

Transnationalized communication and culture: Armand and Tristan Mattelart's legacy for the geographies of communication

Comunicação e cultura transnacionalizadas: contribuições de Armand e Tristan Mattelart às geografias da comunicação

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to show, through a comparative bibliographic analysis, how the intellectual trajectories of Armand Mattelart and Tristan Mattelart—father and son—intertwine, dialogue and differ from each other, regarding geo-historical and geo-cultural approaches on phenomena, systems, networks and policies of communication and information. From this spatial perspective, it was possible to identify that these two authors choose different geographical scales as a starting point to approach their objects of study, during their respective paths as researchers. However, both come together in the transnational and cross-border character of the observed communicational and cultural phenomena.

Keywords: International communication, cultural industries, media geographies

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RESUMO

Este artigo procura evidenciar, por meio de análise bibliográfica comparativa, como as trajetórias intelectuais de Armand Mattelart e Tristan Mattelart – pai e filho – se entrecruzam, dialogam e se diferenciam em torno de referenciais geo-históricos e geoculturais dos fenômenos, sistemas, redes e políticas de comunicação e informação que investigam. A partir dessa perspectiva espacial, foi possível identificar que esses dois autores elegem escalas geográficas diferentes como ponto de partida para a abordagem dos objetos de estudo que privilegiam ao longo dos seus respectivos percursos acadêmicos. Entretanto, ambos se encontram no caráter transnacional e transfronteira dos fenômenos comunicacionais e culturais que observam.

Palavras-chave: Comunicação internacional, indústrias culturais, sistemas de informação

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MATRIZES

SINCE THE SECOND half of the 20th century, expressions like *geography of media and communication*, *geographies of communication*, *communication geography*, *media geography*, *media geographies*, *geographies of media*, *geomedia*, *geocommunications*, *géopolitique des médias*, *media globalization*, *geographies of the internet*, among others, have been used by both geographers and communication and media researchers, especially in the United States and Nordic countries.

Although it is difficult to identify the departure point of this approximation between Geography and Communication, the oldest reference (so far) located in this paradigmatic axis, as pointed out by James Craine (2014), was made by the French geographer Gilbert Maistre, in the article “*Pour une Géographie des Communications de Masse*,” published in 1971. However, for Craine, what “we now consider the subfield of media geography was perhaps first addressed” in the volume *Geography, The Media and Popular Culture*, edited in 1985, in London, by Jacquelin Burgess and John R. Gold.

It is clear that such field of studies—consensually called Communication Geographies in Brazil—has been consolidated from the works of the Swedish media researchers André Jansson and Jesper Falkheimer (2006) and from the American geographer Paul Adams (2009). In their work, these authors demonstrate the importance of interdisciplinary thinking to understand the role of spatiality in the configuration of the various forms of media expression and communication and information systems. The relevance of this approach, as highlighted by Craine (2014), is due to the fact that the media and spaces of communication are not neutral, so it is necessary to identify and analyze them. Such issue had already been brought up by Armand Mattelart in his book *The Invention of Communication* (1996):

Each historical era and each type of society has the communicational configuration that it deserves. With its different levels, whether economic, social, technical, or mental and its different scales (local, national, regional, or international) this configuration produces a hegemonic concept of communication. In the movement from one configuration to another, it is important to distinguish the continuities and breaks. In the course of the time period studied here, we will observe the concept being refashioned many times into unprecedented figure, without cutting off all connections from the elements present in the preceding mode of communication. (A. Mattelart, 1994b, p.10)

It is under this spatial perspective (notably geo-historical and geo-cultural) that this article aims to emphasize, through comparative bibliographic analysis,

how the intellectual trajectories of Armand Mattelart and Tristan Mattelart—father and son—intertwine, dialogue and differ around multi and trans-territorial geographical references of communication and information phenomena, systems, networks and policies they research. Therefore, it is a methodologically exploratory incursion, inspired by the trajectory studies with hermeneutics bias, as done by Isabel Carvalho (2002).

The broad (though not exhaustive) bibliographic survey on the trajectory and work of Armand Mattelart was based on three interviews granted by him (Bigo & A. Mattelart, 2009; Constantinou, 2008; A. Mattelart, 2014); three intellectual itineraries (Araújo, 2009; Maldonado, 1999; Zarowsky, 2012); and two online directories, in which articles dedicated to the author can be found (Filosofia en Español, s.d.; Infoamerica, s.d.). As to Tristan Mattelart, the reconstruction of his intellectual trajectory started with his doctoral thesis (published in 1995) and is supported by institutional sources connected to his affiliations as a research fellow in International Communication at the University of Paris II - Panthéon-Assas.

A sociologist by formation, with a Doctorate degree in Law and Political Science at the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium, Armand Mattelart has been guided, since his first writings on communications, by observing the multinationalization, internationalization and globalization of information and communication phenomena, systems and networks (and their corresponding technologies), always associating them to the expansion of capitalism, to the ideological clashes and to the relations of power in these macro-scales. Tristan, while also focusing on transnational issues, pays more attention to contemporary media and cultural phenomena concentrated in regional spaces, mostly those limited to Europe and its areas of influence in Africa and Asia. In the end, both meet on the trans-territorial aspect of the communicational and cultural phenomena they observe.

