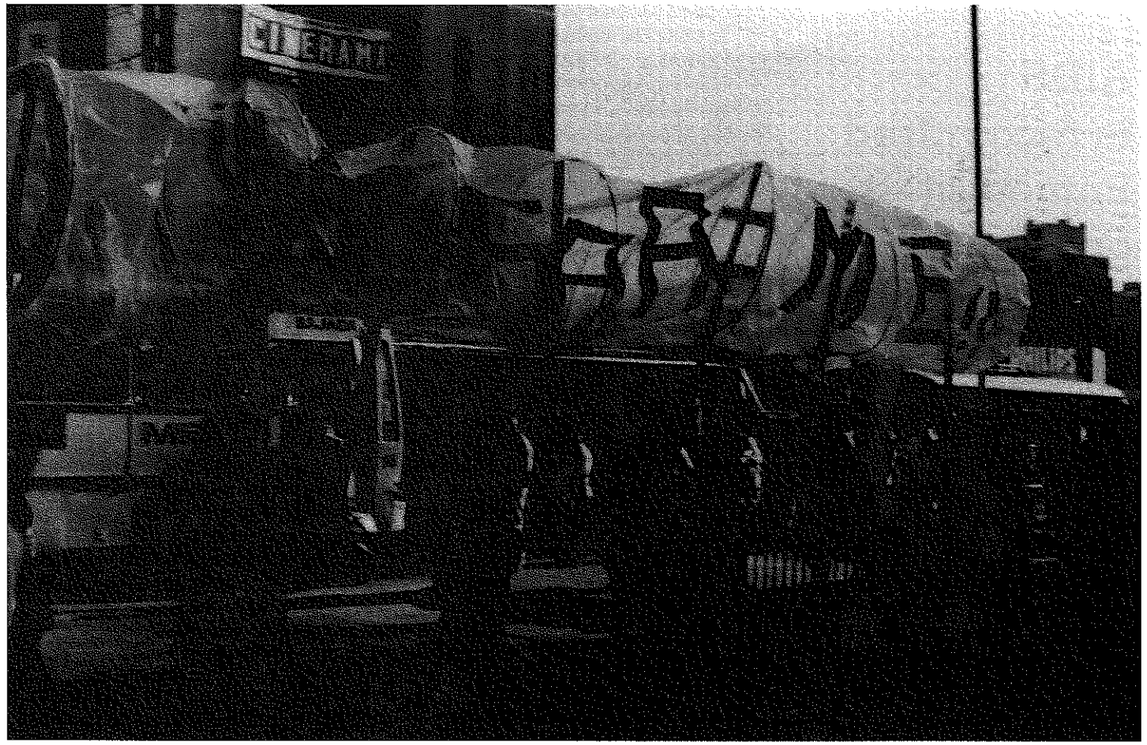
The punk *chavas* are always searching for freedom, and while they live they will continue to protest. They are not fashion punks, nor pretenders. They drink their beer and move to their own rhythm, and those that doubt will fall behind. The *chavas* dance for animal liberation. My friend, if you were born fucked up, you'll remain so all your life. *Amiga*, you have to fight against marginality in order to surface and protest against your environment and your society. If you resign yourself to it, nothing awaits you but frustration, vice, drugs, mediocrity and hopelessness.

Everyday the *chavas* spit, vomit, shit, bleed, sweat, cry with rage; they wear scars or tattoos of anarchy on their bodies so as not to forget that sensibility or that consciousness. The Day of the Dead fills them with peace, not fear. They lament the loss of human beings - animals, children, women, *chavas*, *chavos* - a monumental and archeological heritage left unprotected in the filthy air and mutilated by the shameless who loot ancient cultures and sell them to the highest bidder. Destruction on all sides. Lost people who cry for the gods and goddesses in Paradise, for the robbery of ancient headdresses, jewels in gold and silver, plumages, such marvellous things. And we let it go on, so we condemn ourselves for caring so little for our city. The history of pre-history chills the future. We must escape. In Sanborns, VIPS, Dennys, Burger Boys and McDonalds, presumptuous, moneyed people elbow each other in a rush of waste and gluttony, wolfing down rat meat, third grade chicken and beef bone. But these are exclusive places, so nobody questions what they eat and they pay good money for their fill. With their scraps of foreign and sophisticated meals, everyone is so contented to be in a multinational place.

Taco stands on the street, single ears of corn - squeeze on a little lemon to kill the amoebas and you still have something left over for a cup of hibiscus tea. You don't have to show off to anyone, and nobody does the same to you because they know where you are coming from. If you're on the same wavelength, well, give the fellow a tip!

The city lives, sleeps, dies, revives, reincarnates, survives. The girls, humans, women, punk *chavas* keep on going. They understand that they are slowly losing the hours of the watch. Punctual with their future and bleeding their past, they suck on the present like an apple. While they contradict themselves in terror, they are stopping to cry and on the streets they sing a sensual schizophrenia. The *chavas* don't accept wars or repression because they've stopped living the lies!

Susana Quiroz Martinez lives in Mexico City and writes plays and film scripts.
Dean Brown is a Vancouver translator currently planning a trip to Chile.



It is not WHAT you do, but HOW you do it:
Cultural risks and HIV/AIDS in Chile

by Francisco Ibañez

When five of us from La Corporaciòn Chilena de Prevenciòn del SIDA [Chilean Corporation for AIDS Prevention] CChPS - unfolded that huge condom made of clear plastic with big red letters that said "Use me" and held it for dear life marching along el Paseo Ahumada, the main boulevard of Santiago, shouting "El ministro cartuchòn no se atreve a usar condòn" [the prudish Minister of Health does not dare to use a condom] with a hundred others, I knew we were making history, the real one. Like small chat and gossip, this was one of those moments in which the stuff of life -- the collectively shared codes and cultural themes -- is transferred, transformed, re-interpreted and re-thematized. This is how we celebrated the World AIDS Day's motto "Sharing the Challenge" on December 1, 1991.

Moments before starting the march, a *Gringo* who had been a teacher of mine at the Universidad de Santiago came up to me and told me that this demonstration was colonization at its worst, that the World AIDS Day was nothing but a North American orchestration. I told him to fuck off, deep inside I had to recognize the ambiguities in what we were doing. But isn't that what cultures are all about, hybridization of themes and forms? Later, when I was visiting Antofagasta in the North of Chile, I read in a local newspaper that the archbishop of Santiago was scandalized and had said that "multitudinous demonstrations" in downtown Santiago weren't leading to anything good. I was joyous; this was the greatest favour that the Catholic church could do to us. It was better than having a bunch of *apolillados* [moth-eaten leftists] trying to perk up their discourse to include queers and other specimens that they had been ignoring (or attacking) a year before. Archbishop Carlos Oviedo's sustained stream of attacks and the media-quaking that it provoked was more effective than the disempowered voices of many "pobladores" [poor urban dwellers] who have organized themselves, but have not been heard seriously since1973.

AIDS is recognized immediately as an "American" disease and a product of poor "American" moral standards, sexual revolution, and decadence. The image of "the Gringo" embodies both what is loathed and what is desired.

In October 1991 when I arrived in Chile the number of reported seroconversion (people who come in contact with the HIV virus and become HIV positive - HIV+s), sero-prevalence (asymptomatic people living with HIV), and full blown AIDS cases was on the rise. This does not mean that the AIDS epidemic had suddenly begun, but it means that its effects were becoming more visible. Most women and men living with HIV/AIDS reside in the metropolitan area of Santiago or Valparaiso (Chile's main seaport). They are between 15 and 35 years old, they have acquired HIV via high risk sexual activities (many, but not necessarily all of them, with same- sex partners), and they belong to middle and lower socio-economic classes. Many questions arise here. What culturally specific meanings are attached to illness and sexuality in Chile?, What are societal responses to epidemics such as this?, What are people's understandings of transmissible sexual illness?, How does "living with HIV/AIDS" translate into everyday living in Chile?, Why have many people been living with HIV/AIDS and dying without ever having been reported?

For months I looked intently into every magazine and newspaper to see if HIV/AIDS reporting would go beyond the sensationalistic headlines. No such luck!! - obviously my presence in Chile would not alter the course of its history. Statistics about the booming Chilean economy, unemployment and issues such as "youth permissiveness" and "internal security", bank robbery, street theft and assaults, kidnapping, and terrorism occupy the top positions on the Chilean agenda. This is what concerns average citizens and what appears in news headlines. Many of the voices of "concerned citizens" echo long held themes and metaphors utilized in the dictator's rhetoric before 1989 in his *amedrentamiento* ["politics of fear"]. AIDS does not have the historical scaffolding necessary to be sustained in people's collective agenda. It is perceived as closely linked to same-sex sexuality, marginal groups, and deviant behaviours and is weighed down by negative attitudes that have traditionally been sanctioned by cultural codes that run deep beneath the surface of Chilean society.

Latin America is above all "Baroque"; its countries have multiple and convoluted social, cultural, political and technological levels that overlap and co-exist creating a distinctive ethos, a way of inhabiting the world. *Mestizaje* and social class are among the most salient elements of this ethos that one must recognize in order to do HIV/AIDS prevention education. *Mestizos* was the name given at the time of the conquest to the children of Native women by Spanish men. Today *mestizaje* means a hybridization of races and blood. This is not only a biological process which began 500 years ago, it is a cultural process that has shaped Latin American identities and ethos. As Montecino writes, "to think of Latin America as a *mestiza*, baroque and ritual culture is to think about it as a particular [situation] where blood and symbols were amalgamated, where a history of complex combinations makes it difficult to define a single face." *Mestizaje* entails an ongoing political process. The *mestizo* identity places an individual at the heart of a perennial conflict between what is "mixed" (Native, European, African, Asian) and what is "pure" (European from the "mother land," Spain). The *mestizo* identity gives the individual an alter ego: the "pure" individual.

Latin American societies have been shaped by this cultural and political tension that runs parallel to a tension between what is romanticized as *nacional* ("Si es Chileno es bueno" - If it is Chilean it is good) and what is *extranjero* [foreign], in particular North American. In Chile both of these tensions can be recognized in the circulation of conflicting cultural themes. It is a common belief, for example, that in North America the lifestyle is generally comfortable, the society is homogeneous, and the people are white and speak English as their first language; the quintessential "American dream." However, AIDS is recognized immediately as an "American" disease and a product of poor "American" moral standards, sexual revolution, and decadence. The image of *the Gringo* embodies both what is loathed and what is desired.

The *mestizo* is replaced in Chilean jargon by the term "roto" [a reference to "torn" clothes] that is either used as a derogatory term or is conveniently appropriated as a romantic hero of the national heritage, much like a museum artifact. The implications of these "distinctions" for AIDS work are manifold: for example, CChPS's volunteers, who mostly belong to a lower socio-economic class, when working at the *mesas informativas* [information booths] in uptown gay venues are met with indifference and condescension by those who perceive themselves as members of a superior socio-economic class. Thus, *mestizaje* is perceived as a disadvantage, a problem "one has to live with," in brief, as a trait of the lower classes that "naturally" determines their lack of satisfaction, political malleability, dependency, "low culture" lifestyle, and "relaxed" moral views. "Naturally," these characteristics make them prone to moral and physical contamination. This culturally stigmatized position is somewhat similar to that of IV drug users, sex workers, and ethnic minorities in North America. In Chilean society low and middle socio-economic groups are most affected by the tensions produced between *mestizaje* and social class. The clientele of CChPS is mainly formed by male individuals who belong to these stigmatized groups.

The collectively held perception is that the lower classes are inevitably drawn to the substance abuse, idleness, unrestrained sexuality and violence places them at higher risk for HIV/AIDS. Chile, unlike other Latin American countries, has shown a contained population growth, but much like its neighbours it has shown an erosion of its rural life, a human and bureaucratic centralization in large urban centres, and an uncontrolled expansion of its service sector both in the informal and formal versions. These processes have stimulated the growth of a large impoverished sector of the population that is predominantly young. Socio-economic factors translate into lack of educational resources, forceful initiation in the strained job market, as well as symbolic and cultural pressures to fit into a certain class and to behave accordingly.

Those involved in AIDS work face the difficult task of striking a balance between tensions brought about by cultural (and implicitly epidemiological) labelling of popular classes as "high risk" groups and the HIV/AIDS educational premise that all individuals regardless of their age, gender and social class are at risk. It is a case of a double bind between accepting that certain groups in Chilean society (and by extension in Latin American society) are groups at higher risk (as opposed to "high risk" groups) because of their disadvantaged position, and refusing public stigmatization and discrimination by forceful defense of the posture that states that (regarding HIV transmission) it does not matter what one does, with whom, where or when, but how one does it. This tension is felt strongly at the heart of CChPS as it tries to dislodge itself from a gay identity that, however paradoxically, needs at the same time to be preserved in order to educate people about life-affirming options for everybody.

The Catholic heritage and its relation to HIV/AIDS prevention education is also a point of consideration at CChPS and other Non-Government Organizations devoted to AIDS work. Strongly evidenced in the *Culto Mariano* [cult of virgin Mary], the Catholic presence and influence is key to understanding Chileans' views on sexuality, same-sex sexuality, emotional, and familial relationships. *Marianismo* carries specific Latin American and Chilean cultural themes such as *machismo*, the absent father, the dualism "virgin/whore," the dualism "caring mother/playful son," and many others that are directly associated with gender roles, sex roles, and cultural "games" of sexuality. The implications for

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because of their disadvantaged position, and refusing public stigmatization and discrimination by forceful defense of the posture that states that (regarding HIV transmission) it does not matter what one does, with whom, where or when, but how one does it.

HIV/AIDS prevention education are multiple, but in general the existence of double standards and collectively held myths about men and women makes most educational efforts extremely difficult. For example, women are loosely categorized either as "easy" or "decent" (virgin/whore) depending on the relationship they have to male individuals. A brother would never allow anyone to doubt the chastity of his sister, even knowing that she engages in sexual activity with her fiancee. Comparatively, men are granted many privileges; for example, a mother is not likely openly to discuss her son's bisexuality (caring mother/playful son) and his *caidas* [falls] are likely to be explained as "blind spots" produced by males' "stronger" sexual drive.

Many minorities fall through cracks in this value system that places them at a great disadvantage. For example, lesbians do not fall into any of the cultural categories mentioned and their official existence is so marginal that there are almost no cultural narratives that include them. A lesbian is perceived as a non-person, she is unable to beget and raise children (as a caring mother), provide pleasure (a whore) and she is certainly not a virgin, an expectant vessel of purity to be deflowered by a male. This does not mean that Chilenas (and by extension Latinas) should be seen as powerless, for they make strategic use of their possibilities. For example, women might be unable to force men to wear condoms, but they are instrumental in mobilizing local resources and organizing traditional social networks to prevent STDs, obtain access to treatment, provide health services (e.g. abortions) and counselling.

An example of how ambivalent attitudes form invisible obstacles for AIDS educators in Chile is provided by detractors of the straightforward approach offered by CChPS through posters, condom demonstrations and brochures. It is claimed that this approach to education is "confrontational" and could place its receivers at greater risk; for instance , a middle class husband would be in trouble if a safe sex brochure about bisexual practices were to be found in his jacket by his wife even if there is a tacit acceptance of his "fooling around." CChPS brochures are said to promote a "gay" identity that is colonized by North American standards and values that are at odds with the complex identity of a married man who has sex with men, but considers himself *macho*. The first response from an earnest AIDS educator could be that of calling this attitude "denial," "lack of self esteem," or in Chilean gay jargon *un trancado* [the one who is locked in]. An understanding of the ambivalent nature of these judgments and the ambivalent attitudes towards same sex-sexuality might not place the educator in a non-judgmental and objective area, but it might allow her/him to accept a complex reality that has not been named/spoken.

Ambivalent attitudes with respect to sexuality in Latin America can be attributed to widespread "cultural and internalized homophobia," a culturally based fear of same sex sexuality and emotionality, but this has proven to be a simplistic reduction. At the surface level the response to sexuality and its "dangers," such as STD infections and HIV transmission, is that of disapproving silence, condemning judgments or strong denial. At deeper levels Chilean society maintains traditional ways of dealing with sexuality that show great flexibility and compassion. For example, homosexuality is not discussed within families where lesbians and gay men live quite openly; to "asumirse" [accept one's sexuality] does not necessarily entail a public confession, as "coming out" does in North America. Full blown AIDS cases go unreported and tight social networks are formed around a sick person not only to provide care and support, but also to hide and camouflage the situation.

There is an authoritarian -- almost "feudal" -- tradition in Chile that directly affects HIV/AIDS prevention education. The basis of its rigid class system is the *Latifundio* [grand landowners] and one of the traditional social relationships is *el favor* [the favour]. This can be compared to the North American tradition of commerce and its social relationship, the exchange. The "favor" differs from the exchange in that there is a greater imbalance in the relation of power between two individuals. A "favor" determines a certain degree of influence and authoritarianism that lies at the heart of social relationships in modern Chile. As Nestor Garcia Canclini explains, "European modernization was based on the autonomy of the individual, the universality of the law, the disinterested culture, the objective remuneration and its work ethics. The practice of the *favor* [in modern Latin America] allows for the dependence of the individual, the exception to the rules, the interested culture [elitist?], and the remuneration to personal services."

This traditional form of social relationship shapes the character of HIV/AIDS prevention education. The *favor* is a cultural tradition that has laid the foundations for social relationships of dependency at the interpersonal level between individuals and at the collective level between individuals and government institutions. In Chile there is a strong tradition of relying on government services and organizations to provide health care, education and legal services. The state is both loathed for its authoritarian policies and revered as the source of practitioners (social workers, teachers, judges, nurses, doctors) who can alleviate almost every malady. The *favor* influences social actors who seem to play their roles as employees, beneficiaries, clients or recipients on cue to get what they need from seemingly despotic, arrogant, and authoritarian bureaucrats, medical personnel, and security personnel, who deliver public service as a form of benign charity. One's social class largely determines at which end of the *favor* one is placed.

The state has traditionally occupied the patriarchal side of this relationship, although within the current neo-liberal market strategies the state is no longer responsible for social welfare anymore, but must ensure the functioning of the markets without intervening in them (Schkolnik & Teitelboim, 1988: 20). AIDS service organizations such as CChPS have been created to palliate the surging AIDS crisis that the government was ignoring. Since the mid-70s NGOs have taken over substantial areas of health care and prevention education that had been the province of the government. The government has changed its policies but has kept its paternalistic rhetoric intact with only token assistance efforts. Organizations such as CChPS a way of doing the government's work without disbursing taxpayers' money.

The *favor* as interpersonal approach to social relations also influences the way people understand social mobilization around HIV/AIDS. Thus, the concept of volunteerism (as we know it in North America) cannot be applied to Chilean reality. Although people do offer their time and energy, when they belong to upper and upper-middle classes, they are likely to see it as a form of charity, and when they belong to lower classes, they are likely to see it as a political defense or a way to partake of the best *favores*. Organizations seem to adjust rapidly to the hierarchical roles played in the cultural concept of the *favor*. Boards of directors are formed mainly by professionals and middle class male volunteers. Straight women and homosexual men usually perform line duties. This enhances a top-down circulation of information and decision-making. This situation might be compared to the dynamics of power in North American organizations , where lip service is paid to empowerment of minorities and women, but decision-making is still retained by a small, usually white, male group. One salient element in Latin American organizations is the explicitness of the power relations. This allows for recognition of "who is who" in the hierarchies, which might present a more workable -- because more visible - situation for those involved in AIDS work. The resistance of government officials is explicit; the disgust of many people is also quite evident. By contrast, the North American *modus operandi* seems to place some individuals in ambiguous situations

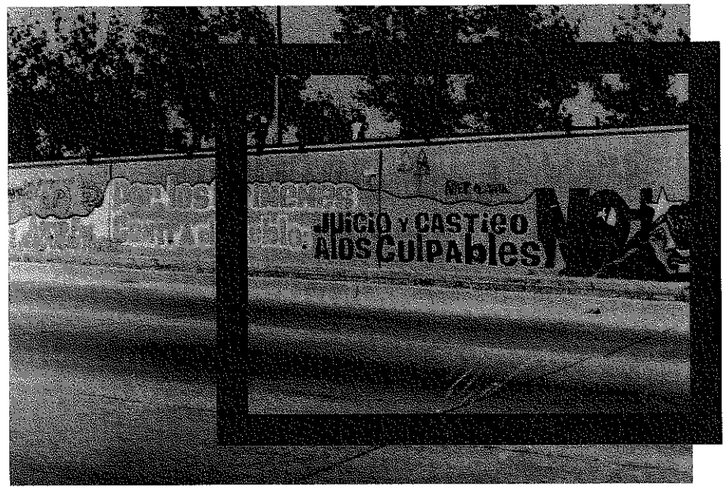
Similar to the North American experience, AIDS has been construed as a "gay disease," a "gringo disease," or as God's punishment.

with respect to political issues around HIV/AIDS education.

Mass media, in particular television, have played a cultural role in the HIV/AIDS epidemic similar to that of North American and British media. They reflect and re-thematize collective fears and cultural narratives long existing in the Chilean cultural matrices. Similar to the North American experience, AIDS has been construed as a "gay disease," a "gringo disease," or as God's punishment. The cultural connections between same-sex sexuality, non-stream sex (S/M, non-penetrative sex), "public" exposure (indecency, lack of decorum, prostitution) and concepts such as evil, perversion and sickness (read AIDS) are deeply rooted in the collective mind and are constantly reinforced by the media. Words such as illness, contamination, degradation, homosexuality, bisexuality, lesbianism, and *invertido* form a cluster, a constellation of concepts occluding most educational possibilities.

The elements described above come together along the axis of sexuality to configure a culturally specific situation where CChPS has had to develop its HIV/AIDS prevention education programmes. Class, age, gender, sexual orientation, and ethnicity configure specific forms of sexuality that permeate the Latin American ethos. The North American stereotype of the oversexed black male is also held for the Mestizo in Latin America and it is translated mainly as a *macho* figure with strong homo-erotic connotations. Male sexuality is perceived both as a form of domination over submissive women and as a violence over men without sexual potency or prowess. The *macho* is, however, a troubled identity: he is connected to the absent-present of the father of the *mestizo* (the Spaniard who plunders and retreats), he is eternally dependent on the mother (which makes him struggle with effeminacy), and he is in constant competition and must "show off" before his peers. In this context, women are obliged to consolidate a secure identity early in life that compensates for the instability of their counterparts. Although machismo does not fully explain the unspoken bisexuality of many Latin American males, it explains one important characteristic: its focus on "sexual aim" - as opposed to a focus on "sexual object-choice". That is, a focus on the act of fucking for pleasure rather than a focus on fucking the "right" person of the opposite sex.

