



ALTERNAUTAS

(Re)Searching Development: The Abya Yala Chapter
Vol.2 - Issue 2 [December 2015]

Daniel Mato

The Production of Meaning, Economy and Politics. Intercultural Relations, Conflicts, Appropriations, Articulations and Transformations

Alternautas is a peer reviewed academic journal that publishes content related to Latin American Critical Development Thinking.

It intends to serve as a platform for testing, circulating, and debating new ideas and reflections on these topics, expanding beyond the geographical, cultural and linguistic boundaries of Latin America - Abya Yala. We hope to contribute to connecting ideas, and to provide a space for intellectual exchange and discussion for a nascent academic community of scholars, devoted to counter-balancing mainstream understandings of development.

How to cite:

Mato, D. (2015), The Production of Meaning, Economy and Politics. Intercultural Relations, Conflicts, Appropriations, Articulations and Transformations, *Alternautas*, 2(2), 39-54. URL :
<http://www.alternautas.net/blog/2015/9/17/the-production-of-meaning-economy-and-politics-intercultural-relations-conflicts-appropriations-articulations-and-transformations>

Editor : Alternautas
<http://www.alternautas.net>
London, UK.
ISSN - 2057-4924

ISSN - 2057-4924

DANIEL MATO¹

The Production of Meaning, Economy and Politics. Intercultural Relations, Conflicts, Appropriations, Articulations and Transformations²

As it often happens, my research work is rooted, among others, in studies carried out by other authors. The work of Nestor Garcia Canclini was, and still is an important source of inspiration and learning for my research. It is from this relational place that I dedicate this text to comment on some key aspects of his work that, I think, are of particular importance and usefulness for contemporary social research. This will not cover all of them, as my article does not pretend to nor can be exhaustive, but there are some aspects that have been inspiring for the development of my work, and for this reason I think they could be of interest to other researchers. The title of this chapter tries to name synthetically some of these aspects, or, more accurately, my interpretation of them.

From his pioneering book *Popular cultures in capitalism* (1982) until his most recent publications, the work of Nestor Garcia Canclini, from different kinds of interpretations and various strategies of production and interrogation of data, develops and operationalizes an analytical approach that, among other distinctive

¹ Daniel Mato is Principal Researcher at the National Council of Science and Technology (CONICET) and Universidad Nacional Tres de Febrero, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, as well as the Coordinator of the Project "Cultural Diversity, Interculturality and Higher Education" of the International Institute of UNESCO for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC).

² This paper was originally published in Nivón Bolan E. (2012) *Voces Híbridas. Reflexiones en torno a la obra de García Canclini*, México, Siglo XXI Editores: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, 254 p. It was translated by Emilie Dupuits and published in <http://www.alternautas.net/blog/2015/9/17/the-production-of-meaning-economy-and-politics-intercultural-relations-conflicts-appropriations-articulations-and-transformations> on September 17th, 2015.

features, is characterized by the emphasis on the study of social processes integrating elements from different disciplinary traditions, in particular from anthropology, sociology, social communication and economy.

Moreover, in general, his work is directed towards bringing ideas together for the formulation of policies that tend to favor democratization, equity and valuation of contemporaneous societies' diversity, in particular from Latin America. Regarding this last point, it is necessary to outline that another important characteristic of his work is what I will term his Latin-American-centrism, for want of a better word. With this term, I tend to allude to two features of his work. One of these is the general scale and context, as his texts are oriented toward studying processes of development taking place not only in one but in several Latin American societies. The other one is that he takes advantage of publications from other colleagues and institutions from almost all Latin American countries, not only enriching his own work but also facilitating the circulation of knowledge of these other studies in countries other than their place of origin, stimulating interest among readers.