ARMAND MATTELART: IN THE SPIRAL OF TIME

Armand Mattelart's first contact with Geography may have been through the atlas that his grandfather showed him to tell stories about World War II, as he recalled in the book *Pour un Regard-Monde*, a “conversational autobiography” (with his pupil Michel Sénécal), first published in Paris, in 2010, and later in Barcelona (A. Mattelart, 2014). As noted by Azahara Cañedo (2015) in his book review, at that time nothing indicated “that boy would become an extraordinary figure in the study of communication and

culture of our time”¹ (p. 196). Much less that he would build his personal, intellectual, family and love life linked to the many places in the world in which he lived and where he passed and left indelible traces, especially in Latin America, guided by missions from the Catholic Church.

But it was precisely the approach to one of the areas related to Geography – Demography – that led him to cross oceans for a mission in Chile, where he arrived in 1962, at the age of 26, as a specialist in population policies, sent by the Vatican to the Universidad Católica de Chile, where he built an academic career. The specialization in this area was obtained at the Institute of Demographic Studies of Paris, founded by Alfred Sauvy, noted as the creator of the expression *third world* – which is defined as “a *third state* constituted by the poor countries of the world that did not belong to the first world capitalist *nobility* neither to the second world communist *clergy*”², according to the online dictionary *Filosofía en Español* (Philosophy in Spanish)(s.d., para. 2).

Thus, between 1963 and 1968, Mattelart published thoughtful diagnostic studies on social structures in Latin America, demographic analysis associated to regional development, an essay on social regionalization in Chile and even a social *Atlas de las Comunas de Chile* (the latter two, sponsored by Chile’s presidency). Much of this work was carried out under the presidency of Eduardo Frei (1964-1970), the first Christian Democrat to become head of State in Chile. The purpose of these studies would be “to confront, based on the Catholic spiritual perspective, strategic models of family planning that were being implanted by the Ford and Rockefeller foundations, in the context of the Alliance for the Progress”³ (*Filosofía en español*, translation from original in Spanish, s.d., para. 4).

According to Espinoza (2017), it was only after starting to work for the United Nations as a specialist in social development that Mattelart started his studies on mass media. For this purpose, he set up a research group with Michèle Mattelart and Mabel Piccini at the *Centro de Estudios de la Realidad Nacional* (Ceren), then recently created at the Catholic University of Chile. This redirection in Armand’s trajectory was due to the “need of the Catholic Church to adapt itself to the advancement of the Latin

¹ In the original: “aquel niño se convertiría en una figura extraordinaria en el estudio de la comunicación y la cultura de nuestro tiempo”. This and other translations by author.

² In the original: “*tercer estado* constituido por los países pobres del mundo que no pertenecían ni a la *nobleza* capitalista del primer mundo ni al *clero* comunista del segundo mundo.”

³ In the original: “confrontar desde la perspectiva espiritual católica los modelos estratégicos de planificación familiar que estaban implantando las fundaciones Ford y Rockefeller, en el contexto de la Alianza para el Progreso.”

American revolution, stimulated, mostly, by Communist Cuba”⁴ (*Filosofia en Español*, s.d., para. 4), in a way that “they were entering into the fields of communication strategies applied to ideological, political and social combat, in order to build ideological and political alternatives, both to atheistic communism and North American Protestant imperialism”⁵ (*Filosofia en español*, s.d., para. 4). With the electoral victory of the Popular Unit (UP) and Salvador Allende as president of Chile, the sociologist started to dedicate himself to the development of communication policies in the country, until the coup d’état of September 11th, 1973, led by Augusto Pinochet.

Between 1971 and 1975, Mattelart published six books (two of them co-authored), in which his critical thinking regarding communication, culture and technologies, in the context of the transnational expansion of capitalism, was clearly present in the titles (see Table 1). The inaugural work of this field, in partnership with the Argentine Ariel Dorfman, would soon become a controversial bestseller, due to its purposely “drumbeater” tone. It was *How to Read Donald Duck: Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comic*, published in several countries since 1971 (including Brazil, where its sixth edition was published in 2010⁶). Right at the introduction, the authors indicate the transnational extent of the “Disney empire” (inseparable from the “North American imperialist project”): “There are Disney strips in five thousand daily newspapers, translated in more than thirty languages, readers in one hundred countries” (A. Mattelart & Dorfman, 1971/1980, p. 15).

its creations and symbols have become an unquestionable reserve of the contemporary human’s cultural collection: the characters have been incorporated in each place, glued to the walls, welcomed in plastics and cushions, and in turn have reciprocated by inviting human beings to belong to the large universal Disney family, beyond borders and ideologies, below hates and differences and dialects. Nationalities are omitted with this passport, and the characters become a supranational bridge

⁴ In the original: “necesidad de la Iglesia católica de adaptarse al avance de la revolución latinoamericana, impulsada sobre todo desde la Cuba comunista.”