The male population becomes a "hard to reach" population because within their troubled identity, men do not see themselves at risk of contracting a virus that attacks weak *maricones* [fags]. Women, again, are left out of the sexual tension. Male homosexuals who until recently called each other *entendidos* [the one who is in on the secret, who understands] and *locas* [crazy females], as signs of secrecy and weakness, are now calling themselves "gays," which marks a departure from their resigned position as "marginals," but also marks a dangerous imitation of a partially understood North American figure established during the 70s. The risk of acquiring HIV mainly resides in the misleading attitude that only *pasivos* [passive sexual partners, men or women] are prone to acquiring HIV from sheltered *activos* [active sexual partner]. *Pasivos* take on the female roles and *activos* remain *machos* regardless of the danger. This "aim-oriented" focus makes sexuality a more fluid affair and redefines homophobia (which in North America is at the centre of HIV/AIDS education). In a North American context homophobia means fear of same gender sexuality and emotionality; in a Latin American context it needs to be re-conceptualized as a fear of being seen as weak and passive.



In practice CChPS has opened its activities to people with many interests and to all social classes. Its positive message of HIV/AIDS prevention has been particularly heard by those who needed to work in a safe space that did not discriminate because of their different sexual identity or social class. However, while CChPS is a safe and open space for "lower" socio-economic peoples of the gay population of Santiago, gay middle class professionals are reluctant to be seen or associated with it. Heterosexual professionals (women and men) actively participate in the activities of CChPS, mainly as contributors. This fragmentation may seem odd, but it can be explained by the rigid class distinctions that are imposed (and self-imposed) on people in Chilean society. Gay men respond to stereotypes that describe them as fashionable and classy, but these stereotypes break down in such a diverse group of people. Many of the volunteers, collaborators, monitors and directors of CChPS are people who come from a political background, who actively participated in political parties and are well educated and sensitive about issues surrounding class and politics. This gradual development of political sensibility is observable in the current discourses of political parties in Chile that are including previously unheard topics that include violence against women, abortion, divorce and sexuality.

North American HIV/AIDS prevention education, in its pretense of neutrality, refusal to judge and objectivity, has been successful in the task-oriented step of delivering information, but not in educating for change because it does not offer people viable solutions or strong motivation to modify their behaviour in an environment that is hostile. It is imperative that AIDS educators resist the unsatisfying explanations provided by the dependence and imitation theories that were so popular throughout the 70s and 80s. These uni-directional, cause-and-effect theories do not satisfactorily explain the cultural and social processes that so called "developed" or "underdeveloped" countries are experiencing. Understanding such cultural processes allows us to understand the social actors who perform them. To understand why HIV/AIDS prevention education programmes for Latinas/os in North America have failed, we must understand the poor fit between educational concepts such as "participation," "conscientization" and "democracy," and the "reality" of the target audiences; we must also acknowledge the ethnocentrism with which these projects have been designed and implemented. Cultural elements specific to a white, middle class, literate, able-bodied culture are embodied in phrases and slogans such as "coming out," "gay community," "homophobia," "safe sex," "just say no," and "high = high risk;" and these phrases are then used to "educate" (read instruct) ethnic minorities. To understand lifelong, sustained and non-discriminatory HIV/AIDS education we must understand that most scenarios will always be saturated by the tensions produced by overlapping and conflicting experiences of reality.

When border-crossing into North American countries these culturally specific tensions are increased, as a new identity is thrust upon Latinas/os: the immigrants. Being an immigrant is an experience fraught with danger and many pitfalls. Long standing stereotypes and misconceptions configure the image of the Latina/o that is received with an immoral form of indifference in North America. This places Latinas/os at a greater risk for welfare dependence, drug and alcohol dependence, unwanted pregnancies, crime, STDs, HIV acquisition and AIDS development. Just as Latinas/os are not "naturally" a problem, their lives are not fateful and naturally determined. What we know about HIV/AIDS prevention education is that it has little or nothing to do with what is spoken/unspoken and practiced/unpracticed at the street level. There is a gap between the formal discourse of "what we ought to do" and their/our street talk packed with jokes, anecdotes, stories, whispers, and sarcasm that bluntly spits out "we do what we do," "I am what I am" and "one has to die of something anyway." This is because there is a profound indifference (and sometimes open resistance) to introducing aspects that are culturally relevant to ethno-cultural communities. The experiences and understandings of both *Gringos* and Latinos who have crossed the borders leave *a flor de piel* [at the surface of the skin] the conflict between official discourse and street discourse, between an ethnocentric representation of culture and the hybrid identities of Latinos.

Francisco Ibañez
is a graduate student
in the Faculty of Education
at Simon Fraser University.

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Rubén Martínez

Corazón del Rocanrol

Mexico City, December 1990

Reprinted from *The Other Side,* courtesy of Verso Books.

Under a zinc-colored sky, a block away from the railroad tracks and next to a buzzing electrical substation, a young man with hair immaculately slicked back, wearing an oversize gray jacket, a starched white shirt, a fat 1940s tie and black baggies with fob swinging low, takes giant strides as he leads me down the asphalt corridor toward the crowd ahead. "Now, you're going to see the true history of Mexican *rocanrol*!" he calls back over his shoulder, flapping along through the warm, smoggy breeze. I scramble after him as we dive into the marketplace. Throngs of Mexico City youth in all manner of *rockero* regalia surround us: *chavas* in leather miniskirts or torn jeans, *chavos* wearing Metallica T-shirts, James Dean leather jackets or Guatemalan-style *indigena* threads. We walk past stall after rickety stall, scraps of splintered wood and twine holding up faded blue tarpaulins, where the vendors - young *punkeros* or *trasheros* (thrash fans), leathered heavy *metaleros*, Peace and Love *jipitecas* and the working-class followers of Mexican raunch-rock heroes El Tri known as *chavos banda* - sell cassettes, CDs, LPs and singles, bootlegs and imports, as well as posters, steel-toed boots, skull earrings, fan mags, spiked bracelets and collars, incense and feathered roach clips. Ghettoblasters blast Holland's Pestilence, Mexico's El Tri, Argentina's Charly Garcia, Ireland's U2.

"*! Tenemos punk, tenemos heavy metal, tenemos en español y en inglés, tenemos al Jim Morrison y El Tri!*" yells a young vendor, exactly as any one of Mexico's army of street vendors hawks rosaries or Chiclets. His is but one voice among hundreds at El Chopo, as the sprawling swap meet is known.

It's Saturday afternoon, some ten years after this institution was born, and the vendors tell me that the crowd of about three thousand is on the light side. "What's *chingon* is that there's no divisions here between the different *rockeros*," proclaims Ricardo, a high-school kid in a T-shirt emblazoned with the logo of the punk band LARD, a Vision Streetwear beret and hip-hop hi-tops. "It doesn't matter whether you're hardcore or *trashero*."

Mexican authorities haven't distinguished between styles either: all are equally suspect. El Chopo is often raided by police eager to club skinheads and longhairs alike, Ricardo and his young punk friends say, as a jipiteca strolls by with a gleaming white Fender Precision bass, telling everyone that he'll let it go for one million pesos.

It isn't long before my zoot-suited guide is recognized.

"Don't you play with la Maldita?" kids inquire, before asking for autographs. Roco, the lead singer of Maldita Vecindad y los Hijos del Quinto Patio (roughly, The Damned Neighborhood and the Sons of the Tenement) greets all comers effusively. "And don't forget to make the gig tonight! At LUCC, about midnight!" "*!Ahorale, hijo!*"

We're already hopelessly late for a meeting with Maldita's manager on the other side of the city (a trip that takes about an hour and a half by subway and bus), but Roco is intent on getting me freebies. Already I'm loaded with copies of *La Pus Moderna*, one of the city's underground magazines, along with more than a dozen LPs and cassettes by groups with names like Atoxxxico, Sedicion, Psicodencia.
"It's the craziest city, *hijo*, " Roco says, standing in place for a rare moment before a stall featuring a lithograph of Marilyn Monroe hanging next to another of Che Guevara. "Anything can happen here."

"We've received influences from all over, " he adds, the words spilling out rapid and vowel-twisted, in classic Mexico City, or *chilango* slang. "From the North, from the South, from Europe, It might be true that rock began in the North, but now it's all ours."

"Rock *en español*," reads the publicity slogan, "Music for a New Generation." Since the mid-1980s, in Mexico, Argentina and Spain, *rocanrol* has been billed as the perpetual Next Big Thing. Record labels, mostly the Spanish and Latin American subsidiaries of majors like BMG, Sony or WEA, signed dozens of bands. Stadium gigs drew huge crowds at most of the big capitals in Latin America.

Key groups lived up to the advance publicity: Mexico's Caifanes, a dark-pop band reminiscent of The Cure, sold a respectable 100,000 copies of their first album; a subsequent *cumbia* rock single, "La negra Tomasa," moved half a million. Other acts, such as Radio Futura and La Union from Spain, Los Prisioneros from Chile, and Miguel Mateos and Soda Stereo from Argentina, sold well and garnered airplay throughout Latin America.

Impresarios also looked toward the USA and its relatively untapped Latino youth market: there have been impressive Latin-rock gigs in Los Angeles and other major American cities since 1988. "L.A. is a meeting ground for rock from Latin America and Spain," says Enrique Blanc, a deejay at Rancho Cucamunga's KNSE, one of the few Spanish-rock supporters in the States. "And there are plenty of people with

money who are interested." Marusa Reyes, a transplanted *chilanga* producer living in Los Angeles who handles both Caifanes and Maldita Vecindad, succeeded in convincing Jane's Addiction to book a few shows with a special added attraction: none other than Maldita Vecindad y los Hijos del Quinto Patio.

Roco and the Chopo crowd want to shake Mexican culture down to its very roots. But these heavier *rockeros* are still on the margins-and not because they necessarily like it there. It's the pop rockers like Menudo that have become megastars. As one veteran of the Mexico City rock wars put it, "The joke here has always been that *this* is the year real *rocanrol* is going to make it-and we've

Maldita Vecindad

been saying it for thirty years."

In the summer of 1985, a group of *chavos* from different Mexico City *barrios* began holding jam sessions: a piano player, a vocalist and six percussionists (water bottles, pots and pans), but nothing experimental about it. "Either we waited to save up and buy equipment, or we played with what we had," recalls Roco, his leg bouncing nervously up and down on the bar stool.

The city around them was on its knees, again, enduring the worst economic crisis since the revolution of 1910. A profound malaise contaminated all areas of life. Then, on the morning of September 19, 1985, Mexico City lurched over its liquid foundation, the ancient volcanic lake it was built upon.

"It was total devastation, cabrón," Roco says, leaning into me and yelling over UB40's "Red Red Wine." "Whole barrios darkened, without electricity, water running everywhere, people carrying coffins, looking for their loved ones. The people of the barrios had to organize themselves to survive. All of a sudden, people I'd seen my entire life but didn't know, I knew."

Citizens' committees organized relief efforts much better than the government, which has spurned international aid for the first two days after the quake, claiming it had "everything under control," until a second devastating *terremoto* made it clear that nobody controlled anything.

The city was transformed by the experience. Out of the rubble there arose all manner of new populist political personalities, including Super Barrio, a masked wrestler, whom the earthquake turned into an activist/performance artist who to this day shows up in his yellow cape and red suit wherever slumlords do their foul deeds. Cuahtémoc Cardenas nearly tossed the ruling PRI (Partido Revolucionario Institucional) dynasty out of office (something that may yet happen). In the midst of this upheaval, Maldita Vecindad y los Hijos del Quinto Patio were born.

The other members of La Maldita join Roco and myself at our table, weaving through a crowd whose attire would fit in well in New York's East Village or on L.A.'s Melrose Avenue. These *niños bien* have paid 50,000 pesos (about $17) for Maldita's *tocada*, their gig. We're in the Zona Rosa, the Pink Zone, at Rockstock, a club whose logo bears a suspicious resemblance to the Hard Rock Café's.

In comes Pato, curly locks peeking out from under his trademark gray fedora, a veteran of several vanguard Mexican bands. Sax, at twenty-two the youngest of the group, is leaning toward a U2 look with long, straight hair and loose gauzy white shirt. He's Maldita's purest musical talent, and moonlights with mariachi bands in the famous Garibaldi Plaza. Lobo, a dark, leathery *rockero*, is the quiet one who batters the congas. Elfin-smiling and clean-cut Aldo, born in Argentina but now a full-fledged Mexico City boy, is on bass. And Pacho, the oldest at twenty-nine, with head shaved close on one side and exploding curly on the other, is the drummer, an intellectual who studied anthropology at Mexico's finest university, UNAM. (Roco, too: he's finishing his degree in journalism.)

La Maldita huddle close together sipping Coronas and smoking Marlboros in Rockstock's cagelike no-smoking section. Their look–resonances of James Dean, Tin Tan (a Mexican comedic great of the 1940s and 1950s, who popularized Chicano/Pachuco swing style), U2 and the Mexico City *barrio* kids of Buñuel's *Los Olvidados*–clashes wildly with that of the surrounding scenesters. Roco's wearing a pair of mammoth black work boots. He notices me eyeing them.

"They're just like my father's, *cabròn*," he says, lifting his foot up and inviting me to tap the steel toe. "They cost sixty thousand pesos, *cabròn*–not like those European ones that all the *niños bien* wear, that sell for three hundred thousand here in the Zona Rosa.'

Maldita and other young bands, like Café Tacuba, Santa Sabina and Tex Tex, lash out at the Americanization of the Mexican middle class, a tendency led by media giant Televisa. This corporation prides itself on nationalism, a tune that's made it millions and that the PRI government has also used to help keep itself in power for the last seventy years. It's a bastion of national pride, but Televisa is also accused of promoting "*malinchismo*," a term that goes back five hundred years to La Malinche, Hernàn Cortés's Aztec translator, the most famous traitor of Mexico's history.

Televisa's is a no-lose strategy: by backing both national and *gringo*, mainstream and underground, it's cornered all markets. But somehow, the Americanized acts always seem to fill the screen. Pato tells the story of the time Maldita did *not* meet Madonna at L.A.'s trendy Club Vertigo. Seems that somebody told somebody that Madonna was in the club the night of the band's first L.A. appearance. Though the band members swear they never met her, tabloid headlines hit home instantly–the blonde goddess had given the sons of Mexico her blessing. Upon returning to Mexico City, the band was deluged with press queries about their all-night party with Madonna.

"They wanted to know about her, nothing about us," recalls Aldo. Horrified, the band called a press conference to set the record straight. "But it made no difference," Aldo says, finishing his beer before he heads backstage. "They still ask us about her all the time."

When Maldita bounds on stage, they start without so much as a hello. They play with a precise fury, styles merged, overturned and burned. Ska gives way to funk, funk to rap, rap to *son veracruzano*, to *danzòn*, to *cumbia* and mambo on one of their anthemic numbers, "Bailando":

No tengo ni puta idea porque quiero hoy salir
lo ultimo de mis ahorros me lo gastaré en ti
en la fabrica dijeron, "Ya no nos sirves, Joaquín"
para no perder dineros nos corrieron a dos mil
hoy es viernes por la noche todos salen a bailar
yo me apunto en el desmoche tengo ganas de gritar: !Ya no aguanto mas, quiero bailar!*

*I don't have a fucking idea why I want to go out tonight/but I'll spend the last of my savings on you/at the factory they said, "We don't need you anymore, Joaquín"/they fired two thousand so as not to lose any more money/it's Friday tonight, everyone's going out to dance/sign me up in the madness, I really want to scream:/I can't stand it anymore, I want to dance!

A few kids sing along, some skitter perfunctorily about the dance floor. It seems the *niños bien* don't want to risk tearing a thread. But Roco doesn't care: he's bouncing up and down, splaying his legs like Elvis being chased by *la migra*, diving down and nearly kissing the floor with the mike stand. His face flashes a grin, a sneer; now he jerks his head back repeatedly, as though he's being slapped by interrogators, while rapping his way through "Apañon," a song about police abuse of *barrio* youth:

En un sucio callejón, despiertas sin recordar
nada de lo que pasó, te duelen hasta los pies
no traes dinero no traes zapatos y ya no traes pelo
sales de ese callejon, !ODIANDO!**

**In a dirty alley, you wake without remembering/anything about what happened, even your feet hurt/you don't have a jacket, you don't have money you don't have shoes and you don't even have hair/you leave that alley, HATING.

Jesus, I'm thinking, Maldita have blasted on the wind of free-jazz sax past decades of balding folk trios, put the lie to the World Beaters by merging mambo, *danzón*, R&B, ska and rap–within each song–as pleading it all on stage with the rage and rapture of boys possessed by the most sacred of rock demons, and these kids (black-stockinged *chicas*, Mel Gibson *chavos*) aren't seriously dancing.

When Maldita's roadies begin to break down the equipment, UB40's "Red Red Wine" again blares through the speakers. Suddenly, five hundred Zona Rosa kids are singing along in English, dancing so cool.

While the *niños bien* pride themselves on their Americanized hipness at Rockstock, elsewhere in the city a bunch of long-haired, wannabe *gringo* kids from Tampa, Florida, are playing before another crowd, having been billed as death-metal heroes from the North. On Televisa, naturally, there is a fake blonde reading the news off a prompter. And all across the city on billboards and posters hung in liquor stores, buxom blondes are tonguing beer bottles, sucking cigarettes. Looks like La Malinche is alive and well and as sexy as she was five hundred years ago.

Yo no soy un rebelde sin causa
ni tampoco un desenfrenado
yo lo único que quiero hacer
es bailar rocanrol . . .*

Los Locos del Ritmo, circa 1960

*I'm not a rebel without a cause/nor a hoodlum/the only thing I want to do/is to dance rock & roll . . .

The battle for the cultural soul of Mexican youth may well be as old as La Malinche. And Mexico City intellectuals are only half joking when they say that postmodernism actually originated here five hundred years ago, with the Conquest and its clash of radically different sensibilities. The tango, swing and mambo have each arrived from distant lands and transformed the city's style. Even so, most of what was promoted on radio, vinyl and the silver screen through the first half of the century was the sacred la *cultura nacional*–mariachis and romantic balladeers like Augustín Lara or Pedro Infante.

When the first leather jackets and Elvis pompadours appeared on the streets of the *barrios*, the over-forty guardians of culture, nervous that Mexico City youths would arm themselves with switchblades and roar Harleys through elegant Zona Rosa establishments à la Marlon Brando in *The Wild One*, mounted an all-out assault. Films like *The Blackboard Jungle* were pulled from movie theaters and newspapers apprised the populace of the dangers of *rocanroleando*: gang violence, lax morality, and, especially, the destruction of *la cultura nacional*. Maybe the single thing the government, the Catholic Church and the Marxist left could all agree on was that Mexican youth was imperiled by the Protestant, decadent and individualistic North. But *bandas* like Los Locos del Ritmo, Los Apson Boys, Los Hooligans, Los Crazy Boys and Enrique Guzmán y los Teen Tops all had avid followers.

Most songs from the early years were covers sung either in English or awkwardly translated into Spanish ("Hotel Descorazonado," "Rock de la carcel," "Pedro Pistolas," "Un gran pedazo de amor"). Gradually, however, the translated covers of American hits became more than literal adaptations; Mexican *rockeros* began rewriting the lyrics. "Under the Boardwalk," for example, became "En un café". While these tunes were often fluff, the feel of the songs was subtly shifting toward a Mexicanness that, many years later, would seem to exemplify the best of the country's rock.

Lest the Old World version of *cultura nacional* be forever ruined, the *oficialistas* made one final attempt to crush the *rockeros*. Elvis Presley, undisputed king in 1957, was their weapon. In what was probably an unsubstantiated story, Elvis was quoted in a border newspaper as saying, "I'd prefer to kiss three Negro women than one Mexican."

Headlines across the country. "!INDIGNACIÓN POR INSULTO A LAS MEXICANAS!" "!INICIA FUERTE BOICOT CONTRA EL INSOLENTE ARTISTA!" Radio stations sponsored massive public record-shatterings. "Love Me Tender" was yanked from playlists. But, as Federico Arana, Mexico's premier rock historian, points out in his *Guaraches de ante azul* (Blue Suede *Guaraches*), the conspiracy was bound to fail.

"The best that you can do for a person or group to reaffirm their ideals is to persecute them and surround their lives with prohibitions," writes Arana. "The story of the three kisses actually helped Mexican *rocanrol*."

Ayer tuve un sueño, fue sensacional
los pueblos vivían en paz
nunca había soñado nada igual . . .*

Los Pasos (Spain), circa 1970

*Yesterday, I had a dream, it was great/all the nations lived in peace/I'd never dreamed anything like it . . .

In the late sixties and early seventies, rock reached into every corner of Mexico, Central and South America as more bands bypassed covers and explored the peace and love idealism of the time, with original songs in Spanish. In Mexico, rock had become a solid underground christened *la onda*, or "the wave" (a term that survives today in all manner of colloquial

speech": ?Qué *onda*?", "*¡Que buena onda*!").

In 1971 at Avándaro, on the outskirts of Mexico City, anywhere between one hundred thousand (government figure) and half a million (*rockeros* version) *chavos de la onda* attended a two-day festival featuring bands such as Three Souls in My Mind, Love Army and El Ritual. The spectacle was a mirror image of Woodstock, right down to one of the organizers stepping up to the mike and warning the kids about a bad batch of LSD. The authorities braced for a predicted riot, but the *rockeros* camped out peacefully under the rain with little food or warm clothes and, yes, plenty of pot and acid.

"The fact that so many kids got together in one place really scared the government," recalls Sergio Arau, who later formed Botellita de Jerez, one of the most important bands of the eighties. The government had every reason to be nervous. It was the first large gathering of youth since 1968, the year the army massacred several hundred protesting students in the Tlatelolco district of Mexico City. Since Avándaro, the Mexican government has rarely granted permits for large outdoor rock concerts.