Popular cultures in capitalism

In 1984, when I read *Popular cultures in capitalism* (1982), I was conducting fieldwork for my PhD thesis. I dedicated various years to study the practices of the narrators of stories in many villages of different sizes, including small indigenous villages and rural communities, as well as in some cities of Venezuela. Whereas this book by Garcia Canclini did not influence my research design and does not appear in its bibliography, retrospectively I thought that, together with other factors I will not comment upon here, it was decisive in my field observations to not miss the articulations between language, writing and audiovisual means that I was able to observe in the practices of some "traditional" narrators.

This book, which studies the transformations of popular handicraft and celebrations associated with changes happening in its social contexts, improved my capacity to observe the ones happening in the narrators' practices. For example, it helped me observe how some narrators incorporated events they had heard as

children from their families who read aloud stories from their school books (on Simon Bolivar's life and military campaigns). Or how one of them has developed and related in a vivid way the story of Un Solo Ojo that was not much than his own creation based on the image of Polifermo, the famous Cyclops from Greek mythology, which the narrator in question knew from his first visit to the cinema in a nearby city. In the same way, I learned to pay attention to the facts mentioned by some narrators from small rural villages who, by their own accounts, had developed some expressions from the observation of telenovelas and other TV shows actors' actuation.

Another aspect of this book that had a huge impact on me and since then has been a sort of inspiration for my own work, was the integration of questions, analyses and data production approaches from anthropology, sociology, semiotics and economics. I have not followed Canclini's way of conducting research³, but this book was an opportune and significant concrete example of how integrating these disciplinary perspectives into a study was possible and beneficial. Therefore, this had a particular significance for my work, as my PhD formation was multidisciplinary in social sciences, including training in disciplines that inform this book; my bachelor's degree was in political economy and my specialization in international economy. To say it with a hint of irony: I had more than enough theoretical resources but I was lacking examples of concrete research traditions and Canclini's book provided it for me for the first time, or one of the first times, and without any doubt one of the most significant ones. In this sense, in various occasions this book represented a source of inspiration for my work. The creative and productive articulation of interpretative perspectives and resources of production and analysis of data from a variety of disciplinary traditions is a salient feature of Garcia Canclini's work, that I think can be of great inspiration for other researchers.

³ "Way of doing"

Hybrid cultures, strategies for entering and leaving modernity

Hybrid cultures (1990) offered me new examples of how to creatively articulate topics, research questions and modes of data production from various disciplines. Moreover, this book strengthened my conviction that the formulation of theories has to be based on empirical research. To formulate a theory, it is not sufficient to sit and think, but it is necessary to produce and analyze empirical data, either quantitative or qualitative. This book was also suggestive in another sense, as it went beyond the former in the analysis of intellectual and academic communities', museums', various state institutions', firms' and foundations' practices, with a special focus on entertainment and communication industries. It also demonstrated more interest in influencing public policies than the former book. And it included explicit elaborations on transnational processes, the topic of my few publications in economics, which was of particular interest to me. But, above all, it showed the importance of intercultural relations and the resulting transformations, as well as practical ways of analyzing it.

As is known, in this book Garcia Canclini introduced the categories of “hybrid cultures” and the “hybridization process”. Even though both categories were used throughout the book, I think a sort of “title effect” happened, and whereas Garcia Canclini mentioned in various posterior publications that what he was interested in was to study *hybridization process* (2001, 2005), the expression “hybrid cultures” acquired widespread diffusion and became commonplace in a strange sort of automatism, compulsion, in contemporary social research. At some point it became detached from the book and the analysis it was linked to, thus losing sight that it was linked to the study of “how, in the crisis of occidental modernity – of which Latin America is part – the relations between tradition, cultural modernity and socioeconomic modernization are transformed” (1990: 19).

I think the category “hybrid cultures” became (really quickly) fashionable and consolidated in social research as a sort of “epistemological obstacle” (Bachelard, 1976). This category became independent from the idea that the most important thing is to analyze processes, and started to be used as an answer to not yet formulated questions, which does not aid, but obstructs research questions. Then,

despite Garcia Canclini's focus on the study of hybridization processes (2001, 2005), in reality, the trivialized diffusion of the category of "hybrid cultures" often limits the formulation of research questions: how do these processes emerge, who are the social actors, how are they relating to each other, what are their cultures, what are the concrete dynamics they use to appropriate and adapt elements of the other actor's "culture", as power relations, meetings and exchanges, in short how these *processes* are occurring.