⁵ In the original: “que se fueran adentrando en los terrenos de las estrategias de comunicación aplicadas al combate ideológico, político y social, para poder construir alternativas ideológicas y políticas, tanto al comunismo ateo como al imperialismo protestante norteamericano.”

⁶ The original subtitle in Spanish was *Manual de Descolonización Antinorteamericana*. The version published in England in 1975, on the other hand, received the subtitle *Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comic* and its first batch, which arrived in the USA, was “seized by the US Treasury, accused of copyright infringement”, according to Érico Assis (2017, para. 11).

through which human beings communicate with each other. (A. Mattelart & Dorfman, 1971/1980, pp. 15-16)⁷

Since then, Armand Mattelart's geographical macro-scale of concerns – in accordance with the critical approach to capitalist expansion, from the perspective of Catholic humanism – has been progressively consolidated, especially in his post-Chile production⁸. According to Sénécal (2014), when Armand returned to France, Michèle's homeland, he felt as an expatriate and faced issues of identity and profession, by realizing he had never published in French before⁹ and stayed apart from scholarly life for a while, until he became a professor at the University of Paris VIII - Vincennes, in Saint-Denis.

Table 1. *Books on communication and culture by Armand Mattelart*

Year	Title and co-author
1971	<i>Comunicación Masiva y Revolución Socialista</i> (Chile)
1975	<i>How to Read Donald Duck: Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comic</i> (with Ariel Dorfman) [1971]
1972	<i>Agresión desde el Espacio: Cultura y Napalm en la Era de los Satélites</i>
1973	<i>La Comunicación Masiva en el Proceso de Liberación</i>
1974	<i>La Cultura como Empresa Multinacional</i>
1980	<i>Mass Media, Ideologies and the Revolutionary Movement</i> (Chile 1970-1973) [1974]
1982	<i>Multinational Corporations and the Control of Culture: The Ideological Apparatuses of Imperialism</i> [1976]
1980	<i>Télévision: Enjeu sans Frontières: Industries Culturelles et Politique de la Communication</i> (with Jean-Marie Piemme)
1985	<i>Technology, Culture and Communication: A Report to the French Ministry of Research and Industry</i> (with Yves Stourdzé) [1982]
1983	<i>L'Ordinateur et le Tiers Monde: L'Amérique Latine à L'heure des Choix Télématiques</i>
1984	<i>La Culture contre la démocratie? L'audiovisuel A L'heure Transnationale</i> (with Michèle Mattelart and Xavier Delcourt)
1992	<i>Rethinking Media Theory: Signposts and New Directions</i> (with Michèle Mattelart) [1986]
1991	<i>Advertising International: The Privatization of Public Space</i> [1989]

(continua...)

⁷ Translated from the Brazilian edition, as it is closer to the original in Spanish than the English version *How to Read Donald Duck: Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comic* (1975).

⁸ Armand and Michele Mattelart left Chile with their children, Gurban and Tristan, immediately after the coup d'état that overthrew the president Salvador Allende, in September 11th, 1973. Since then, they live in France.

⁹ In 2015, French publishing house Presses de Mines released an anthology with works about communication and culture penned by Armand Mattelart in different languages from 1970 to 1986, edited in three volumes: *Communication, idéologies et hégémonies culturelles; Communication, cultures populaires et émancipation; Communication transnationale et industries de la culture*. All volumes were edited by Mattelart himself, along with Fabien Granjon and Michel Sénécal (his former student).

Table 1. *Continuação*

Year	Title and co-author
1990	<i>La Publicité</i>
1994	<i>Mapping World Communication: War, Progress, Culture</i> [1991]
1996	<i>The Invention of Communication</i> [1994]
1998	<i>Theories of Communication: A Short Introduction</i> (with Michèle Mattelart) [1995]
1996	<i>La Mondialisation de la Communication</i>
1999	<i>Histoire de L'utopie Planétaire: De la Cité Prophétique a la Société Globale</i>
2003	<i>The Information Society: An Introduction</i> [2001]
2003	<i>Introduction aux Cultural Studies</i> (with Érik Neveu)
2005	<i>Diversité Culturelle et Mondialisation</i>
2007	<i>Identifier et Surveiller: Les Technologies de Sécurité</i> (with Christophe Wasinski)
2010	<i>The Globalization of Surveillance</i> [2007]
2010	<i>Pour un Regard-Monde</i> (interview with Michel Sénécal)
2015	<i>De Orwell al Cibercontrol</i> (with André Vitalis; Juan Carlos Miguel de Bustos, translator)

Source. own elaboration based on bibliographic data available online and complementary search results in international virtual bookstores. In the absence of titles in English, the language of the first edition was chosen, with the respective year in brackets.

It was in this context that he intensified his collaboration with Michèle and other authors, and directed the film document *La Espiral*, which he produced together with a group of French filmmakers noted for their cross-border *militant cinema*: Jacqueline Meppiel, head of the department of editing at the San Antonio de los Baños Film School in Cuba (where she died); Valérie Mayoux, who directed *Cuba: Battle of the 10,000,000*; and Chris Marker, director of the acclaimed documentary *A. K.*, about the Japanese filmmaker Akira Kurosawa.