For Carlos Monsiváis, one of the Mexican Left's best-known essayists, *la onda* still seemed more of an imitation of the North's hippie culture than an authentic national discovery, except in one important regard. "*La onda* was the first movement in modern Mexico that, from an apolitical position, rebelled against institutionalized concepts [of culture]," he writes in *Amor perdido*, a collection of essays on the sixties in Mexico. "And it eloquently revealed the extinction of cultural hegemony."

Throughout the early seventies, *jipitecas* wearing *juaraches*, loose sandals with auto-tire soles, hitchhiked across Mexico on hallucinogenic pilgrimages, a tattered copy of *Las enseñanzas de don Juan* stuffed into their rucksacks. Even Joaquín Villalobos, today the top commandante of El Salvador's FMLN guerrilla army, admitted that there is room for *rocanrol* in *la revolución*–probably half the cadres of any given guerilla army listened to groups like Los Pasos in the mid-1970s, not to mention Pink Floyd and Led Zeppelin.

Salvadoran Marxist friends have boasted to me of sneaking a few tokes of pot and listening to rock on battered tape recorders, breaking away from clandestine military training on El Salvador's remote beaches.

By the early eighties, however, Mexican rock was on the verge of extinction. Only a handful of Mexican bands survived the doldrums of the late seventies–punk hadn't arrived to save *rocanrol* here as it had in the North–and El Tri, formerly Three Souls in My Mind, was the only solid draw. The battle between English and Spanish, North and South, had been virtually conceded to the *gringos*. The city had a bad case of Saturday Night Fever.

After generations of *rockeros* had done their best to overthrow the *cultura nacional* by singing in English and bleaching their hair, it took a few radicals to discover the obvious–that they didn't need to go north to take back rock-n'-roll. Botellita de Jerez announced the birth of a new sound: "*Guacarock*" (*guaca* as much a reference to *guacamole*, the sacred national snack, as to *guacatelas*, an onomatopoeic term for vomitting). Botellita reclaimed popular traditions like the *norteña* and *cumbia*, as they ridiculed American rock megaheroes and *el PRI*. Mexico City youth were joining their cultural roots with the heart of rock-n'-roll.

Considering how well these worlds merged, one begins to wonder whether rock is really foreign to Mexico City at all. Ask Roco, and he'll say that the blues could have begun only here, what with the city's deep ties to Afro-Caribbean culture and its long-standing love affair with death. And rock itself? Where else could it have exploded into being other than in the biggest city in the world, where soot and sex and social unrest are legendary? Even rap: Roco claims the music actually originated in Mexico with Tin Tan and fellow golden-era comedian El Piporro. "Just listen to the raps on the streets of the city," he says. "The vendors are the best rappers in the world!"

After Botellita, frenetic movement ensued: hardcore punk (Atóxxxico, Masacre '68), industrial disco rap (Santa Sabina), roots rock (the perennial El Tri and younger bands like Tex Tex), dark pop (Caifanes), straight pop (Neón, Fobia, Los Amantes de Lola), and bands like Maldita and Café Tacuba, with their crazy blends of styles from North and South–all churning out Spanish-only products.

"There was an explosion," says Luis Gerardo Salas, executive director of Nucleo Radio Mil, a network of seven radio stations in Mexico City, one of which is dedicated full-time to rock. "Everyone in Mexico seemed to want to be a *rocanrolero*. People discovered that there was rock in Spanish with the same quality as in English."

The *hoyos fonquis*, underground clubs that spontaneously appeared in poor neighborhoods, were the heart of the new scene. Bands would set up in the middle of the street, running electricity straight from somebody's living room. "All of a sudden, you'd see smoke rising around the stage," says Lalo Tex, lead singer of Tex Tex. "But it wasn't from a smoke machine. It was the dust being kicked up by the kids dancing on the asphalt."

A childlike awe overwhelms me as we pull up to the block-long monolith that houses the biggest media conglomerate in Latin America. We walk past the security checkpoint and wait in an antiseptic hallway. I glance at a pair of memoranda on the wall: one says you'll be fired if you're fifteen minutes late, the other urges employees to attend a seminar entitled "How to Enhance Your Image." Tonight Maldita enters Televisa's domain, for a live appearance on Galavisión, a cable infotainment network.

To be inside the monster, finally! After nearly three decades of watching it in my Mexican grandmother's bedroom in Los Angeles: all those macho heroes and child stars, Jacobo Zabludowsky, the dour-faced anchor with the Mickey Mouse earphones, and Raúl Velasco, variety show host with the sweet "This is our glorious national culture" voice. Zabludowsky and Velasco are among the most powerful men in Mexico, friends to presidents and corporate executives the world over.

Though it is often considered synonymous with *el PRI*, Televisa may be more powerful than the party. It is one tentacle of the country's most powerful business cartel, the Monterrey Group, which owns over 90 percent of television outlets, numerous radio stations, an important record label, and, to boot, the country's biggest brewery. If you want to reach the masses, Televisa is the only way.

Maldita lounge about smoking cigs, antsy to get the performance over with. "Our real audience is in the *barrios*, at the universities," Pacho says, a little defensively. So entering the realm of Televisa is a contradiction, right? "We aren't just going to do Telvisa's bidding–we aren't about that," he scoffs.

The Marxist youth of the sixties and seventies would never have walked through Televisa's glass doors–except with machine guns. Even today, some look upon *rockeros* like Maldita and Caifanes (who have been on several Televisa shows) as *vendidos*, sellouts. Maldita insists that reaching the mass audience is crucial. But what will happen on the day that they decide to sing a song, say, about political prisoners on a Televisa program? Or burn the Mexican flag? Or use profanity on a single?

While the anchors read the news off prompters a few feet away, the band takes its place on the pristinely waxed stage, before elegant bronze urns gushing water. The newscast breaks for a commercial and, a few second later, on a talk-show set at the other end of the studio, entertainment hosts Rocío Villa García and Mauricio Chávez (she an aging, tall fake blonde in a red dress, he a light-complected innocent in preppy sweater and black tie) shuffle papers and listen to the countdown. "And now, with us tonight is a group of fine young men . . ." The studio fills with a loud recording of the only song that's gotten airplay, "Mojado," the tale of a father who makes the perilous journey to the USA but dies along the border "like a pig, suffocated in a truck." These tragic lyrics are set, somewhat bizarrely, to a blend of highly danceable tropical and flamenco rhythms.

Televisa staffers crowd the plate-glass windows that seal off the newsroom, watching the band make an only half-serious effort to lip synch to the recording. Restrained at first, Roco begins jumping tentatively, but it's not until the second song, the Veracruz-style "Morenaza," that the band really loosens up. Sax spreads his arms and snaps his fingers, twirls about. Pato sneers, scratching ska-ishly at his guitar. Pacho and Lobo are bashing away on percussion–which, apparently, you're not supposed to do when lip-synching–you can hear the skins being pummeled even above the deafening monitors. Aldo plucks his bass with a vengeance. And Roco is now all over the waxed floor, collapsing his legs, flailing them outward in a leap, skidding and sliding . . . this image is being seen all over Latin America and Europe, I'm thinking, but twenty minutes from now, it'll be back to the soap operas and wheezing professors discussing the Aztec legacy. And then I notice it: from the moment he hit the stage, Roco's black work boots (just like his father's) have been scuffing the Televisa floor like jet tires on a runway. Rocío Villa García is drop-jawed in horror. Technicians are making exaggerated hand signals, trying to settle Roco down. But no! Roco is blind to the world, on the verge of knocking himself out dancing as the song slowly fades.

Out bounds Villa García, all smiles for the interview. "Roco," she bubbles, "just how is it that you dance around with those *heavy* boots?" Roco looks down at them, and for the first time notices the dozens of black streaks radiating from the mike. Before he can answer, Villa García is already into her next question. "Now just what is that about Madonna showing up at your concert in Los Angeles?"

In the late 1980s, encouraged by the success of such Argentine *rockeros* as Soda Stereo and Charly García, as well as by the birth of *guacarock* in Mexico, the labels began signing again. BMG's Ariola led the way, producing Mexican acts Los Caifanes, Maldita Vecindad, Fobia, Neón and Los Amantes de Lola. A suspiciously supportive Mexican government also helped by allowing a few rock acts from Argentina to stage large outdoor gigs. At the Plaza de Toros in 1987, twenty-five thousand *rockeros* attended the biggest *rock en español* gig since Avándaro.

In 1988, the hit that promoters, label execs, radio program directors and *rockeros* had all been waiting for arrived: "La Negra Tomasa" by Caifanes. The song was a slightly electrified, *cumbia*-styled cover of an old Cuban standard, and it sold over half a million copies–more than any other Mexican single in the thirty-year history of *rocanrol*. It seemed as if rock's Latin hour had finally come.

Not quite. No other band came close to matching the sales of "La negra Tomasa": most acts topped out at well under 50,000 units. Maldita barely managed 25,000. "There was a crash," says Jorge Mondragón, a Mexico City rock promoter. "People were saying that *rock en español* had only been a fad."

The reasons cited for the crash were familiar: bad label promotion, unscrupulous concert promoters, conservative radio, government censorship.

"Let's face it," says Giselle Trainor, an Ariola label manager. "It's not as easy to sell this concept as it is to sell Lucerita." The teen star's voice is nonexistent, but her long legs and fair hair have made her a Televisa darling. "And if other labels don't start supporting rock, it's going to collapse."

Soon after the initial boom, poprockers like "Mexican Madonna" Alejandra Guzmán (daughter of Enrique Guzmán of Los Teen Tops, the *rockero* heroes of the sixties) achieved stardom, propelled by Televisa's massive promotional machine.

"Rock was taken over by people who aren't *rockeros*," says Nucleo Radio Mil's Gerardo Salas. "Sometimes I think that the whole *rock en español* movement was planned and promoted in such a way that pop rockers like Timbiriche and Menudo would end up winning."

Pop rock, one Televisa promoter told me, is most successful with the middle class, Mexico's strongest consumer force, and the bulwark of the PRI. Working-class *chavos de la banda*, who are more likely to listen to the underground, are not part of the equation. "They're dirty, violent," I was told by the promoter, who complained about violence at *hoyos fonquis* and at some of the few larger scale concerts (a violence, *rockeros* say, that is usually provoked by the authorities). "The underground may just as well roll over and die. We don't want to have anything to do with that crowd, and we never will."

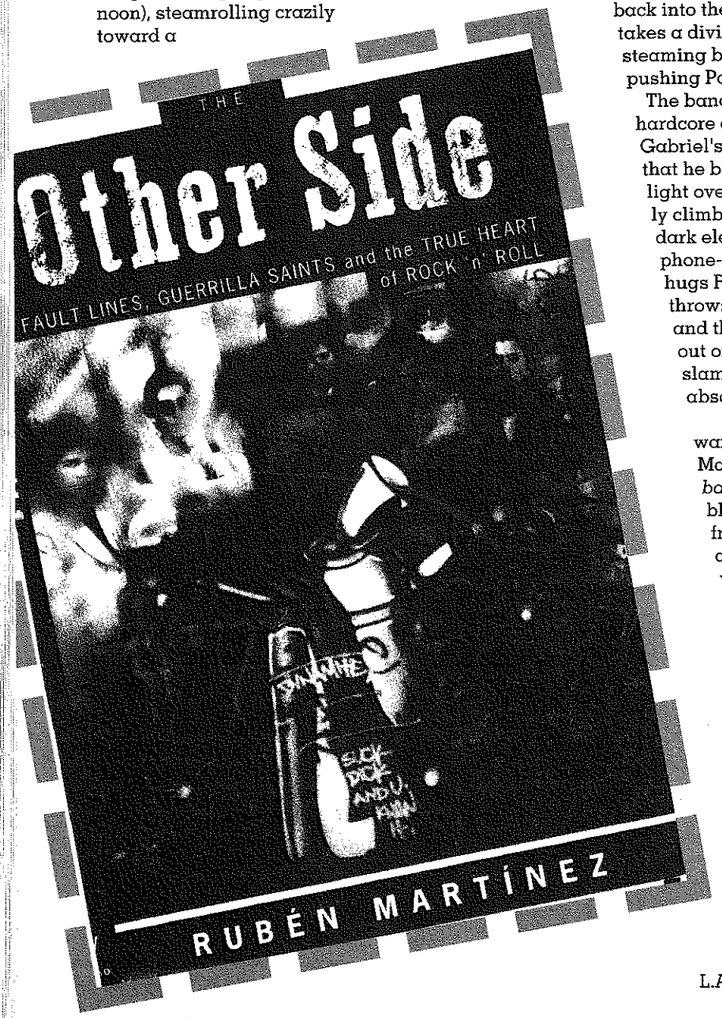
Bouncing around El LUCC, a dingy concrete vault light-years away from Rockstock in the south of the city, Roco has his arm around Saúl Hernández, lead singer of Los Caifanes, slurring: "Come on, *cabrón*, admit it. You guys sound like The Cure. *Ya no mames, güey*

And Saúl comes back, rocking back and forth on his heels: "Not everything has to be so obvious like in your songs. There's an interior landscape, too, *cabrón*."

By the time Maldita stumbles onto the stage, the walls of the club are sweating. Everyone's hair is pasted onto their foreheads in the dripping wet air. I inch my way through the crowd, slipping on stray bottles on the unseen floor below. The balconies seem on the verge of collapse, dozens of kids hanging over the railing.

The sound coming from the stage convulses, lurches: Roco, Sax, Pato, Aldo and Lobo are floating away on tequila-inspired riffs (they've been partying since early afternoon), steamrolling crazily toward a great abyss, drunk boys daring each other as they look down into the darkness and laugh. The anarchy doesn't perturb the crowd in the least. On the dance floor a thousand bodies match Maldita's wild energy leap for leap.

Roco loses his breath during the melodramatic, held note on "Morenaza." Sax stumbles through solos, barely keeping up with the rushed rhythms, flapping across the stage in his loose shirt, waving his arms, giggling. Lobito is oblivious to everything but his own private torpor, slamming away at bloodied congas (he ripped his hand open during the second song).



Punkish youths leap on stage and tumble back into the crowd. Now Roco himself takes a diving leap of faith into the mass of steaming bodies. Now Sax. Now Roco is pushing Pato, guitar and all, into the pit.

The band launches into "Querida," a hardcore cover of pop megastar Juan Gabriel's hit. Roco leaps skyward so high that he bangs his head on the red spotlight overhead. Saúl Hernández suddenly climbs onto the stage in all his tall, dark elegance, plays with a microphone-become-penis between his legs, hugs Roco like a long-lost brother, throws his head back, closes his eyes, and then without warning he too dives out onto the dance floor, where the slamming youths edge ever closer to absolute madness.

As the crowd filed out afterward–punks, ex-hippies, ex-Marxists, kids from the *barrios*–Lobo is nursing his hand, bleary-eyed in the arms of his girlfriend. Aldo is downing more beer at the bar. Pacho, the only one who played the gig straight, is talking with a small group of fans. Roco is nowhere to be found. Sax is back behind the percussion section, weeping into a friend's arms–in a few minutes he'll make a bizarre attempt at taking off his pants and pass out.

Tonight, Maldita have fallen apart. Tomorrow they'll wake up, hung-over as hell, in the city where *rocanrol* never quite dies.

Rubén Martínez is a journalist, poet and staff writer at L.A. Weekly.

Pilar Riaño

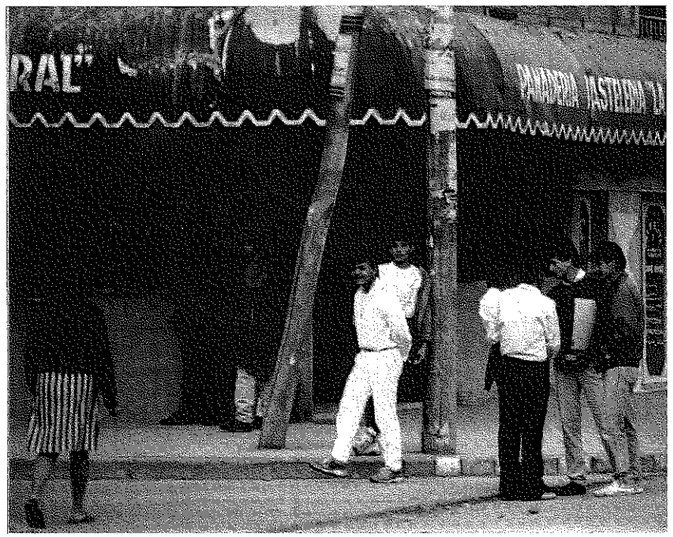
THE GALLADAS OF THE BARRIOS OF BOGOTA: ACTORS IN SPACE AND TIME

Popular Culture Studies in Latin America has criticized the reductionist approach of essentialist, romantic or exclusivist views of popular culture, insisting that "the popular" should be approached as a hetereogenous, dynamic and conflictive cultural matrix. In the case of Latin America, this cultural matrix is grounded in a history of colonization in which, despite the destruction of the political and social structures of indigenous populations, indigenous knowledge and cultural forms could not be completely exterminated. The peculiarities of colonial history of the region have accentuated ethnic and cultural fusions.

"*Mestizaje*" represents not only the defining element of this popular cultural expression, but also the key device for social, economic and symbolic interaction of Latin American societies. This fusion, however, has not dissolved indigenous and local cultures into a unified "*mestizo*" culture. "*Mestizaje*" in the Latin American context represents not just cultural blending, but the creation of a new identity, "the *mestizo* identity," that is continuously and sectorally re-created with new fusions: the rural and the urban, the massive and the popular, the "modern" and the "premodern," the ethnic and the new social actors. Plurality and "impurity" are probably the best descriptive elements in approaching the curious mixture of cultural backgrounds and the systems of values contained in, for example, the cultural practices of poor urban dwellers. The various cultural practices of street youth of the *barrios* of Bogota that are described in this article illustrate the dynamics of such *mestizaje*.

"Yes brother everybody changes for good or for bad and they are distinct and I see the *barrio* and in despite of all the buildings and whatever I believe this is the same shit like when I grew up, like my best friend and my best brother, they never let me down. As the song says 'Time passes/ and we grow older' and I believe more fucked up than before. But, whatever, the best school I ever had is my *barrio*, the university of life, here in Kennedy..."

(Paco el Tenaz)



April 16, 1988. It was 8 p.m when we reached the bus parking lot of the *barrio* "María Eugenia." From there, an unlighted and unpaved space, we could hear the lively noises of a clear and warm Saturday night. The smell of dust was in the air: dust spread out everywhere, on walls, doors and windows, covering stalls, sidewalks and buses. However, below layers of dust, a colorful scenery could be perceived. Houses in bright colors, doors and windows in combinations of colors. As we started walking, a cloud of dust circled our feet.

Surrounded by three rows of houses, the parking lot is located at the south-west side of the *barrio*. On the south-east side of the parking lot two young couples enjoyed the privileged darkness of the corner. In a straight line to the bus stop, three young members of a *gallada* [young males group] stood by the outside stall of the *fritanguería* [fried food vendor] drinking beer. The fresh smell of their still-wet hair was filtered by the smell of the pork sausages, *morcillas* [blood puddings] and fried potatoes on display in the stall.

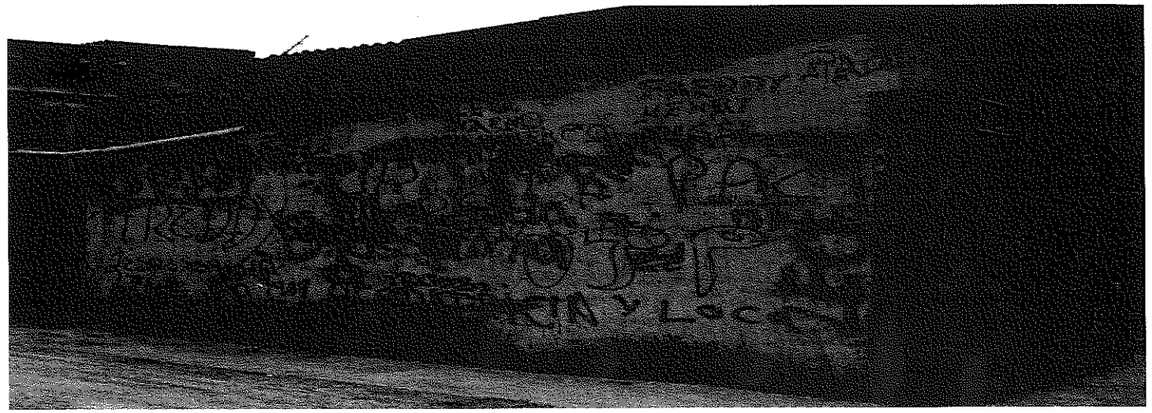
Miguel, a *barrio* resident and a member of one of its *galladas*, was walking with me. Looking at the three young men, he commented: "You see, they're getting ready for the night, they look very *pintosos* [sharp]. They're getting together later to move on to their favourite *tienda*, [small corner store]. By this time, if they've not been invited to a party, they'll go find one." The three and some other guys from the same block have hung out together since their childhood. Their friendship is based on a *ñero* relation [fellowship relation] of common likes and mutual help.

The gallada, an informal group, constitutes the basic cultural unit and most meaningful institution for young people of Bogota's barrios. As the literature on youth cultures has emphasized, the informal group represents the space where youth find a collective response to their search of identity.

The group constitutes the culture's material base that is tied by friendship relations and by an implicit body of group norms. In the galladas studied, the group norms are basically defined in terms of: 1. loyalties to the group (when and how specific actions or attitudes are considered double-crossing); 2. a group's ways of 'mamar gallo' [kidding], or of relating with women; 3. a group's weekly routine (what to do, when and how). Group membership is highly recognized and valued. The sense of group is closely tied to the sense of belonging to the barrio.

The three young men standing in the *fritanguería* belong to a *gallada* known as *plásticos* [plastic people]. Although this name is only used by other *galladas* when they refer to these young people, Miguel explained, " *'plásticos'* are guys [*manes*] who always want to have the latest fashion either in clothes or in hair style. They just want to know the latest dance movements and to listen to Disco music. They dress like *Menudos* [the current teen-idol group], tight t-shirts, slip-on shoes and close fitting pants. They are very *pintosos* [sharp], beautiful!" For young people, to be a *plástico* means to belong to a kind of *gallada* with a distinctive set of activities and likes (good clothes in light colours, disco music, rivalries with other *galladas*).

