

## **Marginal Turn: The Rise and Fall of Intellectuals' Political Commitment in the Cultural Production between 1958 and 1971 in Venezuela**

This research project addresses the cultural production and participation of Venezuelan actors bounded to what was known as *cultural left* in national and transnational contexts during the sixties. The term *cultural left* refers to those intellectuals who were politically engaged with the sociopolitical circumstances and committed their aesthetics to ideological values. It is specifically to be studied the production of the members of the Venezuelan neo-vanguard groups Sardio, El Techo de la Ballena and Tabla Redonda within their production (journals, exhibitions, and editorial work) as well as in their international projection. Methodologically this research consists of an analysis of discourses and practices from a semiotic perspective to map the ever-changing cultural field. A critical discourse analysis will permit to identify different stages of commitment: linking, support, constitution, representation, or legitimation. Besides, an archeological procedure will also help to distinguish different strategies chronologically.

1958 meant the beginning of the democratic period in Venezuela but the Pacto de Punto Fijo and exclusion of the Communist Party led to the uprising of an armed struggle also encouraged by the success of the Cuban Revolution. Unlike other countries in the Subcontinent, Venezuela's chronology may seem ahead with the leftist withdrawal. Drawing from archival research and histories of life, it is argued that there is a deradicalization process for several reasons: individual artistic development, personal circumstances, political context and institutional co-optation and wealth.

The aim is to deeply understand the nature of these productions both in discursive and material levels of analysis. The conditions of the cultural production must not be disregarded since the editorial scarcity and the lack of institutional support are also part of their discourse. For the transregional and transnational perspective, the journals *El Corno Emplumado/The Plumed Horn*, from Mexico, *Eco Contemporáneo*, from Argentina, *Casa de las Américas*, from Cuba, and *Zona Franca*, from Venezuela will be the main focus. A

study of networks will be pursued attending the Latin American intellectuals' (imagined) community to understand how the transference of knowledge takes place. Thus, from both of these focuses, this research deals with the immateriality (discourses) and materiality (journals, catalogs, photographs, films) of the Venezuelan intellectual field.