In 2008, Mattelart published an article titled *La Spiral: Notes at the Edge of a Cinematic Adventure*¹⁰, in which he reports the documentary production process (between 1974 and 1975) and seeks to clarify some controversial points and undo some misunderstandings. Like the fact that the film does not tell the story of Unidad Popular (UP)¹¹ but that of its opponents, with the objective of explaining how the Chilean right turned the three years of the Allende government into a “hellish machine.” Narrated in French and almost 140 minutes long, the film premiered in France in 1976, but only thirty years later it was officially screened in Chile.

In an interview with the magazine *Cultures & Conflicts* (Bigo & A. Mattelart, 2009), the Belgian sociologist explained how his daily monitoring of the editorials of the newspaper *El Mercurio* was useful to build, in the film, a narrative that revealed the “strategic importance of the cultural and ideological struggle

¹⁰ Free translation of the original title *La Espiral: Notas al Margen de una Aventura Cinematográfica*, published by *Cuadernos Críticos de la Comunicación* n°4, de la Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona. <https://lahaine.org/bH8z>

¹¹ Left-wing party coalition formed to elect Salvador Allende, who presided Chile from 1970 to 1973 and intended to achieve socialism through democratic institutionalism.

through the media”¹² (para. 14). He also told how the records in photos, films and videos made by filmmakers and journalists from various countries (Cuba, France, Belgium, Italy) were fundamental to the construction of this narrative, including Americans “who had fallen in love with the Chilean experience”¹³ (para. 19), besides Chileans themselves.

One of the biggest challenges of the film, conceived shortly after the coup d'état in Chile, was to refer to the complexity of previous events, especially the role of the United States. According to Bigo & A. Mattelart (2009), the solution was to take advantage of images from public hearings of the US Senate, recorded in 1972, “about the planned plot by the ITT [International Telephone & Telegraph] company, in collusion with the CIA [Central Intelligence Agency] and the newspaper *El Mercurio*, aiming to prevent the investiture of President Allende”¹⁴ (para. 47). Therefore, a transnational articulation.

The work following this “cinematic adventure” by Armand Mattelart was the book *Multinational Corporations and the Control of Culture: The Ideological Apparatuses of Imperialism*, English title for *Multinationales et système de communication: les appareils idéologiques de l'imperialisme*, originally published in French in 1976, and six years later in USA. It is interesting to note that even though it was written in his European period, the work carries the methodological style of applied empirical studies from his Chilean times, when his research was almost exclusively based on documents from different sources (reports from companies, governments and multilateral organizations; specialized journals, newspapers of wide domestic and international circulation, business sector analysis). All references are quoted in footnotes and there is no list of bibliographic references at the end of the publication, as usual.

The theoretical notions constructed throughout this book—that would unfold in other future works – are inferences of the profusion of quantitative data and the identification of the roles of different actors in the configuration of a new technological scenario of information circulation and communication practices for mass audiences, no longer restricted to national territory. The notion of *ideological devices*, for example, transposed from the State (national scale) to *imperialism* (world scale), goes beyond the theoretical

¹² In the original: “importancia estratégica que adquirió la lucha cultural e ideológica a través de los medios.”

¹³ In the original: “que se habían apasionado por la experiencia chilena.”

¹⁴ In the original: “sobre el complot tramado por la empresa ITT, en complicidad con la CIA y el periódico *El Mercurio*, con el fin de impedir la investidura del presidente Allende.”

discussions of Antonio Gramsci and Louis Althusser, then quite debated in the Brazilian academia.

From 1980 on, Armand Mattelart published several co-authored books, seven of them with Michèle Mattelart, in which he theoretically unfolded terms from the data and evidence critically systematized in his work of 1976, based on the communication, culture and technology tripod. Among the couple's productions, two became recurrent bibliography in Communication courses in Brazil: *Penser les médias* (1986), later published in English as *Rethinking Media Theory: Signposts and New Directions* (1993); and *Histoire des théories de la communication* (1995), published in English as *Theories of Communication: a short introduction* (1998).

Since the 1990s, Armand Mattelart definitely adheres to the historical method as a space-time approach on the processes that explain the contemporary configurations of information and communication systems. Or as an "archeology of knowledge about communication," as he refers to it in *La Communication-Monde: histoire des idées et des stratégies*, published in France in 1991 and in English three years later, as *Mapping World Communication: War, Progress, Culture*. In this book, the author organizes the themes chronologically (organized in an appendix), which goes from January 1st, 1788, launching date of *The Times* of London (then with *delayed* news from Rotterdam, Paris, Frankfurt and Warsaw), to 1991, when journalists formed a pool to cover the Gulf War.