We walked towards the *barrio*'s main road. The *barrio* "María Eugenia" was the first settlement in this



area 25 years ago, when it began as charity mission of a rich Colombian man who built 640 houses to be given to large, destitute Catholic families. He did not, however, provide public services. It was the community which did this through a system of self- help. The community built the access road to the *barrio*, opened the trenches to install the sewage system and demanded public electricity, water fountains, telephones, public school, public transportation and community centers. The *barrio* was marked as an illegal settlement until six years ago when it acquired legal status.

Each one of the twenty-five blocks of the *barrio* faces the main road. Taking this road we walked down to the *barrio*'s final blocks. In the very last *esquina* [corner] of the *barrio* there was a group of five youths. The dark clothes they had on seemed to me an echo of the mysterious darkness of the bushes next to this block. It is a place feared for its countless stories of hold-ups, murder and rape. Dark clothes, long jackets of imitation leather and boots signal a *gallada* of *malos* or, as they call themselves, *vivos* [sharks]. By their *esquina*, they stood making a circle, three of them leaning on the wall and the others facing it. The *esquina* is known and respected as belonging to the *gallada* of Runcho [nickname of its leader]. They kept a very small distance between themselves. Their hands were in the pockets of their jackets and their eyes were watchful.

Popular identities -who we are, where we are - are inextricably rooted in a sense of place which popular groups build up throughout the appropriation of specific spaces as a stage for social relations and communicative exchange. In the gallada's use of space one can observe evidence of this process. The esquina is probably the best representation of this. It has been marked as youth territory and the space has acquired a meaning related to the individuals, their group and their social practices.

In the corner, what probably was a very good story told by one of the members of the *gallada* produced a collective outburst of laughter followed by playful kicks and boxing punches. As Esteban, a very well-known leader of a *gallada* of *vivos* in this *barrio*, once told me,

> *When you're not working, you meet your friends to have a joint, to drink, to chat: 'we went out last night to jump someone and look brother what I got was a leg full of lead; it was a man that we were going to hold up'. Yes, it happens any time you see a gallada: 'so what, compadre [buddy, originally used for relations among parents and godparents], are we going to get high? and go and start to 'hablar mierda' [shit around].*

As I walked to the west alongside the main road, the *barrio* appeared as if it were breathing. Hundreds of people flowed around corners, streets, houses, *tiendas* and restaurants to the main road and its corners. A communicative exchange expanded from the *barrio*'s beginning to its end. From sidewalk to sidewalk, the road had been occupied. There were kids playing, groups of people, men and women, either chatting in a circle or rocking back and forth. On the road, cars, motor bikes and bicycles snaked their way through the frenetic movement. Human voices and the noises of car motors, horns and several stereos blasting created a constant din.

Public electricity is scarce in the *barrio*. The main road has a few lamp-posts positioned far from each other. Somehow, this dimness was counterweighted from below. Each store - and there are at least four in each block facing the main road - had its bright bulbs on, its doors and windows open. To my left was the *panaderia (bakery)* of *Don Velasquez*. In the corner, the *gallada* of Milton (its leader) was waiting for a *rumba* or something to do.

*It is this Friday's waiting-for-something-to-do which reveals a group sense of time regulated by a cyclical organization. The weekend is the cycle's point of departure and arrival. A cycle begins with the Friday-and-Saturday-*rumba*-night and continues through the day on Sundays (the sports day) and the evenings at the "*esquina*" during the week. The expectations for the return of the weekend's ritual pull out group dynamics and temporality. This sense of time presents a significant continuity with a popular temporality that evolves around the community's 'fiesta' and its return. This experience of time contradicts a linear organization of time intrinsic to production routines and hegemonic logic .*

The wall that members of Milton's *gallada* were leaning on displayed in big, messy letters the names and nicknames of some of the members of the group. Members of this *gallada* are between 22 and 25 years old. Those that are unemployed at the moment constitute the more active and permanent members of the group. Depending on the job situation, *gallada* members will continuously enter and re-enter the group. The *gallada* is for them a place to be when they do not have a full-time job. That night one of them was trying, on his tiptoes, a new Salsa dance movement to a song from the Colombian Salsa group "Niche." Meanwhile they waited. Miguel commented,

> *You always try to feel alright but when you feel bored, then you say 'well brother, what are we doing?' You're there in your corner speaking,* mamando gallo *[to tease, to poke fun at], goofing around, dancing but waiting for something, looking for what you are going to end up doing. You are always waiting for something.*

Free time is highly prized by the gallada's *members. It is group time and therefore how to pass this time represents one of the group's biggest concerns.*

The leisure time of Latin American popular youth exhibits differences from European or North American working class youth. The "Barrio Popular*" is not just a unit of habitation. The barrio has a multifunctional character (leisure, reproduction, work, education) that influences the different social and cultural processes occurring there. The distinction between times for work and times for leisure is not clear in this place. Popular youth's leisure time, if seen as "free time," cannot be characterized plainly as "non-work." As with other popular social relations, it is characterized by its multifunctionality and, therefore, is not just associated with consumption and the attempts to resolve symbolically problems of work, family and future. The space of the group, in the case of Bogota's* galladas*, offers as well a space to resolve materially basic needs of social security and basic survival.* Galladas *are part of a network of services and self-help that functions within the* barrio*. Group members and sometimes their families exchange favours and services as part of their group's taken-for-granted duties.*

In the *tienda* of Don Jose, the 'social club' of the *barrio*, the other members of Milton's *gallada* have started a second round of drinks. Going for a drink to their favorite *tienda* is part of a *gallada's* ritual activities during the weekend. It is, as well, the main occasion for social exchange with other youths and adults. The activity unites the group in long, intense sessions of drinking, chatting and listening to music. *Gallada's* drinking times are afterwards a favorite theme of discussion at the *esquina*. To remember drinking bouts provides an occasion for mockery, criticism and group reminiscences. For the drinkers, that night was a *rumba* night and this meant to be ready for anything, to drink heavily, to party until dawn, to hang out on the streets and to be alert because at any moment they might have to fight. These are the moments where the *gallada's* honour and *hombria* [manhood] are in play. But 'getting in trouble' is taken as part of the fun and excitement 'philosophy' that *galladas'* members share. As Miguel said,

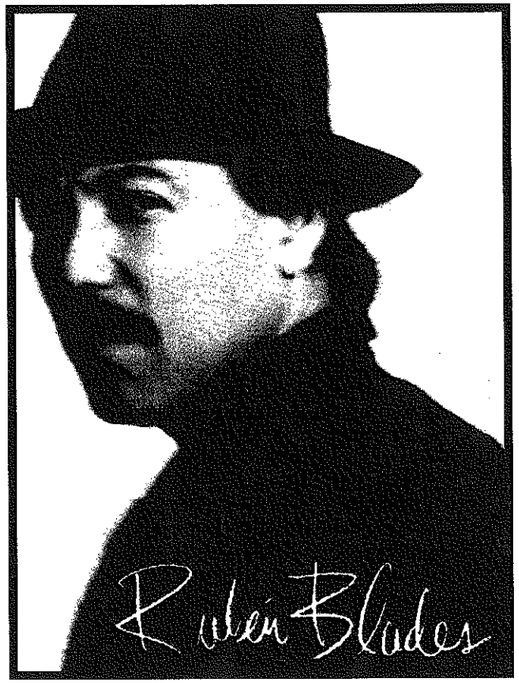
> *you see it's not a big deal, in a* gallada *you just want to feel all right and this is the way you see life, like* de paseo *[a wild-weekend, to take 'life' easy], 'giving time to time' because solutions come later, to have fun in life even though you might be in trouble, you just 'take it easy, maaan'* !

We saw all kinds of small businesses in the next two blocks: five-and-dime stores, a roast chicken stand, a beauty parlor and a meat market. In the corner of one of these blocks were seven young men. This is the corner known as the *esquina de los plásticos*. It is Saturday night, the time to wear their best clothes: white runners, tight t-shirts and light colored pants. Their gestures and clothes reminded me of the Latin American Disco music group *Menudo*, a quintet of youngsters with patent costuming and set up choreographies that have had large audiences among Latin American teenagers.

This concern to be "in-fashion" appeared during the late seventies and mainly during the 80's. The incorporation of youth and women into the job market occurred at the same time as the implementation of a strategy to strengthen Colombia's domestic market. The strategy involved the incorporation of popular youth into the trend of consumerism through fashion and leisure activities. Up until then, popular youth cultures could not be seen as being shaped through a conspicuous consumerism; rather they were more concerned with the defense of their territory and the maintenance of group loyalties. The galladas of plásticos *emerged in the middle of the 70's to be the first popular youth group to exhibit a more explicit concern for mass consumption and fashion; specifically a concern for looking "well-dressed" as the symbol of their "distinction." They exhibited a patent style of clothing concentrating on detail and cleanliness; a style that has come to identify the "new-elegance" of the young-urban-male of the* barrios populares .

In this *gallada* of *plásticos*, they all talked at the same time, looked at who was passing by and played physical games. Three of them were huddled down while they shared a cigarette. One of them told us 'what-they-were-doing':

> *killing time, in the* gallada *nobody is quiet, you never get to talk about serious things, while you are on the corner looking at people passing back and forth you are kidding, bugging people, and telling stories. You get to comment on them, you are* rajando del pueblo, *[cutting everybody down] in very different ways. At times you can judge a* Concurso de Feas *[Miss Ugly contest] or imagine* Jardines de Sucias *['filthy women's garden,' you are there in your corner so you try to get some excitement.*



For the *galladas*, the corner is a very strategic space; it allows them to move and it is the 'best' view point: "to 'watch!' girls, the weird things happening, to know when the *rayas* [police] are coming, to gossip and to make fun of everything you can." Moreover it is their 'liberated' territory: 'nobody can make you move from there'. The daily, nocturnal and weekend routines take the *esquina* as reference space. Miguel commented, "A day of *vagancia* [day off] in these groups starts at 7 a.m, Each one goes to the same *esquina* without having a shower. To let the others know you are there, you use signals such as hissing, clapping or throwing small rocks onto your friend's roof. Little by little, everybody drifts in."

Relations with women embody the basic structuring principles of gallada *moral values. Women are perceived as both objects of sexual pleasure, fantasies and humour, and as almost sacred symbols of high values of wisdom, intuition and care.*

The ethnography reveals the sexist orientation of most gallada *activities on the corners and the streets. The speaking of passing women in terms of "Miss Ugly contests, the imagining of* gardens of sucias *[literally filthy women], the nicknaming of women according to their physical features, the sexual fantasies and retelling of sexual stories, all operate under the same principles: a vision that dissects and objectifies women.*

Represented in the figure of the mother, women are associated with tough-wisdom, intuitiveness and sensitive understanding. Mothers (as mothers not as women) are seen as wise and are sought after for advice.

On the other side of this street, a woman had a stall to sell *arepas* [corn bread] with pork sausages. The strong smell of the pork fat surrounded us. At the same time we perceived the smell of a roasted chicken stand and the smoke of a *bazuco* [crack] cigarette recently lit at the corner. The street is well-know for its drug dealers, *ollas of bazuco* [crack houses] and marijuana. People come from all over the area to buy drugs here. Four *vivos* were leaning against the wall, cigarettes held in their mouths, while their heads were slightly bent. One of them wore a black ranchero hat, another a soccer cap. Their hands were in the pockets of their dark jackets. Standing at the corner that has been witness to their life-games, they watched people of the *barrio* pass back and forth. Their postures reminded me of Carlos Gardel, an Argentinian tango singer who left to posterity the gestures and looks from the *lunfardo* world [low urban world] of Buenos Aires. They are a *gallada* of tough people, *malos* or *vivos*, young people engaged in illicit activities (drug dealers, thieves); those for whom life is a matter of sharpness.

The members of the *gallada of vivos* greeted us and asked Miguel the 'what's-happening-tonight' question. The loyalties they maintain with the neighbors are very strong. Miguel commented,

> *When the police come to the barrio for a* requisa *[to ask for I.D and a military service card] or when the* rayas *[secret agents] are around, the barrio's people have the doors open and call you:* 'mano, mano.'

When the police get there, you just get into any house that has the door open; if not, anyway, somebody's going to open the door for you ; because you are bien *[all right], they're nice to you. Here, the vivos protect you even more, they'll go and defend you and then they'll walk you home. Once something happened to me - it was a New Year's day - "Runcho" put his revolver to my head and he said 'Puta [bitch] hand over all that you have ' and I said, 'but man, what's wrong with you, don't you know me?' 'Oh! sorry man', he had a large 38, he hugged me, offering to walk me home but I told him I wasn't going there. That was on the dawn of the New Year ! 'O.K, man Happy New Year!' then, he kissed me. Fifteen days later he got killed!.*

As much as the kind of clothes worn, *vivo* language differentiates them from other *galladas*. As Esteban, the leader of a *gallada* of *vivos*, said, 'This language is born from your own self, from us, it is born with the *vivos*, it is not written down or anything'. Creating new words and expressions almost every day, *vivo* language is full of metaphors and words of altered meaning. When the members of Esteban's *gallada* talk, they use a drawl, stretching the end of words, and always putting the accent on the final syllable.

A group's way of talking constitutes an important distinctive element for popular youth. Popular youth language appropriated the expressiveness of a popular language that is built on the richness of description and on the concreteness of discourse. It is a language full of metaphors, ruptures, imprecisions and ambiguities. The language of galladas *offers a way of isolation from the 'others.' Codes and signs define them as a group.*

One block further, we saw the side wall of Señor Castillo's house completely filled with graffiti. Pablo, his son, is 16. His *gallada* hangs around this *esquina*. The group was carefully listening to one of its members. His story was followed by noisy laughter. Miguel commented, "Usually there's somebody in the group who's a good storyteller. Everybody likes him because he can laugh at anything. You can stand out in a *gallada* for different things: for the way of gambling, for your toughness, for your street smarts, for the way you tease, but very importantly for the way you *raja del pueblo* [cut everybody down].

From the unlit street, we came to the light of one of the most popular meeting places for young people, the billiard room of Rafa. Cream-coloured walls contrasted with the green billiard tables and the redwash of the floor. On one wall was a beer poster of "the sexy woman" and beside this, a poster of an unfamiliar landscape of purple-white flowers, green-red trees and a river of very clean water. On Friday and Saturday nights, Rafa's billiard room receives more clients than usual. All the billiard tables were in use with groups of men drinking *aguardiente* and beer. The great number of cigarettes smoked and the absence of open windows created a curtain of smoke that filtered the flashes of light coming from the light bulbs on the ceiling.

Young people coming to Rafa's billiard-pool room belong to various *galladas* from the middle part of the *barrio* María Eugenia or from the other two neighbouring *barrios*. Two billiard players, while waiting their turn, followed the fast beat of the song "Marcela," a top hit with the Merengue rhythm, that was playing on the radio:

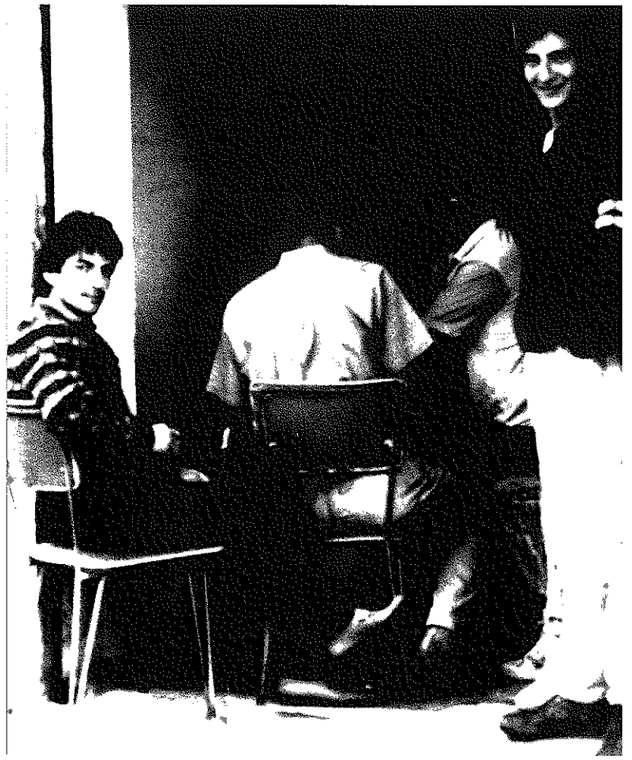
I do not know if time has ended or maybe
if it started
about the future I dreamed that it was
you who I loved
Make my day, without you I can not
live, Marcela.

The dancers had their hands up while their bodies swung with the rhythm; they moved their feet at a very fast pace to Caribbean Merengue, the new king of rhythm. The swinging pace of this musical rhythm is vividly expressed in the excerpt from the novel *Reina Rumba*:

I'm called negrita sandungera *because I dance with a lot of swing, I do not know what it is that comes inside my body when I feel a merengue, my hips get anxious and my heart leaps."*

A consciousness of body movement and of its endless rhythmic possibilities has been discovered by Colombian youth through dance. In their walking on the streets where risk and chances of dangerous surprises are always present, popular youth have reinforced this consciousness of the body. On the street their bodies need to be always alert. Their bodies express the rhythmic sensuality acquired with the dance but with the co-ordinated, measured and watchful movement learned on the streets. In the daily life on the street, in the gallada's *most routinized activities, music is a means to define identity and to remember.*

Rafa, the billiard room owner, is 28 years old. He has been a member of the *gallada of Deportistas* since he was sixteen. As a member of this *gallada* he used to play on behalf of the *barrio* in mini-soccer tournaments. He started working when he was 13. When he was 16 he got a steady job in a factory. As many other people have done in these *barrios*, he asked for an advance of his retirement payment to fulfill a dream he had had in mind for a long time: that of a small business in the *barrio* that could provide an additional income for his family. During the week, the billiard room is kept open by his parents, who own a *tienda* in the front block. During the nights and weekends Rafa is in charge with the help of his brothers.



As we were leaving we met Bolita. His black curly hair was very long, he dressed in tight ripped jeans, jean jacket, handcrafted leather bracelets and a bead necklace. Bolita belongs to a *gallada* of *roqueros* [rockers]. While he waited for his friends, Bolita wandered around the *barrio*. His friends were coming back from downtown Kennedy. On Saturday afternoons they meet with other *roqueros* in the *minitecas* of Kennedy. A *"miniteca"* is the afternoon opening of a discotheque where young people (13-25) can get in. To enter, there is a cover charge, and inside they can buy any kind of liquor at lower prices than at night. *Galladas* of *Roqueros* maintain close relationships with the other *galladas* of Kennedy. More frequently than the other *galladas*, however, *Roqueros* hang out in downtown Kennedy and in Kennedy's disco bars. *Roqueros* from all over the region meet in downtown Kennedy.

Music is a part of almost any activity of *roquero galladas*. Rock is the background music for their street encounters as well as the music they look for in *minitekas* and at parties. *Roqueros* often rent a big stereo, speakers and music, decorating a house for a dance that goes without stopping for as long as two days at a time. Anybody can go if they pay the cost of admission. Bolita told us about the parties:

To have fun, to feel bacano [groovy], to pick up girls, and to listen to rock music. We took it easy at parties, you know, we didn't want problems, but other people, the plásticos, *wanted to* 'ponerse las fiestas de ruana' *go crazy man and fuck everything up. They only wanted their music and to cause us trouble, they were so arrogant. We just wanted our music: rock, rock and roll and salsa.*

In the next block, about 25 men were drinking beer and *aguardiente* in the Tienda de Aura. The place is very popular among "old generation" *galladas* and *galladas* of *deportistas* and *vivos*. That night all the tables were occupied; bodies frequently touched and bumped into each other, but nobody seemed to mind.

All through that evening Aura's record player shifted from nostalgic Tango songs, through the humbled reproaches of Bolero, to the rage and sadness of the *carrilera* music. The lyrics of this music are memorized from constant replay; it serves as a background for endless conversations "about life." This is the music "where your heart participates" and when nostalgic remembrances come out.

A gallada's plurality of musical likes exhibits elements intrinsic to its cultural expression. It was with rhythms such as rock in the 60s, salsa in the 70s and disco and merengue in the 80s when a symbolic musical world, building up youth differences, was created. In the appropriation of those musical rhythms, popular youth have expressed their stylistic differences: a style created out of ways to hear these sounds, to walk with them in the streets, to dress according to them, and to dance with them. First of all, in the act of dancing, young people brought together the eroticism of body gestures inherited from Afro-Cuban music and the total experience of rhythmic movement. However, the new rhythms could not provide popular youth with the words needed to communicate their experiences and passions. This role was filled by musical genres such as Tango, Ranchera *[Mexican music],* Carrilera *and* bolero *that constitute the old musical rhythms. Old music is liked by everybody:* roqueros, plásticos, vivos, deportistas *and parents.*

In old musical rhythms, youth found a space and time to express their nostalgia. While their parents' city experience was limited to discovering the ways and means to survive in the city, popular youth experience grew out of hanging out in streets and of the construction of a sense of group tied to these spaces. And it was in old music lyrics where youth cultures recognized those stories (of violence, terror, mystery and intensity) and feelings (fear, enthusiasm, pity,

laughter) many times "lived" or seen in the streets of their barrio. Whether looking at new or at old rhythms the same central element can be seen, the musical sound is an empowering element. Music identifies their differences, and provides a way of classifying their spaces.

Four different groups were at the tables. After having spent some time *gastando acera* [wearing down the sidewalk] they came there for a drink. At one table was Adonai, a black male leader of the *gallada* of *deportistas* with his friends. The passion for soccer held by Adonai's *gallada* is equalled by its passion for Salsa music. When Adonai and his friends stand in a corner with a tape recorder, the *rumba* starts right there.

Salsa rhythms are the best company for intense *rumba* nights and *esquina* evenings. Its dancing requires a masterful combination of fast paced feet (back and forward) with the slow waving of the hips. Shoulders mark the beat while arms go up and down, and the dancing partner is taken to swing around. Salsa is combined with clapping and singing and with non-stop dancing journeys through songs that all of them know: songs about love, friendship, the *barrio*, the street, mother, friends, and prisons.

One block ahead was the communal room and the mini-soccer and basketball court. The court is surrounded by the communal room, by a wall of the public school and by the main road. On the red-brick front walls of the communal room we could read graffiti written in English: "Punk Rock not Death." Beside that phrase was the word "*Conde*" -somebody's nickname- and below that the initials J.R. Over the side wall we could see more graffiti with large big red letters in English: Heavi Metal, Anarchy (the symbol), Alex and Rock.