I read *Hybrid cultures* at the beginning of 1992, when for a few years I had been working on the research questions which, although with a few alterations, have stayed with me for most of my academic career. At the beginning, I named this investigation "culture and social transformations in times of globalization", and in 2004 I changed its title for "Culture, communication and social transformations". In this framework, I dedicated myself to study the production and circulation of some social representations of ideas playing a key role in articulate meanings of organizations and social movements' practices. I was most of all interested in studying how it was happening in the framework of intense exchanges between local and global actors, how networks of international and transnational relations in which these representations were built, appropriated, adapted, articulated with each other, and how they were object of conflicts, confrontations, and negotiations. During various years, I developed successive research projects dedicated to study the transnational production and circulation of representations of racial and ethnic identities, social participation ideas, culture and development, citizenship and civil society, and (neo)liberal ideas, that play a key role in the constitution and sociopolitical practices of particular social actors.

This research, as well as my PhD and other studies on these topics that I had to supervise, allowed me to get to know a wide range of case studies, really distinct from each other. This was not accidental but wanted, because amongst other things I was interested in identifying similarities and differences between these experiences and networks of relations among distinct actors, something that is neither possible nor pertinent to expose here. The fact is that I did not find in "hybrid cultures" or in "hybridization processes" beneficial categories for the objectives of my study in

this field. I think hybridization is a useful category, fruitful to define some particular intercultural processes, but not all of them, because not all of the experiences between social actors that are culturally differentiated or distinguishable can lead to produce something “new”. While there exists many cases of encounters between culturally different social actors that lead to conflicts and confrontations, there are also others where one or both actors adopt proper elements of the culture, or the world view of the other, resulting not in a “new” culture or world view, but only in relatively minor transformations of an already existing one; such as in cases in which from a certain culture they appropriate or adopt elements of the other without producing a radical change, but still some particular aspects can result significant. Moreover, cases of exchanges exist between actors with cultures or worldviews that were not necessarily considered as “discreet” before (cf. Garcia Canclini, 1990, 2001; 2005). Maybe we need to mention here that neither the categories of miscegenation, syncretism, transculturation, fusion and heterogeneity were useful; these categories were used by authors like Garcia Canclini to contrast with the ones of hybridization and hybrid cultures.

The fact is that even if I did not adopt these categories suggested by Garcia Canclini, the type of questions that orientated his research resulted suggestive to me. They were also stimulating, as I said before, regarding transdisciplinary approaches, the articulation of questions and method resources from anthropology, sociology, semiotics, political economy and international relations, exhibited in his studies or research. These salient features from his work nurtured and stimulated my own work.

I was already aware of this in 1993, when we had to share a panel at a congress in which I presented one of the papers and Garcia Canclini acted as a discussant. Commenting on my presentation, he highlighted the fact that what he found interesting was that it was focused on the study of interconnections. I do not remember if this was the exact use of the word. The important thing is that I registered his comment associated with this word which together with another has become central when I came to formulate my own research questions: articulations.

Popular cultures in capitalism and *Hybrid cultures* introduced some key ideas for the formulation of research questions that I would like to emphasize: intercultural relations, conflicts, appropriations, articulations, interconnections, negotiations, coproduction, mediations, processes, and transformations. Probably the reading of these books can provide many others; the ones referred to here are the ones that have inspired my own work.

Consumers and citizens. Globalization and multicultural conflicts

Consumers and citizens (1995) was of particular interest to me because of certain methodological suggestions that were tied to the introduction of the category of “sociocultural circuits” (1995: 22-35). Even if I did not adopt this category, it stimulated me to appropriate another one that I took from this book, but more adapted to the experiences I was studying in the framework of the research I mentioned before. I refer to the category of “socio-communicational circuits” that helped me to elaborate useful questions and methodological resources for my research.