The book begins with the emergence of technical communication networks, inaugurated with the optical telegraph, which paved the way for "a new way of exchanging and circulating goods, messages and people" (A. Mattelart, 1991/1994a, p. 15). And it continues to score the business and governance models that are being adopted for each technological innovation or power project (market model or state monopoly), in different countries and times. The documentation of the analysis with several extracted data from technical reports remains a trademark of the author, but now, it is followed by vast theoretical literature, including Gramsci and Althusser; as well as the *philosopher of space* Henri Lefebvre and the geographer Friedrich Ratzel, a reference in Anthropogeography and Political Geography.

In line with its title, *Mapping World Communication* devotes significant attention to the discussion of the notions derived from worldwide and world-system; global, globalization – which "took advantage of the words international and internationalization" (A. Mattelart, 1991/1994a, p.248); as well as multinational; transnational; cross-border; imperialism; and geopolitics. But it also points to the emerging spatial issues, such as the pair deterritorialization/

reterritorialization; nomadic space; cultural industries (as opposed to the “cultural industry” of the Frankfurt School); technological control and surveillance societies in a global scale, all the themes that dialogue with Tristan Mattelart’s scholarly output, as it will be seen ahead.

A paragraph almost at the end of this book points to the dialectical relationships that emerged in the 1980s, as a return to the “singular spaces,” which persist in the 21st century, on the opposite direction of “geostrategists of the world-economy”:

As the “world-system” unfolded, connecting different societies with products and networks functioning under the “universal” mode, approaches to the transnationalization of culture were developed, which were concerned with restoring its character of multiple interactions process. The researchers’ attention will focus on the responses of these unique societies to the reorganization proposal of social relations presented by the new transnational communication instruments that, simultaneously, disrupt and restructure national and local spaces. Such responses are made of resistance, reproductions, adaptation, reappropriation. In short, from now on, we will ask ourselves whether the processes of “reframing,” by which these innumerable ramifications linked to the networks of the fabric of globalization, acquire meaning for each community¹⁵. (A. Mattelart, 1994a, p. 264)

In the book *The Invention of Communication*, first published in 1994 by the Piaget Institute, in Lisbon, Mattelart deepens the geohistorical approach by revisiting several doctrines and theories that, over the centuries, have contributed to the understanding of communication phenomena, far beyond their mediatic mode. In this journey, which begins with the entry of the word *communication*, written *in person* by the French philosopher Denis Diderot, in 1753, for the *Encyclopedia*, the author remains guided by (in his own terms) the *strategic formulations* and attentive to the *market studies* that indicate continuities and ruptures of the subject.

Ever since communication – above and beyond the different meanings each era confers on it – undertook its trajectory in pursuit of the ideal of reason, the representation that has been made of it has been torn between emancipation and control, between transparency and opacity. On the one hand, there is the logic of emancipation from all hindrances and prejudices inherited from dogmatic thinking. On the other hand, there is the logic of constraint imposed by a social

¹⁵ Free translation from Brazilian edition (A. Mattelart, 1994a).

and productive order. The means of decentralization that permit to escape from confinement and from mental and physical barrier allow both the unleashing of movement and the consolidation of the center with the support of the periphery. (A. Mattelart, 1994b, p. 10)

It can be said that *Mapping World Communication*, *The Invention of Communication* and *La mondialisation de la communication* (1996, no title in English) are a kind of trilogy of the epistemological deepening of Mattelartian thought, which, at each volume, shows sophistication of the interpretations of the themes and the reference authors, becoming more theoretical and almost completely abandoning the empirical factual references of the Chilean period and soon after. On the other hand, it is precisely in this *trilogy* that researchers of geographies of communication can find the most interesting references for their studies (in addition to those already mentioned), with approaches on movement and circulation; hierarchy of the world, from the periphery to the center; technoglobal religion; world citizenship; the geopolitics of global society, among others.

TRISTAN MATTELART: IN THE MOVEMENT OF THE IMAGE

PhD in Communication from Université Stendhal Grenoble (Switzerland), Tristan Mattelart is a professor at the Institut Français de Presse (IFP), which acts as a Training and Research Unit and Department of Information and Communication Sciences at the University of Paris 2. He is also a researcher at the Analysis and Interdisciplinary Research Centre for Media (in French, Centre d'Analyse et de Recherche Interdisciplinaires sur les Médias, Carism), affiliated to the IFP, where his line of research is "the transformation of the logics of international circulation of information in the digital age" (<https://bit.ly/2VN9hPd>). Previously, he was a professor of international communication at the University of Paris-8, linked to the Center for Media, Technologies and Internationalization Studies (CEMTI, the French acronym).

An analysis, though provisional, of Tristan's work leaves no doubt about how important geographical references have been for his investigations, which may contribute to those who walk the field of the Geographies of Communication with an interest in the international scale. Trans-territorial spatialities mark his academic trajectory since early research to his doctoral thesis, defended in 1994 and published in 1995, under the title *Le cheval de Troie audiovisuel, le rideau de fer à l'épreuve des radios et télévisions transfrontières*

(*The Broadcasting Trojan Horse: The Iron Curtain against Cross-border Radio and TV*, in free translation).