Over the whitewash of the back wall, there was graffiti written in a very careful, large style: "*Mi Timidez no me permite hablarte/ pero si escribirte/ Marta Yo te Amo, atentamente yo*" [My shyness does not let me talk to you but I can write to you, Marta, I love you, sincerely, I]. The bleachers around the court were painted with all kinds of graffiti, especially political slogans:

Por la vida hasta la vida misma, (of life and to life, itself), Por un Primero de Mayo combativo y unitario [For a combative and unitary first of May], social statements: *Problemas son de Todos* [problems belong to everybody], names, short phrases: "Merry Christmas", "love", "peace" "kiss" and more sarcastic graffiti: *Tú piensas en mí, yo pienso en tí, quién piensa en los dos?* [You think of me, I think of you, who thinks of us both?].

A few names, words and drawings on the walls cannot define a youth culture. However, what calls my attention is the exploratory and different character 80's graffiti shows from what was the graffiti pattern of a few years ago. During the 80's a depolitization of graffiti occurred. New social actors have taken over. These are informal groups or just individuals painting a spontaneous and intimate world on the walls. A popular youth language speaks through these walls. They have completed a circle of space appropriations: the street, the corner and now the walls. It is a language built upon a particular use of space and time. In the creation and marking of their own time and spaces lies the heart/core of youths' difference.

The noises were left behind us. At night, the empty and noiseless court becomes a transient space either to have a joint, make a dangerous deal, or to find intimacy. It was 10:30, the streets were vacant, the crowd of people walking on the road had dispersed. Now they were in *tiendas*, billiard rooms, corners, or houses. The smell of liquor and smoke, the noise of music and voices had decreased. All have gone inside. The night was young and could still offer many things. The *rumba* was there, as was the excitement and uncertainty of the streets.

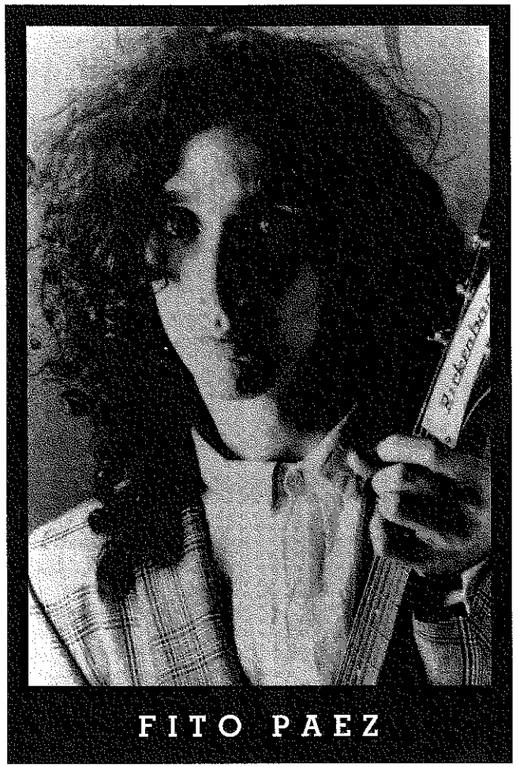
> *And without permission the* rumba *took another course and we for ever moved away from the bar because like a song each place has a special site in your life, in my* barrio's *heart that loves so many things and in this surprising box that amazes us every day. (From "*Celia, Celia Rumba*")*

From the corner of the final block we looked towards a large dark area on our right: the swamp, better known as the *matadero* [slaughterhouse]. We could not see what was going on in the darkness; but out there around swamps, dark trails, corners, or empty land plots there exists a noiseless street world ruled by violence. Illicit affairs, fights, gun shots, revenge and drugs set up a code of violence that is known by every inhabitant of these *barrios*. It is the other half of the *barrio* night that for me, as an outsider, was veiled. In the words of Palomo, "out there you are fast, you are sharp or you die. There is not something like a quiet night." The street, as the salsa singer Willie Colon put it, is a "desert of surprises," a mysterious and dangerous world.

Pilar Riaño has just edited Women In Grassroots Communication *(Sage 1993). She is currently a community development worker for the Latin American community in Vancouver.*

we haven't had time to be guilty: Youth Culture In Argentina

by Silvia Delfino
translated by
Michael
Hoechsmann



"WE HAVEN'T HAD TIME TO BE GUILTY."
- SECUESTRO [KIDNAP]

Three years after the recuperation of democracy in Argentina, this graffiti slogan was painted on the walls of Buenos Aires by the rock group *Secuestro*. In synthetic and eloquent prose, graffiti condenses various key elements of 1980s youth culture in Argentina, which - despite its delimitation by age group - is lived as a site of languages, images and modes of participation which cut across all social practices. In the Latin American context, graffiti not only permits an analysis of youth culture in its use and appropriation of the media and of urban consumption practices, but also as a strategic site of survival and political action during the dictatorships. Thus, for example, the signature -*SECUESTRO*- resignifies the denunciation of repression in the public space of a Buenos Aires street by superimposing upon it the rock concert, a recognized site of youth culture during the periods of greatest police vigilance.

Latin American Youth: From Modernization to Revolt

Latin American youth were protagonists in two major historical 'moments': the attempted social modernization implicit in the development model of the 1950s, and the economic crisis of the 1970s and `80s which showed the deficiencies of this project.

Youth were important in both moments by virtue of their numbers - Argentinian youth constitute 16% of the population and, of those, 82% live in urban centers - and because they were the first ones to be raised on modern forms of socialization where education, demographic control and the passage from rural to industrial economies were to be the transformative strategies for economic development. Youth showed high levels of political participation when the recession rendered impossible the trickle-down theory of economic distribution, and unemployment - aggravated by the overpopulation of the urban peripheries - brought down expectations of social mobility.

At the same time, youth became a social sector particularly affected by repression. Through long years of political instability, civil governments alternated with dictatorships which legitimated themselves, on the one hand, by the call to order and authority by conservative and liberal sectors and, on the other, by the elimination of democratic mechanisms of popular participation. Between 1976 and 1982, young Argentinians lived the systematic violence taking place in public spaces (streets, plazas, soccer stadiums, clubs, concert halls), while other sites of socialization were withdrawn. The violence directed towards youth was a constant feature of everyday life from the end of 1960s through to the 1980s (67% of the disappeared were between the ages of 18-30). For example, there were the armed interventions into schools and universities which resulted in violence towards students followed by kidnappings and disappearances (35% of the disappeared between 14-25 were students), and later there was the *Guerra de Malvinas*

[Falkands War] of 1982 where youth were the principal protagonists.

The dictatorial model not only concentrates power and economic wealth, but it focuses the mechanisms of vigilance upon youth through a culture of fear to ensure the closure of instances of popular mobilization and solidarity cooperation. This, in turn, fulfills the dictates of international finance capital by restricting public expenditure, especially in health, education and cultural programs, and by eliminating all research that does not have immediate uses for the multinational development of technology. The dysfunctional educational system not only fails to train the majority of youth, but further adds to the justification of youth vigilance by creating an image of youth as suspicious and violent which then supports paternalistic and authoritarian politics.

In this context, it is interesting to analyze the ways in which the production of meaning in practices of everyday life "survive" to create alternative moments of participation and recognition. This process is condensed in two moments: the forms of acting and accessing information during the dictatorship, and the recuperation of political discourse in the transition to democracy. In both moments, youth culture offers a fruitful site - especially in rock music, graffiti and places of gathering - for the analysis of the uses of the new technologies which began to play a role in Argentinian culture from the 1970s on (VCR, colour t.v., access to satellite communication, extension of FM radios, etc.). Rather than simply symbolizing the submission to a set of multinational strategies, media culture can be considered as a challenge to the certainties which organize modes of knowledge and conceptions of authority, order and common welfare. This is especially important in youth culture where audiovisual codes are resignified with no respect for the divisions between genres or artistic materials, and where links are made through cultures which problematize definitions of the national and the local.

For mother's day, give her a white handkerchief *(Secuestro)*

Painted by *Secuestro* in 1986, this grafitti slogan acknowledges and pays homage to the movement which played an indispensable role during the dictatorship, by occupying the public sphere in defense of human rights. Having gone in vain from offices, to barracks, to commissaries in search of information on their kidnapped offspring, a group of mothers began to march around the Plaza de Mayo wearing handkerchiefs on their heads, embroidered with the names of their missing loved ones. Visible every Thursday at the historic site which has been the center of collective demonstrations since the Argentinian independence of 1810, this practice transformed the relationship between information and resistance in a way which was impossible for the largely clandestine political groups. Joined later by the Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo to demonstrate for the kidnapped children - or those born in captivity - the language of the human rights organizations thus acquired a visible consistency. The visual element is strengthened by the images, drawings and silhouettes of the disappeared which were painted in the plaza and on the walls of all of the cities in the country. This representation of an absence puts the visual on the primary plane over the simple refrain ("Alive they were taken, alive we want them back" or "Appearance alive"). It is also a visual symbol of the limitations for possible political action (the mothers and grandmothers walk alone in the plaza, rather than with their partners, because they hope that alone the police do not dare to repress them).

This "visual turn" signals the design of a language of resistance which indicates the ways of acting and accessing information in the determinate public spaces where the practices of everyday life can acquire their maximal political potential. In this context, several cultural practices of youth - especially rock - mark the reordering of the city and the resignification of language by addressing questions which have been expelled from public discourse.

Since the mid-1960s, the so-called *"Rock Nacional Argentino"* has designated a movement of convergence and participation which has joined new forms of sociality (the creation of recognizable spaces such as the show or concert) with a cultural interchange based on certain publications and magazines. While the publications on the commercial circuit enjoy high circulation rates, an artesanal genre [or "zine" culture] also emerges in this period with homemade magazines featuring poems, stories, and news of rock groups. These "zines" - often printed by mimeograph or photocopy - circulate through the entire country in parks and artesanal fairs. Through their reports, information and "fan mail," these publications - both commercial and artesanal alike - create a site for the acknowledgement and contestation of the determinate problems which have been expelled from public discourse. Despite the apparent homogeneity of youth culture, the different publications differ in how they resignify the traditional values of family, neighbourhood, school and work, as well as the images and language with which the media portrays youth.

While the magazine offers a space for the interchange, where values and practical norms can be debated, a fundamental ritual is added in this period: the 'show' becomes a site for deliberate practice. Though this is not a homogenous site in terms of genres or social sectors, it nonetheless creates a sense of shared place to account for the dispersion of the student movement and political youth organizations. Between 1975 and 1977, the rock concert emerges to respond to a city under control, where almost all public social life has been eliminated. At this time, various sites emerge - such as theaters, cinemas, clubs and pubs - which offer a place of meeting and refuge. As Ricardo, one of the protagonists, told Pablo Vila:

"... to go to a show was a necessity. We didn't miss a single one. There was a great need to be together... to participate in something, while feeling safe."

The rock show thus emerged as one of the principal meeting places of youth in the rhythm of everyday life under the dictatorship, not only because the time of the party could not be capitalized, but also because it stood outside of the silence and false information occasioned by the dictatorships. In the face of a rearticulation of life where the social participation of individuals is reduced to the necessities of survival and consumption, this practice concretizes codes, gestures and signs which define their public through interaction:

"... we would go to see ourselves, marginalized by the media and confused by other generations. Our applause was also directed inwards, towards ourselves."

By producing paths of recognition, a memory is constructed that mobilizes figures of counterhegemonic legitimation.

Given the lack of confidence of young people in the institutions of the state and the family, the building of a sense of identity and language is left to the media, and, in particular, to song lyrics. This code of counter-signs and double meanings indicates the formation of counter-figures, or "survivors," as Charly Garcia's song of the same name describes:

"Los Sobrevivientes" (1979)

We are blind of seeing
tired of so much walking
we are fed up with fleeing
in the city
We will never have roots
we will never have a home
and nonetheless, you see,
we're from here.
(...)
I have always carried you
beneath my blue scarf
through the streets as Christ carried the cross.

In addition to the criticism in the lyrics, there is an intention to produce meanings for existence itself. These meanings are expressed in a fusion of symbolic practices which indicate not only a rejection of hegemonic discourse but also the construction of meanings to keep on living. Rock evolves to construct an image of the survivor who will summon democracy. In 1978, Charly sang *Eiti-Leda*:

I want to see you naked
the day they parade the bodies
which have been saved, babe,
on some highway
which has infinite barracks
that won't tell a thing.
And I really want you to laugh
and to tell me that it is only a game
or else kill me this afternoon babe.
(. . .)
This winter was bad,
and I think that I forgot my shadow
in a basement
And your legs that keep getting longer
know that they cannot turn back,
the city pisses on us with laughter, babe.

The trajectory from the neighbourhood to the downtown theater or club involves a journey where the rock band - and the band of friends - enters into a critique of media culture by taking emblems and gestures and transforming them. On the basis of selective consumption, youth gather to listen to music in one house in the neighbourhood, the privileged site for the development of youth culture. It is the everyday practices of the neighbourhood - the zone of group recognition and integration through ties of family, friendship and love - that have been used to construct the image of the dangerous youth since the time of the dictatorships. In this regard, it is important to underscore that the category of youth culture is more than just an age-based identification of consumption and leisure practices. Rather, it signals a fundamental a convergence of social relations constructed in terms of race, class and gender, located in various sites such as the home, school, work and the areas of control and security.

In these sites, it is possible to read of the tension between the design of images or forms of "identity" attributed to youth and the other modes of subjectivity in an historical moment. Thus, when the military had to recuperate the image of youth as protagonists during the *Malvinas* war of 1982, the public space which was opened in the media could not count on the support of rock bands. Instead, a "Festival of Latin American Solidarity" was organized by the rock bands in the stadium where they held many of their concerts. The anti-military discourse of the rock bands was bolstered by an explicitly pacifist message which, because of its relation to other youth cultural practices, represented the principal victims of the war and completed the image of the survivor. Peyronel-Pappo sang the following:

I'm checking out what's left after the big noise
in a world with very few sounds
I stop to look at silent machines and an image stands
out on the hood of a Bel-Air
Ah, Ah, Ah! what I see now is
happening in a near future
the image warns me of situations
and I don't know who is giving me their hand.
Today I am just another survivor
and I run with an advantage over the present
Today I am just another survivor
Today I am just another survivor
Oh, Oh, Oh! this sounds better to me
I see a bold girl who survived
is there room for a new emotion?
And be reborn from the ashes with imagination.
Today I am just another survivor
Today I am just another survivor.

But the dinosaurs will disappear

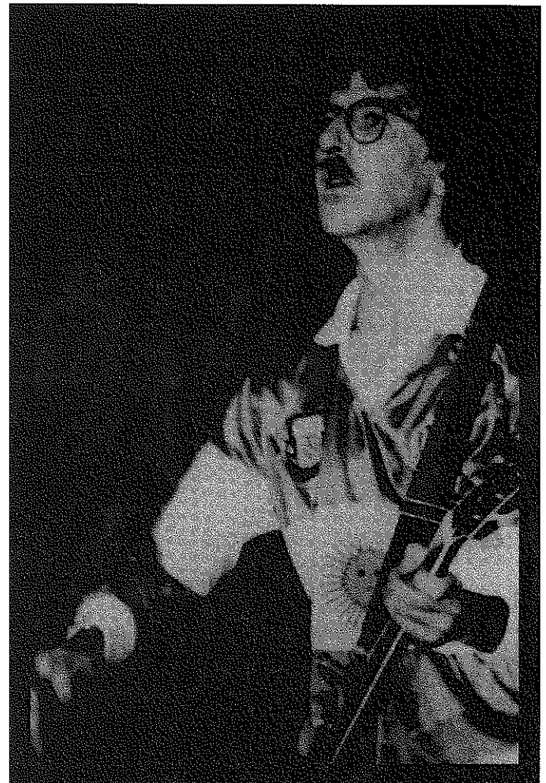
With these words Charly Garcia finished a concert near the end of 1982, after a mass demonstration by all political parties had demanded elections from the dying military dictatorship which was still reeling from the Malvinas disaster. This is what the song said:

It is Saturday night
and a friend is in jail [*cana*]
imagine the dinosaurs
who are in bed [*cama*] . . .
Our friends in the neighbourhood
might disappear
Those who are on the radio
might disappear
but the dinosaurs
will disappear.

As a site for practical deliberation, the concert reproduces the multiplicity of voices and languages in the streets demanding the return to democracy. Mercedes Sosa, folk singer, accompanies the youth at a rock concert singing, "Yesterday I dreamt of the hungry, the mad, those who are gone, those who are in prison." Fito Paez, rock star, responds: "Who said that all was lost, I come to offer my heart, so much blood was washed away in the river, I come to offer my heart." To this, the stadium chants: "*Se va a acabar, se va a acabar, la dictadura militar. . .*" [It will end, it will end, the military dictatorship. . .].

The demand for democracy involved a revision of the modes of interpellation, of the access to information and of the disciplining by fear of the link between knowledge and action. Thus, youth do not look upon themselves as a local subculture or as a group subordinated to the bounds of the neighbourhood, but as protagonists on a broad public scale; youth transcend familiar institutions (home and school) to address national ones. The "return to politics" of youth complements the modes of interpellation of the concert with the mobilization on the street. In 1982, Charly Garcia sang the song "Superheroes":

I am looking for directions
in cookbooks
you are mixing sugar with salt
you are getting information
from boxes made of metal,
you are buying the world at a bazaar.
Looking at superheroes, superstars,
you feel super crazy, super bad.
(. . .)
They are cleaning up the ashes
from our brief carnival
we're already on our way to another city.
You see, we're neither tourists
nor artists wearing tuxedos and smiles
we are part of your reality,
That is why we are here,
trying to get these feet moving,
under the lights, playing until dawn.
Don't stay at home because the dance is
about to start
I want to see you, see you again, see you
again.


CHARLY GARCIA

The occupation of the streets transforms practices of the everyday. Public words and scenes are rewritten on the walls where graffiti produces a space of recognition and identification. At first, graffiti appears on monuments and public buildings, painted under the cover of the mass demonstrations through the city. Later, graffiti appears as a countersign on the walls of the neighbourhood, simultaneously cryptic and exhibitionist.

In the culture of Buenos Aires, the climax of this practice has a precise date, the transition to democracy. The recently recuperated street is converted into a privileged zone to read a heterogeneity of voices, many of which are outside of the structures of political parties. A struggle ensues for the control of this space to ensure the best placement of the signature (THE NOBODY BAND, POLITICAL PUNK, KADAVERS NN) or picture, even if this means modifying the writing of others.

While a fugitive practice, graffiti modifies and denaturalizes the neighbourhood or the block with signs that, while only understood by some, occupy a sight of maximal visibility in the same area which is controlled by the police. In an interview, *Secuestro* link graffiti with the rock concert and the occupation of the city: "We would go to see a band. As they always played in different neighbourhoods, we would bring our aerosol cans so we could paint. At a later date, we were more organized. . . we would diagram the streets (which is what the police do, but we do it for painting), we would choose a neighbourhood, a street, an avenue, then we would go to a show with aerosol cans and hit it on the way."

In graffiti, it is possible to read the resignification of the values and places attributed to youth. This is the site where the ambivalence is played out for youth between, on the one hand, increased urbanization, hopes of modernization and social dynamism, and, on the other hand, the image of danger portrayed by clothes and customs. This ambivalence is condensed in the myth of the "loaf about" youth caused by unemployment. The coexistence of distinct modes of socialization between parents and youth - particularly in the case of urban migrants - further exacerbates the generation gap.

The use of the school and the neighbourhood for the practice of graffiti superimposes the desire for visibility on the secretive nature of the gang. Like all mechanisms of recognition and integration, this functions both inwardly and outwardly. The school teaches youth what society thinks of them, to look at themselves, their families and their very existence as problematic. Nonetheless, the use of the school as a meeting place marks the boundaries of territorialization and deterritorialization of the neighbourhood, signifying the limits of the group and investing the space with the values of a local culture.

While graffiti marks territory, it also marks an appropriation of meaning which fuses word and image in a style which links simultaneity and fragment, a combination which parallels the style of the videoclip. In the final years of the dictatorship, as Argentina was being incorporated into a global media culture, graffiti reveals the appropriation of audiovisual technologies and urban consumption practices into the modes of survival and action of youth culture. Rock groups are even named in English (WASTED YOUTH or PUNK NOT DEAD), and jokes and political satire is invented: "Watch out fascists, Maradona is a leftie" or "In my apartment I have posters of all of you: Che Guevara." On the walls of the streets, hospitals, stations and schools, this burlesque effect of language is at once personalized (the ego assumes singularization) and public: "the church is such a good busi-

ness that there is a branch in every neighbourhood," or "the school is an institution of *Secuestro*." During the debate over the creation of the "Law of Due Obedience," which in 1987 exempted from guilt all human rights violators 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. *SECUESTRO*."

You voted: wait two years and do it again
(*SECUESTRO*)

In conclusion, these final three graffiti slogans signal another aspect of modes of symbolic production in youth culture. The symbolic strategies of youth design spaces which acknowledge heterogeneity 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 microscope 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 allotting social standing. Aspirations of recognition and social mobility are not reduced to individual history in relation to parents or provincial 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 image of themselves defined by the crisis and the authoritarian barriers to association. Perhaps the answer was insinuated in 1987 by the rock group "*Los redonditos de ricota*" ["The little rounds of ricotta"], who would perform in the costume of the creole circus and encourage the audience to dress up and to come on stage. The "*redonditos*" came to be the most broadly disseminated counter-symbol in the cities of Argentina. The following is "Come on, bands" by Skay Beilinson and Indio Solari:

> And what's the use of sleeping under guard
> living cynically 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
> come on, bands
> And what's the use of your stomach in knots
> and your nostrils trembling from fear
> and what's the use of checking everything
> if sleep comes so hard
> that it condemns you
> Come on, bands
> let's boot it
> come on, bands
> (. . .)
> And what's the use of your made-up eyes
> and meditating with perfumed ether
> and what's the use of being the new band
> and going around climbing military radars
> Come on, bands
> let's boot it
> come on, bands.

Silvia Delfino teaches Theories of Culture at the Universities of Buenos Aires and Olavarria in Argentina. She is currently completing her Ph.D. thesis on literacy and mass media in Argentine culture.

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Communication: A strategic site for the debate on modernity.