In this book, after acknowledging the contributions of Mijail Bajtin, Antonio Gramsci, Raymond Williams and Richard Hoggart’s in the recognition of the existence of a “plebeian, informal public sphere organized through more oral and visual communication means than written ones” (1995: 22), Garcia Canclini mentions that “some Latin American authors are working on the cultural study and recognition of these diverse modalities of communication, but we did not much in the theoretical valuation of these popular circuits as forums where information and learning exchange networks are developed among citizens regarding the consuming of contemporary massive means [...]” (1995: 22). His argumentation continues to emphasize mainly the increasing importance of the mass media of global scale and some sociocultural transformations of the second half of the 20th century, amongst which he highlights the transnational communities of consumers of these communications, and other factors and circumstances unnecessary to comment here. Before that, the author affirms:

Modern identities were territorial and almost always monolingual [...]. On the contrary, *postmodern identities* [term that, he comments, results to him “more and more uneasy”] *are trans-territorial and multilingual*. They are less structured from the logic of states than of markets; instead of being based on oral and written communications that cover personalized spaces and are effective through close interactions, they operate through the industrial production of culture, its technological communication and the differed and segmented consumption of goods. The classic *socio-spatial* definition of identity, referring to a particular territory, has to be complemented with a *socio-communicational* definition (1995: 30-31, italics from the original).

Based on all the above, Garcia Canclini proposes the idea of “sociocultural circuits”, the focus of my interest here, and he does it in the following terms:

The empirical analysis of these processes allows identifying four sociocultural circuits, in which transnationalization and regional integration operate in different ways:

- The *historical-territorial*, or the combination of knowledge, habits and experiences organized during various periods related to ethnic, regional and national territories, and which is manifested through historical patrimony and traditional popular culture.
- The *elite culture*, constituted by written and visual symbolic production (literature, plastic arts). Historically, this sector is part of the patrimony in which it is defined and elaborates the uniqueness of each nation, but it is necessary to differentiate it from the former circuit as it includes representative works from high and middle classes with a higher educational level, as it is not known or convenient for each society; and in the last decades it has been integrated into markets and procedures of international valuation.
- The *mass media*, dedicated to huge entertainment shows (radio, cinema, television, video).

- The *restricted systems of information and communication* for the decision-makers (satellites, fax, phones, mobiles and computers) (1995: 32-33, italics from the original).

After having presented the above, he concludes: “the restructuring of national cultures does not occur in the same way, or with the same depth, in all these scenarios, and therefore the restructuring of identities differs depending on the link with each of these” (1995: 33).

It is not my objective to repeat the detailed argumentation of the author, which I find valuable and innovative (in 1995), but I think it is necessary to mention that independent from the fact that we recognize or not the existence of these circuits differentiated in the analysis, it is necessary to think about each of them in plural and also to examine their relations and flows. As I have stated before, my interest in commenting these abstracts from *Consumers and citizens* is aimed at explaining how the introduction of the category of “sociocultural circuits” and the consequent methodological suggestions (to recognize the existence of these differentiated circuits and conduct empirical studies on it, especially regarding transnational processes) stimulated me to come up with the one of “socio-communicational circuits”, more appropriate to analyze the experiences I was studying, and to think about questions and aspects of methodology associated with it, more beneficial to my research.

As neither the studies I was developing at that time in the framework of the research question mentioned, nor the next endeavors – for which I had planned some topics – were focused on “national cultures” (salient focus of *Consumers and citizens*), but the transnational production and circulation of representations of ethnic and racial identities, ideas of social participation, culture and development, citizenship and civil society, and (neo) liberal ideas, played a key role in the constitution and sociopolitical practices of particular social actors, I thought the idea of “socio-communicational circuits” could be a more beneficial analytical instrument for these purposes than the one of “sociocultural circuits”. Even when in my publications I started using it explicitly only a few years later, the idea of

“circuits” was suggestive to me since the beginning, as it is easy to verify in my notes on the margins of my copy of *Consumers and citizens*, just as in my notes from seminars I gave in 1997 and several years later.