Like his father, his insertion in international communication is explicit, both in the disciplines he teaches or taught (Internationalisation des médias: théories et enjeux; Géopolitique des media et de l'internet; Médias et mobilisations internationales; Médias et relations internationales; among others); as in their lines of research and in the titles of their publications (to be explored ahead). But, unlike Armand (even because of generational and personal experience¹⁶), his work focuses on matters of social, cultural, political and economic issues associated to the transnationalization of media, particularly, video produced for domestic consumption or for broadcasting and, more recently, digital products.

Also unlike Armand, who keeps his focus on the world/global scale, from a Latin American perspective, Tristan always directed his attention to the world located east of the Greenwich Meridian, rarely interested in what happens in the communication field of the Americas, so studied by the Belgian sociologist. Another difference is that Tristan's intellectual production (between 1994 and 2019) is not distinguished chronologically, but by themes, which have in common informational and media phenomena that cross borders, with an emphasis on audiovisual productions and systems. Thus, if the father's focus is the insertion of communication and information in the world-system—in the macro-scalar (planetary) sense of the term—the son's *cultural globalization*¹⁷ tends to be restricted to certain regional cuts on the borders between Europe, Asia and Africa.

Based on a survey of 19 titles in French and English, among books and articles, published in the last 25 years (Table 2), a framework of Tristan Mattelart's work is proposed here, divided in three major themes: media and cross-border flows; diasporic transnational communication; cultural globalization and globalized culture.

The first theme emerges from his doctoral research, in which Tristan Mattelart investigated the strategic role that the western audiovisual media played during the *cold war* between the United States and the Soviet Union¹⁸ as a *transnational actor*. The orientation of the research was that these means of communication helped maintain the conditions of *free flow between West and*

¹⁶ It is important to emphasize that, while Armand had an intense experience with latin-american issues during his 11-year stay in Chile (besides his stays in Mexico and Cuba as professor-researcher), Tristan was raised in France since his 8 years of age and his entire formation was based on the European models.

¹⁷ Although the term *mondial* and its derivatives used by Tristan in French are always translated into English as *global* (and its derivatives), we consider that the term *worldwide* best fit the original idea of the author, considering the controversy still prevailing over the conceptual difference of the two terms.

¹⁸ Period extending from the 1947 Truman Doctrine until the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991.

East, despite the *iron curtain* installed to prevent the reception of undesirable electromagnetic signals. With the help of dissidents and ordinary tourists, there was an intense smuggling of cassette tapes from different countries (including Brazil), allowing a first access to eastern Europe and URSS populations to a western vision of world and a life-style (internationalized) broadcasted by the audiovisual channels of liberal democracies (T. Mattelart, 1994;1995; 1999).

Table 2. *Main works authored by Tristan Mattelart (1994-2020)*

Year	Class	Title
1994	article	<i>Pre-1989 East-West Video: Entertainment without borders</i>
1995	book	<i>Le Cheval de Troie Audiovisuel, le Rideau de Fer a l'épreuve des Radios et Télévisions Transfrontières</i>
1999	article	<i>Transboundary Flows of Western Entertainment across the Iron Curtain</i>
2002	book (ed.)	<i>La Mondialisation des Médias Contre la Censure. Tiers Monde et Audiovisuel sans Frontières</i>
2006	article	<i>French Television Confronts Urban Revolts</i>
2007	book	<i>Médias, Migrations et Cultures Transnationales</i>
2008	article	<i>La télévision de la V^e République, entre Logiques Nationales et Internationales</i>
2009	article	<i>Audio-Visual Piracy: Towards a Study of the Underground Networks of Cultural Globalization</i>
2009	article	<i>Les Diasporas a l'Heure des Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication: Petit Etat des Savoirs</i>
2011	book	<i>Piratages Audiovisuels, Les Voies Souterraines de La Mondialisation Culturelle</i>
2012	article	<i>Audiovisual Piracy, Informal Economy, And Cultural Globalization</i>
2014	article	<i>Les Enjeux De La Circulation Internationale Del'information.</i>
2014	book (ed.)	<i>Médias Et Migrations Dans L'espace Euro-Méditerranéen</i>
2016	article	<i>The Changing Geographies of Pirate Transnational Audiovisual</i>
2016	book (ed.)	<i>Géopolitique Des Télévisions Transnationales D'information</i> (with Olivier Koch)
2019	chapter	<i>Information and News Inequalities</i> (with two co-authors)
2019	special ed.	<i>Media, Communication Technologies and Forced Migration</i> [Introduction]
2019	special ed. (chap.)	<i>Media, Communication Technologies and Forced Migration: Promises And Pitfalls Of An Emerging Research Field</i>

Source. own elaboration based on information collected in article and book repositories. The titles are in the language of the first edition.

The next step was the disruption of state control mechanisms in these countries by the satellite signal sent from outside the borders, allowing the transmission of images of economic and cultural realities that were against the current ideological discourse. It was like an *air Trojan horse*, as identified by a Czech newspaper at the time, whose ironic interpretation is echoed by

conservative authors like Raymond Aron, or liberals like Wilson Dizard, listed in the research bibliography, according to Cécile Duret (1996).