Written by

Jesús

Martín-Barbero

Translated by

Michael

Hoechsmann

Although the crisis in Latin America is linked more to the debt - and thus to the contradictions of the modernization designed by business people and politicians - than to the *doubt* over modernity suffered by intellectuals, philosophers and social scientists in Europe and the United States, the crises are intertwined and their discourses are mutually complementary. In some form the reemergence of the modernizing project in our countries is the other face of their crisis, and our "external debt" is part of their "internal doubt," just as their development is part of our dependence. Taking charge of the crisis of modernity is thus an indispensible condition in order to conceive of a project in our countries where economic and technological modernization does not disable or supplant cultural modernity.

Located in the center of the philosophical, aesthetic and sociological reflections on the crisis of reason and modern society, the project of communication now transcends the boundaries and paradigms of our studies and research. The field of communication can no longer be neatly delimited by academic demarcations. Whether we like it or not, others - from other disciplines and with other concerns - now take part in it. We must accept this explosion and redesign the map of questions and the lines of engagement.

At the same time, the economic crisis and political unrest in our countries make the temptation to regress inward stronger than ever. Nonetheless, the return to theoretical certainties, neoconservative positions and to the defence of the most legitimated and legitimating professional ideologies is masked by a convergence of two discourses. On the one hand is the discourse of political possibility, which - while presuming itself to be lucid about what is happening - plays its cards on the expansion of the market and its "presentation" as the only dynamic site in society. On the other hand is the discourse of technological knowledge which presumes that the motor of the class struggle has broken down and that history will encounter its revitalization in the events of communication; in the future, to transform society will require changing the modes of the production and circulation of information.

How should we confront this new and redoubled reduction? How can we recognize the social and perspectival depths of new communication technologies, their crosscutting modes of presence in the everyday, from work to play and from science to politics? How can we accept them not as facts that confirm the deceptive centrality of technological development in which social inequality and power is resolved and dis-

Rafael Goldchain

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 Mois de la Photo a Montreal (1991), the Marianne Friedland Gallery, Toronto (1991), the Fototeca de Cuba (1990), and the Art Gallery of Hamilton (1993). Goldchain was a recipient of the 1988 Leopold Godowsky Award in Colour Photography from the Photographic Resource Center in Boston and the 1989 recipient of the Canada Council's Duke and Duchess of York Award in Photography. His work is in the collections of the Biblioteque National, 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 inertias 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 nation, 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 interconnection" of circuits via satellite and information, and from the "liberation of difference" which accompanies the growing fragmentation of the cultural habitat. The nation 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 nation in turbulence - or in the words of R. Schwarz "the turbulence of the nation" - signals a zone of strategic convergences between the study of communication and the new history.

In his splendid essay on Latin American historiography of the 19th century, German Colmenares dismantles the reasons and mechanisms of incommunication with the past in national histories: "for intellectuals situated in a revolutionary tradition, not only the colonial past seemed strange but so did the population which emerged from this past, so they grasped at straws to come up with a cultural synthesis which had been operative." This attitude was concretized in the absence of an acknowledgement of the reality which was "an absence of the vocabulary to name it," and a quiet hostility towards the dark space of the illiterate subcultures. In contrast to the experience of 19th century historians, Colmenares draws on a key insight of postmodern criticism to problematize the "linear" sense of history which made even the most critical historians incapable of seeing the plurality of historical temporalities. This plurality becomes apparent when - as G. Marramao says - "the long duration of profound strata of collective memory is raised to the surface by brusque alterations of the social fabric caused by the acceleration of modernization itself." To remake history implies above all to establish new ways of 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 majorities in Latin America occurs through the mediations established by the technologies of communications - its grammar and imaginary - the new historical perspective opens the field to two important lines of work. First, the investigation must continue into how the processes of mass communication enable or hinder the memory in which the long term is woven, in order to discover the traces which can enable the recognition of '*pueblos*' [t.n.: both people and country/nation] and the dialogue between generations and traditions. Second, research is required into the changes in images and metaphors of the national, the devaluation, secularization and reinvention of myths and rituals through which this contradictory but still powerful identity is unmade and remade both from a local and transnational perspective.

Over the past twenty years or so, the populational weight 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 populational weight in Latin America has swung from country to city to the point where the proportion of urban dwellers in many countries is near 70%. Obviously, it is not only the number of people which signals the change, but the appearance of new sensibilities which challenge the frames of reference and comprehension forged upon a base of neat identities, deep roots and clear boundaries. While an urban identity is not quite realized, there is an industrious pursuit of European and North American models, and while there is a distancing from rural identities, there remains a secret link to ancestral, indigenous authenticities and solidarities. Our frames of comprehension are failing us because our cities are the opaque and ambiguous stages of something unrepresentable from the perspective of a difference which both excludes, and is excluded from, that which is embodied and indigenous, and from the perspective of the homogenizing inclusion of modernity. The everyday life of the majorities issues a deep challenge to our paradigms because it neither responds to our notions of culture, nor does it allow itself to be so emphatically labelled as uneducated. Incorporated into modernity without renouncing an oral culture, this sensibility does not issue from books but from a "secondary orality" whose grammar is radio, cinema and television. In the process, the study of communication has been converted into a task of truly anthropological dimensions. At play here are not only displacements of capital and technological innovations, but deep transformations to the social fabric. These shifts release profound dimensions of collective memory at the same time as they mobilize fragmentary and dehistoricizing imaginaries, changes which accelerate the deterritorialization of cultural demarcations and the hybridization of identities.

In an attempt to transcend the explanatory paradigms used to describe the violence in the city of Medellín, a communication researcher has had the nerve to investigate the violence from its toughest and most painful site: gangs of youth who work as hired assassins. Working with the new orality he attempted to approach these gangs. The result of his research is a report which focusses its analysis on the explosive mixture of three cultures: the "*paisa*" (from the region of Antioquia), the "*maleva*" or "*tango*," and that of modernization. The "*paisa*" base, which comes from the rural culture of ranchers or cowboys and from colonization, is evident in these youth through three very particular features: the intention to profit, a strong religiosity and the spirit of retaliation. The culture of the "tango" permeates the "paisa" base and suppliments it with the values of machismo, manhood and the idealization of the mother. It is not that there is not more to these cultures than the elements mentioned, but that this is the selection made by marginalized youth to mix with the component of modernity.

The modernity lived by these youth is, first of all, a sense of the ephemerality of time. This is what is expressed in the short life of the majority of objects - disposable - that are produced now, and in the value of the instant when neither the past nor the future matters much, and when the feeling of death becomes the most powerful experience of life. These youth also incorporate the modern sense of consumption, which is simultaneously a manner of making and exhibiting oneself as powerful and of assimilating the economic transaction to all spheres of life. Finally, these youth incorporate a powerfully visual language which is fragmented and rich with images. Ranging from styles of dress to ways of making music and even talking, these youth are inspired by visual mythologies of war crossed with the sonorous stridencies and gestures of punk. One final ingredient to the three cultural matrices of these youth: the Antillan music of rumba and salsa-correct "*paisa*" asceticism with a pleasure of the body which transforms the old Christian sacralization 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 de-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 human 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 encounter results in a de-urbanization of everyday life - as Garcia-Canclini et al. point out about Mexico City - and the city becomes of less use.

It is precisely this sociocultural disaggregation of the city which will be compensated by the network of electronic cultures, a vicarious but efficient compensation. The audiovisual media, and television in particular, will be responsible for returning the city to us, of reinserting us into urban life. Introduced as a dense mediation which can enable the recreation of the social fabric and of the modes of collectivity, the media responds less to the topographies of urban planners than to the topologies of imaginary territories. It is here where the game of the mass media encounters both its sustenance and its limit; this is where social groups perform their re-localizations and thereby mark the city, selecting and putting into play symbols of pertinence which provide them forms of identity.

Cultural marketplaces: integration and difference

According to J.J. Brunner, 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 centrifugal dispersal of the sources of community cultural production to specialized apparatuses, in the substitution of traditionally transmitted forms of life to ways of life based on consumption, in the secularization and internationalization of symbolic universes, and in the segmentation of communities into audiences for the marketplace. All of these processes can be traced back to the turn of the century in some aspects, but they do not achieve their true social visibility until the 1950s and 60s. At this time, mass education was introduced - thus bringing schooling to the majority of the population - and the professionalization of workers and the segmentation of consumers enable the culture to gain differentiation and autonomy from other social orders. For Brunner, our modernity emerges as "an experience divided by differences but within a common matrix caused by schooling, televisual communication, the consumption of information and the necessity to live connected to the signs of the city."

This modernity is taken into consideration neither in the spheres of cultural politics, where the primary objective is to search for roots and to conserve authenticities, nor in the education systems which are dedicated to denouncing cultural confusion

and degradation and to condemning the media as most directly responsible. Some commentators remain anchored to a paradigm of divisions and exclusions which does not correspond at all to the movement of integration and differentiation which our modernized societies are living in great part thanks to the impulses of the marketplace. This movement - as Garcia-Canclini explains - "resituates art and folklore, or academic knowledge and industrialized culture under relatively similar conditions. The work of the artist and the artisan draws closer when each one of them experiences that the specific sociology: the reorganization of hegemonies in a time when the State can no longer command or mobilize the 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 traditionalism of the lettered elites 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 in the reconstitution of social relations. But while in the countries at the center the postmodern eulogy of difference is leading to a growing scepticism about any type of community, according to N. Lechner the ascension of diversity and heterogeneity to social value 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 our challenge and on the horizon of our work: the research and teaching of communication, in which the advancement of knowledge of the social translates not only into a renovation 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.

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Jesús Martín-Barbero teaches at the Universidad del Valle in Cali, Colombia.

symbolic order in which they are nurtured is redefined by the logic of the marketplace. Less and less are they able to withdraw from modern information and iconography, or from the disenchantment with their selfcentered worlds and the re-enchantment which is offered by the spectacle of the media."

There is a third border zone to explore jointly by communication and

Post-Marxist Post-Modern Cultural Populism From Birmingham to Bogota?

BY Nick Witheford

Jesús Martín-Barbero, **Communication, Culture & Hegemony: From Media to Mediation.** Translated by Elizabeth Fox. London: Sage Publications, 1992.

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 social movements in the South, but it also makes a provocative contribution to controversies current within 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 mobilization—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" now seem inadequate. In their place is emerging a more complex sense of "mediations," stressing the "articulation between practices of communication 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 "mass" culture. The concept of "the popular" is, he argues, one misunderstood by both left and right—too swiftly absorbed by Marxists into reductive schemas of class, and by conservatives into the image of the vulgar masses. What is needed now is a rediscovery of "the people" in the sense better understood by 19th century Romanticism and anarchism—as the subordinate, potentially insurgent sector of society whose boundaries exceed those of the proletariat and embrace a multiplicity of cultural experiences.

In the case of Latin America, with its tortuous colonial and post-colonial history, this means recognizing "the popular" as constituted by *mestizajes* —mixtures, compounding native, peasant and urban identities in a series of densely layered, historically dynamic hybridizations. Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, capitalist modernization has attempted the "massification" of these *mestizajes*, violently assimilating them to a model of progressive rationalism in the name first 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.

However—and this is Martín-Barbero's crucial point—massification 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." 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 conserve within—the people." There is thus a sense in which "subversion is imbedded in integration."

Martín-Barbero stresses that in affirming the resilience of the popular he is not seeking a nostalgic rescue of 'authentic' archaisms, 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 we come from but the interweaving of modernity and the residues of various cultural periods, the mixtures of social structures and sentiments." With examples ranging through Mexican cinema, Argentinean radio, black music in Brazil and Chilean journalism he shows how the subordinate classes 'take' the products of the culture industry and "resemanticize" them in the context of their own neighborhoods and struggles. The media is in turn obliged to acknowledge the demands issuing from below, creating "a popular that appeals to us from the mass." Thus, for example, Martín-Barbero insists that Latin America's famous form of soap opera, the telenovela, is no mere instrument of capitalist indoctrination, but rather articulates an idiom of passion and moralism which lies outside the bounds of modernizing rationalism, thereby "allowing the people as a mass to recognize themselves as the authors of their own history" and providing a language for "the popular forms of hope."

By this point, readers familiar with British and North American cultural studies may themselves experience a certain sense of recognition. For Martín-Barbero's work, issuing from the University of Cali, near Bogota, Colombia, has surprising affinities with the line of thought that has burgeoned in the wake of Stuart Hall and the Birmingham Centre for Cultural Studies. This is no accident. Eruditely internationalist, Martín-Barbero parallels many of the theoretical moves which have shaped the revived interest in popular culture in the North. Thus the Frankfurt school's pessimism is punctured with the help of the perkier Benjamin; Gramsci is invoked in his familiar guise as the theoretician of rule by consent, rather than coercion; there is an acknowledged debt to the work of Williams and

Hoggart. The net result of this global theoretical *mestizaje* is firmly to situate Martín-Barbero's work within a larger school of leftish thought characterized by an insistence on the constitutive—rather than merely 'superstructural'—role of culture in reproducing social reality, a preference for semiosis over economics, an emphasis on audiences' 'resistant' readings of media, and a view of hegemonic struggle pitting, not class against class, but, as Hall puts it, "the popular forces against the power bloc."

As Hall and his colleagues reacted against the idea of people as "cultural dupes," endlessly defrauded by an omnipotent capitalist cultural industry, so Martín-Barbero's work takes issue with radical analyses representing the inhabitants of South as hapless victims of the multinational corporations' media bombardment. If the classic instance of such cultural "dependency theory" was Dorfman and Mattelart's critique of Donald Duck as an agent of imperialism, a counter-example for Martín-Barbero's perspective might be the 'Superbarrio' figure, lifted from the pages of Superman comics by the inhabitants of Mexico City's slums as a symbol of their fight for livable neighborhoods.

But despite broad similarities to Anglo-Saxon cultural studies, Martín-Barbero's post-colonial perspective yields distinctive theoretical insights from which we in the North should learn. Here one might single out his emphasis on collective "memory" as a vital element in the construction of oppositional identity. A catastrophic history of exterminations and disappearances has clearly made the remembering of peoples, places and communities erased by official terror crucial to Latin America's liberation movements. Charged with this background, Martín-Barbero's concept of "popular memory" assumes a particular depth and urgency. This is accentuated by the prominent place his concept of popular *mestizajes* gives to the struggle for cultural survival waged by indigenous and rural communities. Understanding continuities with the pre-capitalist and pre-colonial past as living resources for resistance, rather than mere anachronistic hangovers, Martín-Barbero foregrounds issues that are central for ethnic minorities, aboriginal peoples and immigrant communities, but which are only beginning to be to moved from the margins of academic attention in Canada.

In doing so he also by implication raises the profound complicity of so many strands of 'Northern' popular culture in a colonial history of genocide, slavery and racism.

Elsewhere, however, Martín-Barbero displays blindspots common throughout the discourse of 'cultural studies.' Justifiably determined to shake free of monolithic, Eurocentric visions of the industrial working class as the sole agent of social change, he adopts a highly pluralistic concept of "the people" as a source of effervescent heterogeneity welling up against an homogenization imposed from above. But equating diversity with subversion displaces attention from vertical subordination to horizontal variety. This is apparent in Martín-Barbero's treatment of gender, where the relatively benign discussions of machismo and of the domestic sphere scarcely take account of feminist critique. Moreover, in rejecting the "mythos of the proletariat" he also discards any precise analysis of changing class composition, thereby throwing the baby out with the bath water. His reaction against Marx thus veers toward a characteristically postmodernist depoliticization—very evident in recent Anglo-American cultural studies—whereby the celebration of difference eclipses systematically structured inequality.

Equally problematic is the de-emphasis of media production that accompanies Martín-Barbero's theory of "mediation." Attention to the strategies of reception is a real advance over assumptions that the ideological valency of messages can be simply 'read off' from the structures of media ownership. However, fascination with 'audience resistance'—now ubiquitous throughout cultural studies—slides easily toward denial of any specificity or determining power to the moment of production. At the extreme, this reinstates an ultra-subjectivised doctrine of 'consumer sovereignty.' Affirming the symbolic reappropriation of cultural products, Martín-Barbero downplays the importance of materially appropriating the means of cultural production. But retreat from issues of ownership and control risks circumscribing the left's cultural activity within an essentially reactive space, endlessly salvaging telenovelas and game shows, rather than fighting for the enlarged access to media resources which might permit the emergence of something new.

These issues ultimately bear on the politics of cultural studies. While Martín-Barbero constantly suggests the potential for connecting popular culture with political mobilization, his concrete examples of such projects are rather skimpy. But the general direction of his thought is clear. For Martín-Barbero, the "rediscovery of the popular" is linked to a political reevaluation by the Latin American left, which, he believes, has resulted in a rejection of the armed, anti-parliamentary, class-based struggles of the 70s in favour of an approach rooted in the democratization and cultivation of civil society. It is thus part of a move away from the "politics of total transformation" toward a more pragmatic line.

Now, the assessment of strategies for the Latin American left is a matter for activists enduring the dangers of Bogota, Rio and Havana, not for academics safe in Vancouver. But insofar as Martín-Barbero's work may be enlisted to corroborate political realignments in the very different context of the North, comment is in order. This is especially so because of its affinity with that of another Latin American theorist, Ernesto Laclau, whose concepts of popular-democratic struggle have been so influential here in shaping 'post-Marxist' positions. A necessary challenge to ossified dogmatisms, post-Marxism has also often simply rationalized a watering-down of radical commitments rendered unfashionable by a decade of neoconservatism. In the field of 'cultural studies' such dilutions are particularly ill-timed: for it is precisely within 'popular' cultural traditions that the threads of desire for totally transformative social change—change which would 'turn the world upside down'—have often run deepest and been stubbornly preserved during the most reactionary eras. Cultural studies' critical edge may depend on retaining its affiliation to these disturbingly unpragmatic, apocalyptic, frankly revolutionary energies. With so many leftist verities vanishing into air, we are surely engaged in making what Martín-Barbero, in one of this most telling metaphors, terms a "nocturnal map"; but working in the dark as we are, we can perhaps appreciate the many illuminations his work offers, while not agreeing with every aspect of his cartography.

Nick Witheford is a graduate student in the Communication Department at Simon Fraser University.

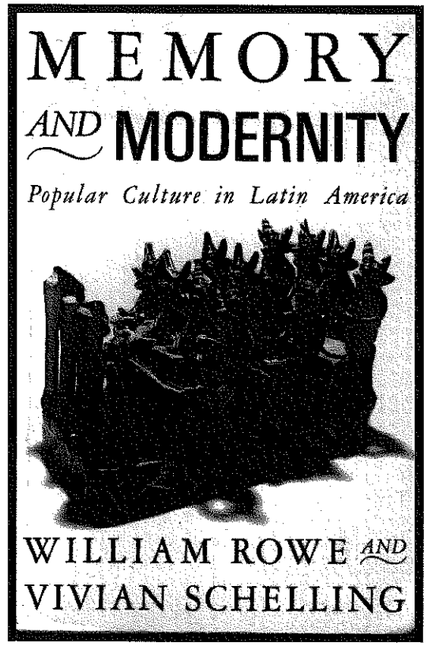
Resources for Memory

BY Michael Hoechsmann

William Rowe & Vivian Schelling,
Memory and Modernity: Popular Culture in Latin America.
London: Verso, 1992.

A new generation of Latin American researchers is finding a powerful "optimism of the will" amongst the people of Latin America. *Memory and Modernity: Popular Culture in Latin America* by William Rowe and Vivian Schelling marks the first major attempt to outline this emerging body of research and scholarship to an anglophone audience. The title of the book alludes to the two primary paths of this research: first, the excavation of the substratum of collective memory as it is embedded in popular cultural practices, the roots of which in some cases extend as far back as pre-conquest times; and, second, the exploration of how modernity in a Latin American context is lived and adapted through popular cultural practices, the "mediations" - to borrow a term from Jesús Martín-Barbero - by which people make sense of their worlds with mass media and commodity products.

Memory and Modernity not only frames the terms of reference for this new arena of debate, but it also offers a comprehensive journey through the terrain of Latin American popular culture, both historically and geographically. Ranging over a wide variety of popular cultural practices, Rowe and Schelling discuss soccer, samba, salsa, rock music, popular theater, community radio, comic books, soap operas, oral poetry and poetic duels, and religious syncretism, to mention only a sampling of topics covered. This entertaining, yet sometimes dizzying, collection of anecdotes provides the backdrop for the important theoretical insights developed by Rowe and Schelling from their own analysis and that of others, most notably Martín-Barbero, Néstor García Canclini and Carlos Monsiváis.



Memory and Modernity is divided into four chapters, a theoretical introduction and a short conclusion. Unfortunately, the book is poorly integrated, and hence the quality is uneven. While the introduction sparkles with promise, the rather long-winded and rambling Chapters 1 and 2 slow things down to a crawl and force the reader to do the writing, so to speak. This is a disappointment, because the material is extremely rich and suggestive, a testimony to much careful research. Chapters 3 and 4 are much more successfully integrated, simultaneously developing theoretical insights and historical anecdotes, and the conclusion briefly reframes some of the central questions posed in the introduction. Whether the publisher or the writers are at fault, *Memor y and Modernity* has the feel of a very promising advanced draft of a manuscript that was rushed to market. Given that its publication pre-empts the imminent release of English translations of works by Martín-Barbero and García Canclini, this is more than a little bit problematic.

Rowe and Schelling contextualize their analysis in the global processes of late-twentieth-century capitalism where an eclectic array of cultural goods from a wide variety of cultural environments "seems to offer an unbroken horizon." Two countervailing tendencies arise from this situation. First, is the tendency to "cultural homogenization" which, in its worst case scenario, results in "cultural death," and, second, is the possibility of dismantling "old forms of marginalization and domination and making new forms of democratization and cultural multiplicity imaginable." Rowe and Schelling maintain the tension between these opposing tendencies, warning that with the growing concern in the 1990s about the "globalization of the media" and "the defense of cultural multiplicity," it is important to resist "apocalyptic pessimism" about the former and "attempts to preserve 'purity'" in regards to the latter.

For an anglophone audience, the context of Latin America offers an opportunity to reconsider popular culture from another historical and geographical vantage point. Rowe and Schelling point out that the history of the relationship between modernity, nationhood and the mass media in the USA is often "taken as a model" for similar experiences elsewhere. To the contrary, the authors point out, "the different historical moments at which the culture industry becomes established give rise to crucial differences." Thus, for example, in the case of Brazil, "modernity arrived with the television rather than with the Enlightenment." The historical difference that marks Latin America "is the force of popular culture," where modernity has not entailed "the elimination of pre-modern traditions and memories but has arisen through them, transforming them in the process."