But for my own interests and objects of research, it was more helpful to study particular “socio-communicational circuits” which, with various degrees of stability and mobility, can be observed in the systems of relation between various groups of social actors. I was interested in studying modalities of relation, modes and means of communication (languages, direct interpersonal, electronics, writings, visuals, audiovisuals, aural, from shared experiences, etc.), routines and protocols, power relations, conflicts and negotiations, and an etcetera deliberately open. Then I started to study the practices of production, circulation and appropriation of representations (formulation of meaning) of socio-politically significant ideas as mentioned before, during events (congresses, seminars, festivals and other types of meetings between relevant actors), projects of “development”, programs of “civil society strengthening”, “capacity-building” workshops and other practices of “technical cooperation”, universities and postgraduate formation centers (mostly but not only in fields as journalism, economy, sociology, anthropology, political sciences, and public policies).

My case and space studies were and are different from the ones studied by Garcia Canclini, but his observations on the existence of diverse and particular “circuits” and his insistence on the necessity of empirical studies were stimulating to me and still nurture my research questions. I put an emphasis on these aspects of *Consumers and citizens* as I think they can also be inspiring for other researchers. This book, as others, apart from shedding light on its constitutive features of attention, also result valuable for the questions he formulates and for the way he overcomes the production and interpretation of data.

The imagined globalization⁴

In contrast to what occurred with Garcia Canclini's earlier books, when I read *The imagined globalization* (1999) I had already spent various years working on the subject, so the book did not provide me with significant novelty. Nevertheless, it gave me satisfaction to observe that our focuses on the subject were converging, but above all, again, I valued the diversity of strategies to produce data and interpretative resources that the author brought into play, and also certain perspectives, ways to address the issue, that I had not thought about.

The expression "globalization" became a pretext with which some people pretended they could explain everything, when generally, it explains nothing. We speak about (and write on) "globalization" as if it was a phenomenon with a proper life, to whom it could be possible to attribute the causality of other phenomenon, as if it had an independent trajectory from the actions of humans. Frequently, it is presented as a depersonalized economic force, or as a powerful energy associated with the rising importance of internet and mass communication. These ways to imagine and represent "globalization" are particularly common among political, business and social leaders from a wide spectrum of orientations, but also among quite a few researchers. These ways to narrate "globalization" "reify" it, in the same way some children often do, for example, with a table they have just hit accidentally, to which they say "*bad table, bad!*". This personification is generally associated with one of two value judgments, its *apology* or its *denomination*. In my opinion, both represent mythologized views of social processes, which overlook the fact that they are the product of human actions. They overlook the fact that what they call "globalization" is not an extra-human phenomenon equipped with free will and proper power, but the result of multiple social processes in which countless social actors are participating. It is the practices of these social actors that produce certain results, to which increasingly we are giving the denomination of: "globalization".

⁴ This section retakes ideas presented before in my comment on this book published in *Nueva Sociedad*, no. 169 (2000), pp. 177-179.

Fetishizing globalization in both ways mentioned above complicates our ability to conduct research on it, to understand the contemporary social transformations and to intervene consciously in it. To the contrary, a fruitful way to investigate contemporary globalization processes is to study how they are the result of social actors' practices, diverse conflicts and negotiations between them. The book *The imagined globalization* does precisely this, and then breaks with common perceptions I referred to as "personification of globalization", as with the associated conducts of passive celebration, resignation or fundamentalist resistance, that we can frequently observe. The book analyzes particular aspects of diverse contemporary social processes emphasizing how the practices of some significant social actors produce *diverse forms of globalization*. The analysis of the actors' practices contributes to break with the hegemony of discourses fetishizing globalization. Particularly, the study of imaginaries' social and political efficiency, of ways to imagine the globalization that guide social subjects' practices, contributes to question the economic and technologic determinisms, such in vogue in those same discourses on globalization, and allows the author to suggest possible interventions.