Since then, Tristan has observed how international radio stations and TV channels with satellite or Internet transmission have contributed to bypass national censorship policies in countries that he still identified, in 2002, as *third world countries*. For the author, these media constitute an *audiovisual without borders*, from a liberal perspective. In the following decade, he identified new actors in this cross-border television market, which motivated the organization of a collection of articles entitled *Géopolitique des télévisions transnationales d'information*, in partnership with Olivier Koch, professor at the University of Galatasaray (Istanbul, Turkey), published in 2016.

The focus, this time, was on the TV news channels and video news agencies of countries from different parts of the world – such as Qatar, China, Russia and Venezuela – to oppose the perspectives of the world distributed by the major internationalized American and European television networks. The authors refer to the debates of the 1970s on the strong imbalances in the international circulation of news (which motivated the discussion of a New Order of Information and Communication – Nomic), in order to better understand what these new players represent in the contemporary context, including a geopolitical point of view. Among them are Al Jazeera, TeleSUR, Russia Today, as well as Chinese and Indian channels, which act as *televisual diplomacy instruments* (Koch & Mattelart, T., 2016).

Based on findings from the book *Médias, migrations et cultures transnationales*, published in 2007, Tristan Mattelart obtained funding for a collaborative research project called MediaMigraTerra, which allowed another thematic approach to the geographies of communication, with a very regional perspective: the relationship between media and migration in the Euro-Mediterranean area. Held between 2008 and 2011, the project initially generated a *state of the art* brief about diasporas in the era of information and communication technologies (T. Mattelart, 2009a).

With theoretical support from cultural studies and the then novice ethnography, the article reviews several empirical studies on how people, separated by forced migrations, start to use the resources available online to communicate, resume ties and build new community and identity relations. From the geographical point of view, expressions emerge from these studies that reveal the impact of losing the ground where one is (or the sense of place): *dissociated nations*; *detrterritorialized nation-states*; *transnational lives*;

*transnational relations; transnational localities; forced transnationality; banal transnationalism; from immigrant to transmigrant*¹⁹ (T. Mattelart, 2009a).

From the dilemmas of these “homelandless” people emerges the efforts to reconnect using information and communication technologies (ICTs): *communication with the absent; digital diasporas; mediated diasporic spaces; mediated spatialities; virtual communities of migrants; diasporic mediascapes*²⁰. At that time, when the use of cellphones was becoming an instrument of reconnection, other more complex issues came up: the territorial limits for virtual space, exemplified by the online and offline transnational networks of Iranian and Turkish-Kurdish immigrants in the Netherlands; or how to build a way of being Greek, Italian, Indian etc. on the Internet (T. Mattelart, 2009a).

The final result of the MediaMigraTerra survey was only published in 2014, in the book *Médias et migrations dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen*. But the thematization of the virtualization of diasporic relations continued and generated a special edition in the *European Journal of Communication* in 2019: *Media, Communication Technologies and Forced Migration: Promises and Pitfalls of an Emerging Research Field* (T. Mattelart, 2019a, 2019b).

Finally, the third theme identified in Tristan Mattelart's research is the closest to the work of Armand and Michelle Mattelart: audiovisual piracy as a phenomenon of globalized culture and the globalization of culture – which also refers to the beginning of the Sorbonne professor's work, when he rescued, for his doctoral thesis, the *black market* of pirated video tapes in the former Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries. It is not by chance that it is in the first article of this line of research, opened in 2009, that two of Armand Mattelart's rare quotations appear in Tristan's work: *Multinational Corporations and the Control of Culture* and *Mapping World Communication*.

This approach resulted in three articles (T. Mattelart, 2009, 2012, 2016), all in English, starting from the observation of the *underground networks of cultural globalization*, which at the same time as they are criminalized (associated with organized crime and responsible for the enormous damage to cultural industries activities), they generate income for local workers and allow populations to access *the products of the local, regional and global entertainment industries*. They also identify the regional ramifications of the phenomenon: Latin America, Maghreb²¹, the Middle East and Central and Eastern Europe.

¹⁹ Free translation from terms in French.

²⁰ Free translation from terms in French.

²¹ Unofficial name given to the North West Africa region, which covers Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Mauritania and Libya.

The reality of audiovisual piracy cannot be reduced to that of criminal activity – as the reports of organizations that defend the interests of Western communication industries tend to do: in southern and eastern countries, the phenomenon responds to a deeper dynamic. Furthermore, far from representing a peripheral dysfunction in the audiovisual panorama of these countries, it is for many of them an essential part of their communication economies. (T. Mattelart, 2009b, p. 320)

To investigate this trans-territorial reality in multiple scales, researchers from eight countries, representing six different regions – North Africa (Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco), West Africa (Ivory Coast), East Asia (South Korea), South America (Colombia), Balkans (Bulgaria) and Eurasia (Russia) – met in a collective research project, the results of which were synthesized by Tristan Mattelart (2012). The study shifts the sense of piracy to the context of international power relations, observing transnational pressures on property rights, as well as the ways in which pirated audiovisual products circulate and are appropriated by local populations. At this stage of the research, the physical copies begin to suffer the impact of the downloads on the Internet, which makes the phenomenon even more complex, from the social, economic, cultural and political point of view, inseparable from the countries institutional and regulatory structures.