Rowe and Schelling distinguish between three principal interpretive narratives which have been used to circumscribe the role of popular culture. First, is the Romantic version of popular culture as "an authentic rural culture under threat from industrialization and the modern culture industry." Second, is

the conflation of popular culture with mass culture, "either as threat or solution." Finally, the perspective which most closely approximates that of the authors invests popular culture with an emancipatory and utopian optimism where the practices of subaltern groups are interpreted as "resources for imagining an alternative future society." Rowe and Schelling recognize that these perspectives are all flawed; the first is nostalgic, the second is pessimistic and the third is idealized.

Rowe and Schelling point out that, as an object of study, popular culture has been taken up within the disciplinary frameworks of folklore and mass culture. Folklore has a particular political resonance in Latin America "because of the crucial fact that its referent - the cultures thought of as folkloric - can be as much part of the present as of the past." Thus, folklore has been mobilized to the cause of fledgling nation states in an attempt to incorporate rural populations, either as a bank of "authenticity" or as "a way of referring to contemporary cultures which articulate alternatives to existing power structures."

Of course, Latin America should not be considered a homogenous entity, and, accordingly, the meanings ascribed to folklore have varied between countries and historical contexts. For example, the merging of the European tradition of carnival with the African roots of samba in Brazil incorporated racial difference into the nation, while in Mexico the effort to validate the artisanal products of the peasant population as national symbols was an attempt to incorporate the rural populations into the nation. On the other hand, a genuine attempt to "articulate alternatives" can be seen in the Nicaraguan literacy campaign where folklore - in the form of popular wisdom and poetry - became the material for social change. And, in Chile, the emergence of *arpilleras* - patchwork images made by women in the *poblaciones* around Santiago - has transformed an innocuous social practice into a powerful political tool.

While folklore can be seen to ground the popular into a particular set of lived practices which make up a whole way of life, mass culture appears as a set of technologies which conduct ideological messages to passive recipients. State Rowe and Schelling: "If the idea of folklore gives popular culture an ontological solidity, that of mass culture appears to empty it of any content." A powerful research tradition which held sway during the 1970s in the study of Latin American communication processes - best known in the anglophone world through the work of Armand Mattelart and others - tended to adopt this view of mass culture, inflecting it with the analysis of cultural imperialism. Recent work, most notably that of Martín-Barbero and García Canclini, has attempted to recuperate the role of mass culture to a position of historical and political relevance in Latin America.

Rowe and Schelling point out that, for Martín-Barbero, the media are "vehicles or mediations of particular moments of the 'massification' of society, and not its source." In Latin America, the "secularization of popular memory is only partial," and thus, "the majority of television viewers in Latin America at the beginning of the 1990s. . . continue to participate in symbolic systems which combine precapitalist and capitalist worlds." Most importantly, and this is what distinguishes the current generation of communication researchers from those who came before, these viewers are seen to make their contribution at the point of reception. The media are not understood as "mere conveyors of messages but meeting-points of often contradictory ways of remembering and interpreting." The move from the media to the mediations humanizes the technological apparatus of the media by bringing social, cultural and historical contexts into the discussion.

Despite his useful insights, Martín-Barbero neglects a careful analysis of power relationships and thus opens himself up 'in the last instance' to charges of romantic cultural pluralism. García Canclini, on the other hand, combines the work of Pierre Bourdieu and Antonio Gramsci to investigate both the forms of power inscribed into symbolic processes and the impact of the capitalist market on popular cultural practices. Rowe and Schelling mention García Canclini's theory of "a market for symbolic goods" in a consumer society where the popular "becomes defined by the unequal access of the subaltern classes to this market." Through a process of "reconversion," or the "refashioning of cultural signs," the popular practices of the subaltern groups resist "being wholly absorbed into the dominant power structures." Among other examples, Rowe and Schelling report on the ceremony of "parading the community-based radio station in a Brazilian shanty town as though it were a saint in a religious procession."

The Latin American context helps to problematize key concepts of Gramsci. For one, the authors argue, there is his "diminished relevance to situations of violence." Furthermore, as Jose Joaquin Brunner argues in his critique of García Canclini, "Gramsci's formulations, which belong to a different historical moment, are not necessarily appropriate to an age of simulation and hybridization." Finally, Latin America has not had to wait for the translation of Gramsci to start theorizing, or practicing, the popular. Figures such as José Martí, who led the movement to Cuban independence in 1895, and José Carlos Maríategui, who struggled for an indigenous socialism for Peru in the 1920s, have long since set the terms for a serious engagement with popular culture. Revolutionary governments, such as the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, have recognized that their project was dependent on being firmly "rooted in the experience and language of the people."

Despite its aforementioned limitations, *Memory and Modernity* provides a rich resource for the history of Latin American popular cultural practices. Rowe and Schelling conclude their study with two important terms in contemporary Latin American cultural theory: hybridization - "the ways in which forms become separated from existing practices and recombine with new forms in new practices" - and deterritorialization - "the release of cultural signs from fixed locations in time and space." Thus, for example, pre-capitalist practices can coexist with modern ones and rural practices can undergird urban ones. These fluid concepts suggest a cultural politics which is evolving and which can provide a resource for collective memory, both as a way of keeping cultural traditions alive and as a site for political mobilization.

Michael Hoechsmann is a student at The Ontario Institute For Studies in Education

Beyond Boundaries

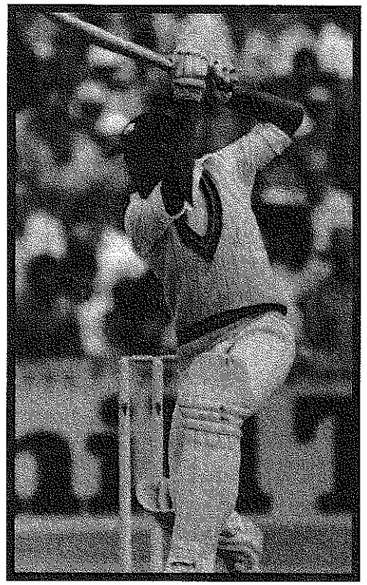
BY W.F. Santiago Valles

The C.L.R. James Reader,
ed., Anna Grimshaw
Oxford, U.K : Blackwell, 1992

If cultural studies addresses the relation between cultural industries and the organization of daily life, the forms through which meaning is negotiated, the historical understanding of the popular sectors and their cultural practices with an integrated overview of the social processes of communication, then it would be safe to say that C.L.R. James is a pioneer in the field within a Latin American perspective that is critical of European and North American influences. In *Beyond a Boundary* (1963), James writes that if you begin from what people do in their daily life, it is possible to understand their goals and values, their consciousness of obstacles and their strategies to overcome them.

During the last ten years, social debate in Latin America has turned on the character of our social formations, on the problems of culture and politics, on the applicability of the concept of hegemony, on the possibilities that limited economic growth might be enough to postpone an anti-capitalist revolution, and on the possible expansion of democracy beyond the limitations of the existing order. For James, as for others since, notably Agustin Cueva (author of *La Teoria Marxista* (1987) and *America Latina, En la Frontera de los Anos Noventa* (1989)), the separation of economic and cultural domination denies the problematic of imperialism and how the daily lives of people in the periphery are organized by state terror. The advice from progressive intellectuals in the North for gradual reforms in the South is based on this denial, as is the notion that social reforms in the North here are due to their own efforts instead of being the consequence of exploitation in the South.

Since the 1930s, C.L.R. James had been researching and writing about the place of social processes of communication in the organization of daily life within industrial capitalism, and about the relationship between European civilization and the new world. His interest in the relations between working people and dominant society had been pursued through sports, labour relations, film, jazz, comic strips, the stories of marginalized women, soap operas on radio, West-Indian self-government, and detective stories. According to Anna Grimshaw, the editor of this anthology, these "case studies" were specific instances of a larger project on the relations between the creative possibilities of individuals and societies organized by relations of industrial capitalism. In his travels from the colonies to the metropolis, James studied how mass culture combines elements of the popular and dominant cultures, the social relations which make this process meaningful, as well as the historical evolution of the place of the audience.



Grimshaw refers to James' life work as the study of democracy in world history, as the search for an integrated experience of the relation between the parts of human existence made possible through an understanding of culture. In order to achieve this he had to make a clean break with metropolitan conceptions and look for clues in the daily practices of the popular sectors in the colonies. In James' own words, "to establish his own identity, Caliban, after three centuries, must himself pioneer into regions Caesar never knew" to discover the ways in which the working people in the West Indies made their own road as they travelled it.

This process began in the 1930s with the research for *Black Jacobins*, James' best known book. The history of Latin America's first war of national liberation in Haiti (1792-1803) is that of a Black people making revolution without an organized party. This study not only questioned European cultural leadership in the pursuit of self-government in the colonies, it also questioned the need for a trained vanguard given the evidence of a triumphant social movement within industrial capitalism. More than twenty years later when James began writing *American Civilization* he had moved from the canon to the daily life of the working people - the emerging social protagonist - for source material with which to integrate social history, dominant art forms and popular culture. James' interpretation of the Haitian revolution and the emerging protagonism of the collective subject was confirmed by the independence struggles after 1945. As Grimshaw states in her preface, James also believed the West Indies were in a privileged position to contribute to the liberation of the colonial world. For over two hundred and fifty years the region has experienced the spontaneous opposition of working people to the capitalist organization of their daily lives, and the symbols of those struggles had been adopted by European and North American students in the late sixties. The creative integration of social experience by working people in the new world confirmed James' notion that European civilization had lost the cultural initiative. For the student of cultural studies the inclusion in *The C.L.R. James Reader* of the theatrical script version of *Black Jacobins*, the section from *American Civilization* in which the work of Whitman and Melville is compared, and the section from *Beyond a Boundary* on the definition of art should be more than enough, but this anthology includes many other pieces that recommend it as worthwhile reading.

James' study of the Haitian revolution helped him understand that there is a liberation tradition in Latin America that does not depend on European leadership, and that understanding the way human experience has been integrated (in the region) to create something new is accessible through the study of cultural practices. With the study of the relation between mass culture and popular art forms in the U.S., James was expanding the scope of the vision used to address the conflict

between the formal support of democratic freedoms and state repression (both under Stalinism and McCarthyism). In a letter to Constance Webb (included in this collection) James insists that by giving the working people access to great art the cultural industries are making the contrast with their exploitation in production only more dramatic. The experience of reaching out for dominant knowledge could encourage a social movement that would reach out for everything in defense of the general interest.

This protagonism of the social subject in the new world was characteristic of industrial capitalism according to James. In another of the essays included in this anthology - "Preface to Criticism" - the author outlines a method of analysis whose evolution will be manifested in *Beyond a Boundary*. In both cases, the role of the audience, working people with a central role in history, is underscored. As the performance is symbolic of a larger social conflict, it gives the audience a better understanding of reality by increasing its awareness of the relations between the parts of the whole. The event is the interaction among the performers and the audience - whether it is a film, drama, dance or sport competition. In *Beyond a Boundary* James discusses the role of the newspaper in connecting world issues with daily life, in forging the natural popular that Jesús Martín-Barbero would write about twenty- five years later. Another ingredient in the process of nation building is the continuity of the cultural practices that carried our people through slavery, which James discusses in relation to the writing of Toni Morrison, Alice Walker and Ntozake Shange.

Like Julio Antonio Mella and Jose Carlos Mariátegui before him, James insisted that an economic crisis was also a period of cultural reorganization. Unlike Marcus Garvey, James thought that the popular sectors could find their own way in such a situation. Long before Antonio Gramsci, José Martí had written about the need to reappropriate the national popular in Latin America without falling prey to populism. This is the tradition to which Mella, Mariátegui, and James contributed with their understanding of culture and the popular. In more recent times, Anibal Quijano, Francisco Weffort, Octavio Ianni, and Walter Rodney have taken up the task.

In articles such as "Popular Art and the Cultural Tradition" included in this selection, James identifies the mass audience as an urban characteristic of monopoly capitalism, whose logic also organizes the cultural industries (particularly film). Since mass culture conditions the way that people make sense of their history, James thought that cultural criticism also had to connect with mass audiences, which, while divided by economic crisis and therefore denied access to decisive experiences, nonetheless kept filling the movie houses because films presented a contrast with their daily life. This is the integrated approach to the study of social processes of communication as social relations that Carlos Monsiváis and Jesús Martín-Barbero have continued and complemented.

According to Grimshaw, James had a method which started by rejecting the colonized middle class which was busy imitating their British masters. Through direct observation and conversation with the popular sectors, James collected detailed information about how they connected world history and everyday life. He then wrote to create a synthesis from these memories, a synthesis that locates the relation between the popular audience and cultural tradition in the context of social conflict. The discussion of his method can be found in the "Preface to Criticism" which is also in this volume. Whether the pretext was *Moby Dick* or cricket, the purpose of the research was to place the evolution of human goals and values in a historical context, in order to make sense of collective, conscious, organized action which succeeded because the leadership knew when to follow the working people.

In the late forties when James was discusses the relation between mass culture and working people to integrate creative work and social history, the construction of a method of cultural criticism which seeks to inform social intervention becomes apparent. As James identifies the links among daily life, mass culture and art, the creative role of the audience as economic and cultural protagonist becomes progressively clearer. Once again James proceeds by identifying the tradition that organizes the discussion and the conditions that raise the question about the relation between the individual and democracy; then he analyses why there is no suitable answer for the majority within the existing relations of force. This is what he was writing about during the McCarthy period as he faced deportation, while others were denouncing their colleagues and principles to protect a tawdry career.

As a person of color from the West Indies, socialized outside the rigors of the British Empire, I have often turned to the writings of James and Walter Rodney in order to make sense of my Canadian experience. Their work has identified the difference between negotiable conditions of cultural consumption and non-negotiable conditions of production which deny the possibility of multiple interpretation is by the new social protagonists.

For those of us raised in the islands of the West Indies, adapting to the environment with ease and humour is a necessity. This was particularly the case under formal colonialism when the colonized lived on two worlds, especially the petit bourgeois elements involved in "cultural affairs." For the latter, everyday life was directed towards the pursuit of imperial standards. In one way or another they were the local collaborators of the colonial bureaucrats. With the new order of the unified imperial North the writers and commentators of mass culture are still an important issue in cultural studies. The publication of James' work gives us a point of reference and comparison with which to evaluate the current fashion of analyzing the lives of the uprooted.

C.L.R. James did well in the North, in spite of breaking the rules, and much of what he wrote about the cricketeer Constantine in *Beyond a Boundary* could also be applied to him: "Without a nation, a national hero can expect little more than applause; a region that can not keep its best children at home does not deserve to have them." In these difficult times for Latin America, and especially for the Caribbean, the precise vision which informed James answers to our most pressing questions in a tradition which challenges the practice of the present generations.

Santiago Valles is a graduate student in the Department of Communication at Simon Fraser University.

The Same Old Tradition

BY Alan O'Connor

John Tomlinson, **Cultural Imperialism**. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991.

Everyone (or, at least, all readers of this magazine) would maintain that cultural imperialism is a bad thing. Intellectuals and media audiences (not exclusive categories) generally agree that countries with powerful media industries should not impose their products on Third World and traditional societies. John Tomlinson's main argument about the subject is that the protest against cultural imperialism is usually made by intellectuals and elites who, in the Third World as elsewhere, claim to speak for the ordinary person. The epigraph for his book is a remark by Gilles Deleuze to Michel Foucault: "You were the first to teach us something absolutely fundamental: the indignity of speaking for others." The over-all effect of the book is to leave the field to the organic intellectuals of the transnational media corporations who find no indignity in taking far-reaching decisions for others.

In 1989 Central Television in Birmingham, England sent out a Christmas card with a photograph of an aboriginal family watching television in a remote part of Australia. It is evening and the family sits outside, their faces lit up by the luminous screen. Tomlinson begins his book by remarking that many readers will interpret the photo as evidence of the imposition of Western culture on a remote aboriginal community. The text on the Christmas card suggests this, but also notes that the community has set up its own broadcasting organization—the Walpiri Media Association—"to try to defend its unique culture from western culture." Tomlinson begins and ends his book with this image because he wants to argue that something rather different is happening and it is not media imperialism. He uses the photograph as a way of catching out readers in their assumption that this aboriginal family is watching advertisements or some foreign television series. Readers are forced to question their assumptions because in this photograph the family actually might be watching its own community-produced programming.

The strategy here is exactly that of cable television companies who defend their monopoly control over the selection and distribution of video signals by pointing out that they do have a channel for local or public access programming. Tomlinson says nothing about the resources, the legal situation and the programming of the Walpiri Media Association. He does not compare its resources with those of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. The reason for this is apparently that although he had easy access to the photograph which was distributed in England by Central Television, he did not have access to Eric Michaels' monograph on the Walpiri Media Association. *For a Cultural Future* is published by Art & Text in Melbourne and is not widely distributed.

In his introduction, Tomlinson acknowledges the irony of writing a book on media imperialism from England and publishing it in one of the world's hegemonic languages. He deals with this by invoking Blaise Pascal's advice to a young nobleman about his position of privilege. The advice was to remember that in his dealings with others that he was a nobleman only by accident of birth. This astonishing turn of argument may divert the reader's attention from a serious practical limitation of this book. Tomlinson has written a book on cultural imperialism which draws only on materials published in the English language. The book is based on a very selective range of published sources.

Tomlinson turns his attention to writers on media imperialism such as Herbert Schiller and Armand Mattelart. He makes two moves against their generalizing argument that U.S. media dominate the world. The first argument is to separate the realm of the economic from that of the cultural. Tomlinson bows before the evidence of political economy research. Transnational corporations, especially those based in the USA, by and large dominate the world in the production and distribution of mass media. However, he insists that this economic domination tells us nothing about its cultural domination. It is somewhat astonishing to find such an insistence on culture as being autonomous from economics. Such a claim was made in Althusser's "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" essay. It has been widely criticized, by Raymond Williams among others, as hopelessly inadequate to the multiple ways in which culture and economy are intertwined in consumer societies in design, fashion, advertising, marketing and the operation of the media industries themselves. As a result of the limitations in Althusser's essays, cultural studies turned its attention to Gramsci and to studies of the institution of meaning, value and power.

Tomlinson's second argument against Schiller and Mattelart is the now-familiar one that the audience is active in interpreting and resisting the meanings embedded in the media product. Here Tomlinson draws on research into the "active audience" by Morley, Ang, Katz and Liebes. The widespread circulation among liberal intellectuals of a very small number of studies of audience reception of mass media deserves some serious scrutiny. What is it about these studies that has attracted such attention? Pierre Bourdieu has researched the use of art and culture in

France since the 1960s. Why is his work not given the same attention?

There are two types of research into the "active audience." The first stresses the role of individual psychology or life experience in the selective perception of media. The second seeks to show patterns of media use, which are invariably very complex, by education, occupation, geography (especially differences between city and country), gender, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity. Many of the studies of reception which, are continually cited are unsystematic "pilot studies" or ethnographic research which because of their limited research design, exclude the possibility of discovering anything but personal preferences or very simple patterns in media use (especially differences between men and women). The Katz and Liebes study of *Dallas* viewers in Israel is more systematic but is flawed by the repetition of a much-criticized distinction between "traditional" and "modern" personalities from Katz's early work on media and national development in the Third World. Not surprisingly Katz and Liebes discovered that viewers of *Dallas* fall into two categories: traditional Arab viewers who see it as about an extended family like their own and modern Israeli and American viewers who continually foreground the fact that *Dallas* is fictional television.

Fuenzalida and Hermosilla's study of television viewers in Chile demonstrates the kind of complex structural pattern of individual responses and choices that a reader of Bourdieu might expect to find. They studied the reception of television among the following: poor urban women in the Greater Santiago area, *campesinos* in rural areas, rural youth, rural women and community leaders. These groups use and enjoy television in different ways, but are also sharply critical about how their own lives are never shown on the screen. They make many detailed and imaginative suggestions to improve television. The book is part of debates in Chile about the future of television in the post-Pinochet era.

Studies which stress individual choices in media preferences and reception are widely read and circulated among liberal intellectuals. But studies which show complex social structural patterns in media use and reception are generally ignored. Liberal intellectuals are unwilling to think through the complex inter-relationships of social class, gender, race and other factors because such work requires an intellectual commitment to the formation of complex theories of class and social structure and this goes against the grain of liberal assumptions.

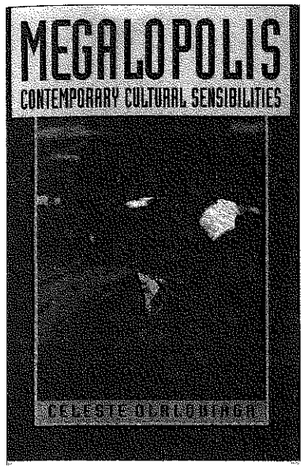
One of the major criticisms leveled at cultural imperialism is that it is an attack on national culture. Here Tomlinson claims that Marxists have difficulty dealing with the topic and draws instead on Benedict Anderson's description of nationalism as a historically constructed "imagined community." Tomlinson makes another sharp distinction, this time between culture and politics. His point is that politics (the nation) does not relate one-to-one with culture (ethnic and other differences within the nation). This theoretical distinction is quite the reverse of the direction of an important Marxist thinker on national culture. Gramsci's whole point was to show the political implications of a "national popular" culture. What Gramsci wanted to point out is how popular culture is more or less linked with to one of several competing versions of national identity and how this is part of the complex processes of the cultural/political hegemony of the ruling bloc.

Tomlinson repeatedly refers in his book to "capitalist modernity." This is part of his argument for a shift in attention from space (geography and imperialism) to time (traditional and modern cultures). His account of capitalist modernity places very little emphasis on class inequality. He also neglects class and anti-colonial struggle as processes which form and transform collective identities. Instead, drawing on Marshall Berman, he focuses on the personal experience of modern culture which provokes a crisis of meaning at the level of the individual. At this point it becomes clear that Tomlinson actually has no sense of the collective nature of culture and that by "culture" he exclusively means processes of individual self-understanding. The major cultural issues for Tomlinson are not cultural at all, but are existential issues of the meaning of life: the purpose of one's own birth, life and death.