But the book is not only interesting for its contribution to the study of globalization and its suggestions of intervention, but also for its repertoire of strategies of production of data and interpretative resources that the author questions, that can result inspiring for other researchers. The author highlights that, in order to study the complexity of globalization processes, it is necessary to analyze jointly diverse statistics; migratory movements; narratives and metaphors of managers, politicians, migrants and exiled; interactions between people at the frontiers; practices and products of artists; intellectuals and – the so called – "cultural industries"; free-trade agreements; practices and politics of governments and supranational organisms. In fact, through the book he works simultaneously with this diversity of materials, and also with other results from his direct observation of other events and specific practices produced during his travels. This approach is highly enjoyed by the author, who likewise travels frequently to cities of many countries of Latin America and Europe, as well as to the United States and Canada, as a lecturer or visiting scholar. The book shows how the author is taking

advantage of these travels in a creative way to build a view that transcends the limiting character of some discourses on globalization, which often paradoxically result a bit provincial, even though this provincialism is not evident when they narrate what happens in global cities, but they do not say anything about what happens beyond them.

Another important feature of the book is that it contributes to challenge homogenizing views of globalization processes and with it frequent stereotypical opposition between global and local. He indicates for example that the different amplitude or narrowness of globalization imaginaries “shows the inequalities of access to what is often called global economy and culture”, what is at the end “an unequal competition between imaginaries”. But, moreover, he shows that not only the scope of imaginaries, but also the specific implications of globalization processes change from industry to industry, from city to city, from social group to social group. Thus, for example, he analyzes the differences that can be observed in the urban dynamics of some global cities as New York or Los Angeles; in cities that are emerging regional centers as Barcelona, Miami, São Paulo or Mexico City, and in other cities of Latin America. He also differentiates cases of visual arts and editorial industries, music and television in Latin America, to show how in each of them the scopes and characteristics of globalization processes are different, as different as the forms and results in which the global and the local combine in their products and in the modes of circulation and consumption of these products. All of this not only results interesting for the specific interpretations that it provides for each of these cities and industries, but also because it goes to show the futility to sustain some generalizations on what is, or what implicates, what they call “globalization”. These examples show the necessity to do micro analyzes of specific practices of social actors in the framework of different processes.

Different, unequal and disconnected. Interculturality maps.

When I read *Different, unequal and disconnected* (2004) I was conducting, in collaboration with other colleagues, field research on intercultural communication in experiences of social participation associated with drinking water supply and

informatics services in a popular community of the city of Caracas, studying relations between different groups of inhabitants, between them and state agencies providing these services and between professionals from different fields from inside. Additionally, I was starting to manage a project on cultural diversity and interculturality in higher education with the collaboration of colleagues from various Latin American countries and working on a systematic revision of different interpretations and uses of the idea of “interculturality” in various fields of study, formation and professional exercises.

This book of Garcia Canclini addressed different interests and research questions than the ones that were guiding the main lines of work I was dedicated to, but it was clearly complementary and, moreover, it strengthened two significant suppositions of these current studies. First, that intercultural analysis is not limited to the inter-ethnic, the inter-religious and the inter-linguistic. Second, that cultural differences not only cause fusions, but also conflicts, confrontations and entrenchments. Regarding this last one, I find it important to signal that I consider this book is also a necessary complement to *Hybrid cultures*. In the own words of the author:

To understand each group, it is necessary to describe how it appropriates of and reinterprets the external material and symbolic products [...]. Of course, they not only mix them: they also impose entrenchments, the occidental persecution of indigenous or Muslims. Not only the intents to harmonize the differences but also the pains living in us.