Inspired by Dayan Tussu (2007), Tristan (2016) analyzes to what extent the globalized networks of the informal economy (which have one of their expressions in street vendors in Brazil's large urban centers) contributed to the changes in global audiovisual flows. The starting point of the study was the conditions that allowed the emergence of new counter-flows of piracy of non-Western products (in opposition to what was observed at the time of the *Cold War*). Then, the author discusses whether these conditions generated counter-hegemonic flows, capable of disseminating content whose meanings are opposed to those of the dominant American production. It also asks whether piracy has contributed to a greater global presence of US cultural products.

Thus, the research coordinated by Tristan Mattelart provides answers, while raising new questions on the diagnosis of the internationalization of cultural industrialists, described by Armand Mattelart more than 40 years ago:

When covering the disc, book, cinema, radio-television [sic], press, photography, art reproduction and advertising, new audiovisual products and services, the concept [of cultural industries] is absorbed by the new situation of competition between cultural policies traditionally conducted by the State, which reach restricted audiences, and the means of production and dissemination to a mass

audience, increasingly linked to the international market. (A. Mattelart, 1994, p.229, our translation)

Table 3. *Comparative synthesis of the studies by Armand Mattelart and Tristan Mattelart*

Armand Mattelart		Tristan Mattelart	
Object / media	Spatiality	Object / media	Spatiality
Disney comics, cartoons; movies	Transnational (<i>american imperialism</i>)	Audiovisual production (videos); radio and TV	Cross-border; URSS; <i>Iron Curtain</i>
Culture in the age of satellites	Planetary; outer space; worldwide	Cultural and entertainment flows	Cross-border; regional
Communication systems	Multinational; worldwide; global	French Television	<i>National and international logic</i>
Publicity	International	Audiovisual piracy	<i>Cultural globalization</i>
Information Society	Worldwide	Circulation / flow of information and news	International
Cultural diversity	Worldwide	Television geopolitics	Transnational
Identification and surveillance technologies	Transnational; global	Migrations, diasporas, media and communication technologies	Transnational / regional; <i>Euro-Mediterranean area</i>

Note. Own elaboration based on the cited bibliography.

THE MATTELARTS MEETING, BY WAY OF A CONCLUSION

On the eve of the 50th anniversary of the book *How to Read Donald Duck*, Armand Mattelart's second incursion in Communication studies, co-authored with Ariel Dorfman, the launch of the streaming service "Disney+" in Latin America and in the Caribbean suggests how the *cultural imperialism* from the land of the Donalds keeps its transnational scale. Advertised by The Walt Disney Company as "a new chapter in its global expansion" and "a milestone in the company's history in the region," the platform is available in Brazil in association with the largest media conglomerate in the country: Grupo Globo. An alliance of these two media giants signals how up-to-date and inspiring is the thought of the Franco-Belgian sociologist to new studies on today's cultural industries, ever more transnationalized.

On the other hand, 25 years since its publication, Tristan Mattelart's doctoral thesis makes us think that the underground paid TV services, marketed by paramilitary militias entrenched in the outskirts of Brazilian metropolises, represent a new *audiovisual Trojan Horse*. At the same time, a new *Cold War* is looming on the dispute over 5G technology in the world, crucial to the expansion

and extension of digital communications, now featuring a new actor in the East-West feud: China.

In these two intellectual trajectories, the geographical concepts of territory and region, as well as the adjectival notions of global, international and transnational, remain underlying, hence their relevance to the subfield of the Geographies of Communication. This relative “invisibility” of Geography in the works of both Mattelarts is akin to that of communication among geographers (Hillis, 1998), who mostly continue thinking of communication phenomena through their material forms (channels, networks, circuits), as shown in previous studies (Aguiar, 2013, 2019).

Thus, the here assessed works of father and son – both researchers on international systems of information and communication – point out to the relevance of the transnational perspective, be it in world/global/planetary scale, or in the regional subcontinental scale (as in Latin America and Southern Europe); or in intercontinental ones, as in the case of information flows and cultural products (that is, entertainment) between countries of Europe, Asia, and Africa.

Graduated in very different socio-historical and geo-cultural contexts, each one of the Mattelarts initially followed very different paths, as much as in terms of objects of research as in epistemological choices. But their studies converge to the point where they pay attention to the impact of digital technologies in the spread of cultural industries throughout the world. And they meet again in the transnational perspectives they apply to communication systems, advertising, audiovisual piracy, information flows, as well as in the approach to references of the Political Economy of Communication and Culture.

The theoretical references of the Geographies of Communication teach us that the choice between Chile under Allende and Russia behind the *Iron Curtain*, or between American imperialism and the diasporas throughout Europe, is not merely a spatial *cutout* in an object, but an option to frame the perspective, which defines what we want to emphasize. Paraphrasing James Craine again, the places and spaces of communication and the media are not neutral. Neither are the geographical scales used to observe them. ■

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