This leads to the conclusion of Tomlinson's book. His argument in the end is that the source of angst in the developing world is not cultural imperialism or media imperialism, not even capitalist culture, but the transition from a traditional to a modern society. The key difference between the two is that in traditional society Tomlinson imagines that existential issues about the meaning of an individual life do not arise. Following a traditional lifestyle by definition means not questioning it because it is not one possible life but the only life. It is only in modern society that choices and possibilities open up and with that the individual existential questions of the meaning of it all.

This is, of course, exactly the position of pre-1960's anthropology and sociology of development. Levi-Strauss was enthusiastically read in the 1960s because he broke with this and insisted that the intellectual activity of "pre-modern" societies was the same as that of "modern" societies. Against the implicit racism of notions of primitive mentalities, Levi-Strauss showed that the intellectual activity of story-tellers and artists and healers in "pre-modern" societies has the same characteristics as modern science. Tomlinson has fallen back into the older position of an absolute difference. In sociology and the new field of media studies in the 1950s it was said that traditional societies were characterized by the social-psychological absence of "empathy." For Daniel Lerner, traditional societies remained the way they were only because their members could not even imagine that their lives (or anybody else's life) might be different. Tomlinson ends by taking the same position.

Alan O'Connor is a member of the Border/Lines Collective.



Vicarious Sensibilities or Vicarious Criticism?

BY Alison Hearn

Celeste Olalquiaga, **Megalopolis,** Minneapolis: Universtiy of Minnesota Press, 1992.

Megalopolis, a collection of five essays, takes as its subject the postmodern "state of things." In each essay Olalquiaga explicates aspects of the contemporary postmodern 'condition' and gives examples from the urban scene as she perceives it; examples range from shopping malls, to World Fairs, to religious icons, to junk art, to Brazilian carnivals. The purpose of the book, Olalquiaga claims, "is to describe how such an apparently finite project as postmodernism, understood as the glorification of consumption, does in fact enable the articulation of novel and often contradictory experiences." Each chapter is just such a "description," with liberal amounts of orthodox postmodern theory thrown in for good measure. Olalquiaga unfailingly looks for the good, or momentarily liberatory, in the signifying practices and products she describes. But ironically, she is at her best when focusing on the baser, more violent and compromised aspects of contemporary culture.

The prologue of *Megalopolis* is a summary of the standard theoretical constructs of contemporary postmodern theory. What with the obligatory "flattening of meaning and the exhaustion of modernism," "the celebration of difference in cultural identities," "the glorification of consumption as an autonomous practice," "the collapse of time into space," and "referential emptiness," we are inundated with a veritable smorgasbord of pomo formulations.

Perhaps the most central and, definitely, the most poignant of these formulations is Olalquiaga's description of the "vicariousness" of contemporary sensibilities and experiences. High technology has interfered with the directness of experience, highlighting the radical split between subject and object. This split is, itself, a result of "the breaking down of traditional referentiality." Our experience in postmodernity, is always and necessarily, indirect. In a state of perpetual "existential displacement," our modern vicarious experience is likened to "the kind of confusion Madame Bovary and Don Quijote developed between themselves and the characters of the literature they so loved to read."

Unfortunately, the concepts of vicariousness and identity confusion comprise a more fitting description of Olalquiaga's work than of contemporary sensibilities. Somehow *Megalopolis*, as either cultural theory or criticism (Olalquiaga would argue it is neither), falls flat. Olalquiaga is obviously wrestling with a confusion between her unique critical voice and those of all the myriad pomo critics that have come before her. The result is, what we might might call, vicarious criticism.

In "Reach Out and Touch Someone" Olalquiaga tracks the ways in which high technology has reconstituted our modes of perception. The increasing dominance of visual images, the replacement of the verbal with the visual, and the new forms of simulated space are echoed in the psychological disorder of psychasthenia. This disorder involves a disturbance in the relationship between the body and its surroundings, where "the psychasthenic organism proceeds to abandon its own identity...by camouflaging itself into the milieu." Olalquiaga gives the standard (although puzzlingly simplistic) example of the shopping mall, where the homogeneity of one's environs is felt to induce a disorientation beginning with "the interminable, spiral search for a parking space (a place in which to place the self)."

In this chapter Olalquiaga also explores the compulsory postmodern theme of the interface between the organic and technological body. "The body has turned into the ruin of its own image," Olalquiaga asserts. Penetrated by technological form and infused with technology's imperatives, the organic body is on the verge of vanishing. Olalquiaga offers both monumentally insignificant and profoundly stirring examples of this vanishing organic body, and its fusion with technology. Olalquiaga cites breakdancing(?!) as exemplary of the potentially liberatory and highly profitable cultural practices that have emerged out of the erosion between time and space, organic and technological. More significantly Olalquiaga provides a description of homelessness. This description constitutes one of the most moving and resonant paragraphs in *Megalopolis*:

Perhaps the most striking account in the struggle over the vanishing body is its very literal manifestation in the fight over territory. In New York City, the value of people has sunk below that of objects, as growing numbers of homeless people - bodies without homes, dislocated to leave room for real-estate speculation - bear witness... This bodily displacement is even more violent than a war, because homelessness is a condition of slow deterioration and hardly appreciated heroisms. It is as if contemporary culture had developed a psychasthenic myopia by virtue of which people living on the street seem a natural extension of the urban scenario. (p.18)

The most lighthearted and fluid bit of cultural analysis in *Megalopolis* is provided in the chapter "Holy Kitschen." Here, Olalquiaga leaves aside, temporarily, her fixation with postmodern clichés, and explores the phenomenon of religious icons as kitsch. It is in this discussion that Olalquiaga makes her strongest case for the concept of 'vicarious sensibilities.' She does so, interestingly, by employing the category of direct experience - one that is usually eschewed by postmodern critics.

For Olalquiaga, the postmodern sensibility attempts to compensate for the loss of emotionality, traditional referential meaning, and a sense of the 'real' by searching for goods and signs imbued with intense emotionality by "other times and peoples." And, although the concept of "authenticity" is inconsistent with much postmodern theory, Olalquiaga con-

vincingly argues that religious imagery, in all of its blatant emotionality, provides an ideal point of intersection with kitsch art practice. Olalquiaga asserts that "(t)he link between religious imagery and kitsch is based on the dramatic character of their styles, whose function is to evoke unambiguously, dispelling ambivalence and abstraction." In this chapter Olalquiaga moves back and forth between postmodern orthodoxy and freestyle, critical eclecticism. Although Olalquiaga argues that postmodernism is a theoretical cannibal, in keeping with the annoying postmodern tendency to preempt criticism by deifying contradiction and dissonance and precluding all, at least theoretical, opposition, she thankfully reveals more than she manages to obscure in her discussion of the 'three degrees' of kitsch.

First degree kitsch religious iconography is that which is sold for its "straightforward iconic value." The relationship between "object and user is immediate, one of genuine belief"; consequently, the first degree kitsch religious object "must be treated with utmost respect." Second degree kitsch's value lies not in its connection to 'real' religious feeling, but rather in its self-referentiality. Neo-kitsch, Olalquiaga argues, involves "a perspective wherein appreciation of the 'ugly' conveys to the spectator an aura of refined decadence, an ironic enjoyment from a position of enlightened superiority." Third degree kitsch is the recycling of religious iconography by artists, true bricolage, where religious icons are 'recovered' by artists and imbued with 'new' meanings. Transcendental themes are replaced by political ones and the access to emotionality provided by religious iconography is exploited by artists and put to use accenting other 'artistic' interests.

Olalquiaga reverts to postmodern orthodoxy in the conclusion of this chapter, bestowing upon third degree kitsch the heavy responsibility of representing the fact that the "boundaries between reality and representation, themselves artificial, have been temporarily and perhaps permanently suspended." Again she shows remarkable and disturbing optimism in her claims for the power of art and cultural practice. We are told that "the exotic, colonized imagery...becomes part and parcel of the appropriator's imagination. Instead of appropriation annihilating what it absorbs, the absorbed invades the appropriating system and begins to constitute and transform it." The coexistence of all three levels of kitsch, we are advised, creates a kind of cultural anarchy which can effectively "destabilize traditional hegemony." Rather than questioning the darker and infinitely more problematic economic and political processes through which the 'original' religious object becomes a stylized and valuable *object d'art*, *Olalquiaga* are admonishes us, instead, to welcome this occurrence "as a sign of opening to and enjoyment of all that traditional culture worked so hard at leaving out."

The final essay in *Megalopolis*, entitled "Tupincopolis - The City of Retrofuturistic Indians," explores both the Latinization of North America and the development of Latin American postindustrial pop. Olalquiaga once again gives facile examples - the plethora of TexMex restaurants and music - to make a facile argument for the "fragmentary incorporation of Latino elements into a fairly technologized discourse" of North America. Her review of Latin American pop culture, however, makes the compelling argument that 'developing' or 'postcolonial' cultures have an understanding of postmodern pastiche, irony, and self-referentiality that can only come from years of submission to the imposition of foreign codes of behaviour and social organization. Both the ability to handle multiple codes, and a developed form of spectacular self-consciousness are "familiar to a culture that has been regarded 'from above' by colonization." Olalquiaga claims for these cultures the status of 'pre-postmodernity.'

Olalquiaga illustrates her argument about pre-postmodernity with examples from Latin American popular culture. Latin American postindustrial pop, Olalquiaga argues, is a form of cultural transvestism, the saturation of North American icons with new meanings. Examples of this genre of cultural practice range from the Mexican superhero figure "Superbarrio," who works against corruption, pollution, and for housing rights, to the appropriation of punk style by Chilean teenagers, to Aztec dancers in Niagara Falls, whose "ability to benefit from the icons of themselves by putting them on stage for a profit goes a lot further in undoing racist cliches than most theoretical deconstructions." Frustratingly, all of these examples are equally significant for Olalquiaga because they represent the fact that cultural icons can be "twisted and turned to satisfy far more needs than the ones that produced those icons in the first place." Through this process "postcolonial cultures show...how the world can also be a scenario for their own directorial and spectatorial delight."

Olalquiaga is a cultural critic who grew up in South America and now resides in New York. Sadly, most of her insights demonstrate a thorough schooling in continental cultural theory and very little understanding of her indebtedness to her own 'pre-postmodernity.' It is only in the rare spaces between the calls to celebrate the liberatory potential of cultural practices and the recitations of the postmodern theoretical litany that one finds evidence of a resonant critical voice in *Megalopolis*. For the most part, *Megalopolis* contains all of the standard problems one has come to expect in this kind of contemporary postmodern cultural criticism: political hollowness, an emphasis on and defense of cultural practice to the exclusion of all other forms of social organization (capitalism and consumerism as signifying systems to be plundered for 'new experiences'), the subsequent and inevitable superficiality of cultural 'description' (a keen sense of the obvious), and a strange kind of anti-theoretical, neo-sociological stance (the result of the view that postmodernism is not a theoretical take on the world, but simply *is* a state of things).

In spite of these problems, however, Olalquiaga achieves some moments of critical clarity and resonance. Her discussions of homelessness, kitsch, and pre-postmodernity are highlights of the book. Interestingly, it is when Olalquiaga addresses those categories of experiences that cannot easily be contained within the postmodern paradigm that her critical insights are most penetrating. *Megalopolis* is frustrating in the way it consistently recapitulates standard themes in postmodern criticism. But the promise in Olalquiaga's critical voice is that she might increasingly focus on those kinds of contemporary experience that resist appropriation by the postmodern gaze; and, as a result, may yet overcome her tendency toward vicarious criticism.

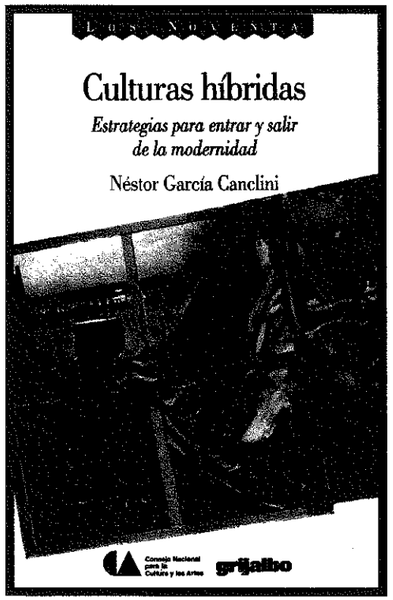
Alison Hearn is a graduate student in the Department of Communication at Simon Fraser University, now living in Toronto.

The B/L List

of Recent Latin American Cultural Studies

Compiled by Alan O'Connor

Néstor García Canclini, *Las culturas populares en el capitalismo* (México, Nueva Imagen, 1982).
One of the key works of Latin American cultural studies. It examines the continued importance of traditional handcrafts (pottery, weaving etc.) in a semi-industrialized Mexico. Handcrafts provide an income supplement in the countryside which sometimes allows families to avoid migrating to the cities. Their production is an important conduit for expression and sometimes protest by their makers. Traditional handcrafts are an important part of the tourism industry. An urban elite uses handmade goods as a sign of distinction. Finally, handcrafts are used by the state as an ideological symbol of the Mexican nation. The book calls for increased control by handcraft producers of the economic value and conditions of display of their work.



Néstor García Canclini, *Culturas híbridas: Estrategies para entrar y salir de la modernidad* (Mexico City: Grijalbo, 1990).
A theoretical reflection on hybrid cultures in Mexico and Latin America transformed by economic crisis, privatization and emigration. For García Canclini, categories are confused; things are no longer in place; resistance is agile. García Canclini's reflections include everything from national monuments to comic books.

Jesús Martín-Barbero, *De los medios a las mediaciones: Comunicación, cultura y hegemonía* (México: G. Gili, 1987).
Provides a reading of European theorists for a Latin American context. Its main arguments are against a model of the "effects" of communication and for a realization of the complex mediations of mass media in an unevenly (under)developed continent. Stresses the "mixture" of indigenous, hispanic, Black and transnational cultures. A densely argued and influential book.

Beatriz Sarlo, *Una modernidad periférica: Buenos Aires 1920 y 1930* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Nueva Visión, 1988).
In her account of literary modernism in Argentina, Sarlo moves beyond the Eurocentric vision of Jorge Luis Borges to writing with more organic ties to the worlds of the immigrants who made up the city of Buenos Aires. Her "peripheral" modernism includes women writers, admiration for the Russian revolution and the margins of Buenos Aires which invade poetry, fiction and newspapers.

Beatriz Sarlo, *La Imaginación Técnica: Sueños modernos de la cultura argentina* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Nueva Visión, 1992).
A study of technology and social change in Argentinian writing of the 1920s and 1930s, including essays by Roberto Arlt and Horacio Quiroga. Radio imagined as technology and fantasy.

Carlos Monsiváis, *"Notas sobre cultura popular en Mexico," Latin American Perspectives*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (1978): 98-118.
An important history of popular culture in Mexico City from popular and revolutionary music to middle-class dance halls and the cultural industries of radio and cinema. Influenced by the Frankfurt School, Monsiváis is a vital independent Mexican writer on culture and politics. Related collections of his essays include *Escenas de Pudor y Liviandad* and *Amor Perdida*. For an essay in English see "Landscape, I've Got the Drop on You!" *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture*, Vol. 4 (1985): 236-46.

Michèle and Armand Mattelart, *The Carnival of Images: Brazilian Television Fiction* (Mass., Bergin and Garvey, 1990).
Whereas print media and radio were regional, television in the 1970s created the first sense of Brazil as a nation. The telenovela is the most important form of fictional TV in Brazil—and is frequently exported. Are telenovelas part of the cultural hegemony of the elite and its modernization strategy? This book argues that the answer is more complex. It is based on research into the production of television fiction and on recent Latin American theory, such as that of Martín-Barbero.

Rubén Martínez, *The Other Side: Fault Lines, Guerilla Saints and the True Heart of Rock 'n' Roll* (London, New York: Verso, 1992).
A book of linked essays, journals and poems written about El Salvador and Los Angeles. The common theme is cultural production whether it is a sermon by a radical priest with AIDS, graffiti by an L.A. "bomber," the film festival in Cuba, poetry by a lonely Central American refugee, or rock music in Mexico City. The detail of this writing challenges easy notions of multiple or postmodern identities as much as it does traditional ideas of national or ethnic identity. The title is Mexican slang for someone who is "the other way" and gay/bisexual issues surface at several points in the book.

David William Foster, *Gay and Lesbian Themes in Latin American Writing* (Austin: University of Texas, 1991).
This thoughtful book is the first overview of queer Latin American writing. Arranged thematically, it discusses the work of about two dozen writers.

Paul Taylor (ed.) *Hysterical Tears: Juan Davila* (London: GMP, 1985).
Art work by gay Chilean artist Juan Davila. The book includes a long interview with and essays by Paul Taylor and Nelly Richard.

George Yúdice, Jean Franco, Juan Flores *(eds) On Edge: The Crisis of Contemporary Latin American Culture* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1992).
A wide-ranging collection of essays which includes most of the introduction from García Canclini's *Hybrid Cultures*, a puzzling essay on Vargas Llosa by William Rowe, Jean Franco on women writers who break the distinction between writers and those who get written about, Howard Winant on racial formation in contemporary Brazil, and much else.

William Rowe and Vivian Schelling, *Memory and Modernity: Popular Culture in Latin America* (London, New York: Verso, 1991).
Brings together a great deal of material to create the first map for Latin American cultural studies. The book is informed by Latin-American theorists but itself employs a more historical framework.

Roberto Schwarz, *Misplaced Ideas: Essays on Brazilian Culture.* Translated by John Gledson. (London, New York: Verso, 1992).
The title essay explores how the hegemony of European ideas continually keeps Brazilian intellectuals off-balance. The subtitle "Essays on Brazilian Culture" is itself somewhat misplaced since the emphasis is more on literary studies (e.g. on the novelist Machado de Assis) rather than on cultural studies in Brazil.

Oriana Baddeley and Valerie Fraser, *Drawing the Line: Art and Cultural Identity in Contemporary Latin America* (London, New York: Verso, 1989).
This well-illustrated book deals with visual images of the land, confrontation with a colonial past, artists' politics, the important surrealist movement in Latin America and popular modern art.

Guy Brett, *Transcontinental: Nine Latin American Artists* (London: Verso, 1990).
An extended essay on artistic practice as the meeting and clashing of Latin American and European cultures and "the creation of non-essentialist multiple identities" in Latin America. The works studied include Victor Grippo's installations with potatoes and Jac Leimer's arrangements with devalued banknotes. The avant-garde joins the popular.

Centro de Comunicación Alternativa Alaíde Foppa (ed.) *Otro Modo de Ser: Mujeres Mexicanas en Movimiento (Mexico City,* 1991).
Published to accompany an exhibition in Germany and Mexico, this book stresses the diversity of women's experiences and cultures in Mexico City. Extends the pioneering work of fem magazine by bringing feminist arguments together with women's experiences.

Jean Franco, *Plotting Women: Gender and Representation in Mexico* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989).
Like several other books, this one challenges the idea that the emphasis on the contemporary of cultural studies makes sense for Latin America. In searching for ways in which women subvert gender narratives, Franco starts with the writings of mystical nuns in the 16th and 17th centuries. Other chapters examine womens' counter-narratives in the national and modern periods.

Marjorie Agosin, *Scraps of Life: Chilean Arpilleras* (Trenton, NJ: Red Sea Press, 1987).
Describes the responses of women during the Pinochet dictatorship and the emergence of appliqué and embroidered tapestry as a means of expression and protest.

Jorge A. Gonzalez, *Cultura(s)* (Universidad de Colima, 1986).
Includes an important study of ex-votos and popular religion. The author attempts to develop a concept of "frentes culturales"—lines and sites of cultural agreement and also struggles over meanings.

Helen Escobeda (ed.) *Mexican Monuments: Strange Encounters* (New York: Abbeville, 1989).
With illustrated essays by Carlos Monsiváis and Nestor García Canclini. Official monuments are sometimes subverted by their surroundings and the popular uses made of them.

Julian Rothenstein (ed.) *J.G. Posada: Messenger of Death* (London: Redstone Press, 1989). Introduction by Peter Wollen.
Posada's graphics as a link between modernist art and the popular in Mexico.

David William Foster, *From Mafalda to Los Supermachos: Latin American graphic humor as popular culture* (Boulder, Colo.: Rienner, 1989).
A study of comics in Latin America from the commercial to the political avant-garde.

Valerio Fuenzalida and María Hermosilla, *Visiones y Ambiciones del Televidente: Estudios de recepción televisiva* (Santiago, Chile: CENECA, 1989).
An important study of the uses and interpretations of television among different sectors in Chile.

Guillermo Sunkel, *Razon y Pasion en la Prensa Popular: Un estudio sobre cultura popular, cultural de masas y cultura política* (Santiago, Chile: ILET, 1985).
Shows what the leftist press needed to learn from commercial populist newspapers in order to reach a popular readership during the Allende years. An important study, frequently cited but summarized somewhat differently by Martín-Barbero.

Néstor García Canclini and Rafael Roncagliolo (eds.), *Cultura transnacional y culturas populares* (Lima: IPAL, 1988).
A thick collection of studies by García Canclini, José Joaquín Brunner, Robert A. White and many others.

Jesús Martín-Barbero (ed.), *Comunicación y culturas populares en Latinoamerica* (México: G. Gili, 1987).
Includes contributions from most well-known Latin American cultural researchers.

Néstor García Canclini (ed.), *Políticas Culturales en América Latina* (México: Grijalbo, 1987).
With contributions from García Canclini, Jean Franco, José Joaquín Brunner, Oscar Landi, Sergio Miceli and an important essay on the political cultures of indigenous peoples by Guillermo Bonfil.

Dia-logos de la Comunicación. Apartado Aéreo 18-0097, Lima 18, Perú.
An important theoretical journal of communication and cultural studies.

Estudios sobre las culturas contemporaneas Vol.1 (1987—).
Published by the Programa Cultura, Universidad de Colima, A. Universidad 333, Colima, Col. México 28000.
Theory and detailed studies in Latin American culture.

Media, Culture and Society Vol. 10, No. 4 (1988).
A special issue on Latin American perspectives on communication which includes translations of theoretical essays by Martín-Barbero, García Canclini and others.

Travesia: Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1992—). From the Centre for Latin American Cultural Studies, King's College, Strand, London WC2R 2LS.
A crossroad between London and Latin American cultural studies. The theme of the first issue is political violence and culture and also includes an important essay by Martín-Barbero on communication and democracy.