It is neither about going from difference to fusions, as if the differences do not matter anymore. Rigorously, it is about adding complexity to the spectrum. We are going to consider, together with differences and *hybridizations*, as chapter 2 intends to, the ways in which theories of differences need to be articulated with other conceptions of intercultural relations: the one that understand interactions as inequality, connection/disconnection, inclusion/exclusion (2004: 21; italics added).

And some pages later, he ends the introductory chapter of the volume with some reflections on key points for the reading of the book:

Different, unequal and disconnected? Setting out the modes of inter-culturality in negative code is adopting what has always been critical thinking: the place of scarcity. But putting yourself in the position of the dispossessed (of integration, of resources or of connections) is not yet to know who we are. To imagine that it was possible to disregard this problem has been, through the 20th century, the blind point of [...] almost all of those who thought to resolve the enigma of identity by claiming with fervor the place of difference and inequality. By staying on that side of the precipice, we almost always let others – either on this side or on the other – build the bridges. Communicational theories remind us that connection and disconnection with the others are part of our construction as individual and collective subjects. Therefore, the *inter* space is decisive. By postulating it as the center of research and thinking, these pages try to understand the reasons of political failures and participate on the mobilization of intercultural resources to build alternatives (2004: 25-26).

I will conclude my comment on this book by simply saying: this is what it is about. As I intended to formulate it synthetically when I gave a title to a paper I published recently: “there is no universal knowledge, the intercultural collaboration is inevitable”.

To continue

As I have affirmed in the pages above, the work of Nestor Garcia Canclini articulates in a creative and efficient way knowledge, research questions and methodological resources from various academic disciplines, especially the ones of sociology, anthropology, social communication, international relations, economy, political science and art criticism. But maybe something more interesting is that with this work he succeeded in linking the tasks of colleagues from all these fields, just as in practices of various social actors outside academia, including political and social leaders, journalists, public policies designers and decisions takers. This gave him an unprecedented impact on our field, culture studies and contemporary social transformations, and it placed us in front of new interlocutors, new problems, new

challenges, significantly broadening our possibilities of creation, learning and findings, participation and influence.

Another important aspect of his work, that I have mentioned in previous pages but I want to emphasize here, is that it is Latin American in more than one sense. It is not only because his studies were mostly centered (whereas not exclusively) in analyzing proper issues of this part of the world, but especially because it takes and articulates contributions from various generations and orientations of theories and studies elaborated in almost all the countries of the region. I think I am not mistaken by emphatically affirming that nobody has done so at the same scale and this appears to me particularly valuable for two reasons. First, because it allowed thinking, theorizing and communicating interpretations on social dynamics at a truly regional scale, that is, he largely overcame the tendency to make references on “Latin America” based on just one, two or three countries. Second, because his publications, in addition to bringing us original and valuable ideas on the processes he was studying, offer us an insight into the work of colleagues from various countries of the region. In that sense, his publications are a means of communication between colleagues.

Bibliography

- Bachelard, Gaston (1977), *La formación del espíritu científico*, México, Siglo XXI Editores, 5ta edición (ed. Fr: *La formation de l'esprit scientifique*, 1938).
- García Canclini, Néstor (1982), *Las culturas populares en el capitalismo*, México, Nueva Imagen.
- ----- (1990), *Culturas híbridas: estrategias para entrar y salir de la modernidad*, México, Grijalbo.
- ----- (1995), *Consumidores y ciudadanos: conflictos multiculturales de la globalización*, México, Grijalbo.
- ----- (1999), *La globalización imaginada*, Buenos Aires y México, Paidós.
- ----- (2001), Hybridity, en Neil J. Smelser y Paul B. Baltes, eds. *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Oxford, Elsevier, pp. 7095-7098.
- ----- (2004), *Diferentes, desiguales y desconectados. Mapas de la interculturalidad*, Barcelona, Gedisa.
- ----- (2005; original 2001), “Las culturas híbridas en tiempos de globalización”, introducción a la edición 2001, en *Culturas híbridas: estrategias para entrar y salir de la modernidad*, México, Grijalbo, 18a., reimp., pp. I-XXIII.