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## **FOREWORD**

CMC Magazine presents, in its 52nd issue, the second part of the Dossier “Latin-American Communicational Thinking – Challenges and Perspectives of the De-westernization of the Global South”, coordinated by the researchers Ana Cristina Suzina (Loughborough University London) and Paola Madrid Sartoretto (Jönköping University). You can find below the editor’s presentation on the articles that comprise the dossier. In addition to the articles of the dossier, the journal brings other articles that discuss the relationship between communication and consumption. In the article “Children, Communication and Consumption: A Comprehensive Study of the YouTube Channel Totoykids”, Dimas A. Künsch and Everaldo Pereira approach this production from the point of view of the technical media that made them possible, the vision of the creators and the social place of the children watching it. In “The Spatial Modelization and the Cultural Memory in the Lavapiés neighborhood in Madrid”, Regiane M. de O. Nakagawa presents an analysis of *corralas*, a type of popular housing present in that neighborhood, based in the concept of non-hereditary cultural memory, proposed by Iuri Lotman. In turn, Fábio Ribeiro takes Portugal as a place of study when exploring the theoretical dimensions that relate with the mobilization of citizens and the potential of some technological platforms of information sharing during catastrophes in “Sharing Information during Catastrophes: International Experiences and the Portuguese Case fogos.pt”.

We wish you all a delightful reading!

# **Dossier Latin American Communicational Thinking: Challenges and Perspectives of the De-Westernization in the Global South**

## **Volume II: Breaking through barriers of knowledge**

Ana Cristina Suzina and Paola Madrid Sartoretto

When we started planning this dossier in May 2020, our optimistic expectation was to receive between 15 to 20 manuscripts. Our thought was that, if we received 20 texts, the call would have been successful. Much to our surprise, by the end of the call for manuscripts, in September, we had received 34 articles. Given the quality of the submissions, we put ourselves in the difficult position of having to pick five texts that would constitute the dossier. Luckily, in a gesture of openness and trust to which we are grateful for, the team of Comunicação, Mídia e Consumo offered us the possibility of publishing the dossier in two volumes of five articles each, allowing us to take better advantage of such reach contributions – and, when we have 34 submissions, we must also consider the work of 68 peer reviewers that offered important inputs not only for the selection of the contributions, but also for the improvement of all those selected.

The interest that the call attracted among colleagues in Latin America and beyond shows the urgency and relevance of naming and making visible the different aspects and fields of Latin American communicational thinking in our times. In addition to the publication, a panel with articles of both volumes was accepted for the conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), which happened online from May 27th to 31st, 2021, taking debates and the collective construction

about Latin American Communicational research and theory to a global arena.

The first volume of the Dossier Latin American Communicational Thinking: challenges and perspectives of the de-westernization in the Global South, launched in March 2021, approached the dynamics of construction, development as well as internal and external recognition of Latin American communication research, theory, and practice. This second volume deals, in different ways, with the notion of borders, whether they are geographic, epistemological, or methodological. The articles pay particular attention to the ways in which Latin American research in media and communication, through a solid and rigorous empirical endeavor, contests and expand existing borders and forges new ones. In this volume, there is a strong engagement with communication practices, with the goal of understanding their social, historical, and phenomenological aspects in order to advance in the conceptualization of communication as a social process.

Therefore, to a certain extent, these texts can be considered unfinished or incomplete and we would like to believe that this is part of what makes them valuable and relevant, because they lead us to question established cognitive processes and engage us in reflections in which we consider what other paths we can trace. To trespass borders means to open oneself to possibilities of other forms of thinking, as advocated by Boaventura de Sousa Santos in his notion of Epistemologies of the South (SOUSA SANTOS, 2002). It also means accepting, even embracing, the risk of creating another science, as suggested in Raúl Fonet-Betancourt's proposition of intercultural phylosophy (FORNET-BETANCOURT, 2007). This Cuban author, based in Germany, suggests that interculturality is not restricted to accepting other epistemologies and knowledges as alternatives to the established Western, placing them as merely peripheral to the core of the "treasure" Western rationality. According to Fonet-Betancourt, interculturality means to redefine science based on more diverse parameters and with parity in

the articulation between the variety of knowledges and wisdoms existing in the planet.

In this sense, on one hand, de-westernization has to do with the effort of escaping the ‘butler syndrome’, which, according to Karin Bennett (2014) affects many countries considered peripheral and leads researchers to reproduce foreign methodologies and theories, ignoring or marginalizing local production. On the other hand, as argued by Waisbord and Mellado (2014), de-westernization is not limited to including ‘cases’ in a Western theoretical paradigm and requires reviewing and reinventing the paradigm itself through other experiences and social realities.

Fornet-Betancourt argues for retrieving the memory of ‘cultures harmed in their cognitive dignity’ by a still inconclusive Western colonialism (2007, p. 25). In the academic world, this inconclusion is often manifested by the regional label, which illustrates an asymmetrical dialogue in which the classification of ‘regional’ is ascribed by the dominant voice of another regional knowledge accepted as the universal canon. Recently, one of us proposed a critical debate on the notion of “traveling research” (SUZINA, 2021), as this would justify a scale of values for the restriction of knowledge circulation, according to a supposed ‘international interest’ that only some studies would contemplate.

This reflection relates to the feeling of strangeness that we discussed in our introduction to the first volume of this dossier, when we shared the experience of seeing ourselves identified as representatives of a ‘particular knowledge’ when working as researchers in Europe (SUZINA & SARTORETTO, 2021). It also reflects another kind of strangeness also mobilized then, which reviews the recognition of the Latin American research in media and communication as socially committed or engaged, as if other research endeavors were not. In this sense, breaking barriers of knowledge means to value knowledge for its contribution to the understanding of local, regional and global phenomena, in an exercise of permanent dialogue welcoming a diversity of epistemologies.



The articles in this collection show how cultural matrices as well as professional and scientific practices performed in the Global South are capable of inspiring and redressing theories. They expand and deepen the debate initiated in the first volume in which we intended to de-centralize the dominating Eurocentric and Western perspectives in media and communication studies. These texts invite to reflection and strengthen South-South dialogues, valuing knowledges often discarded in the reproduction of colonialist research dynamics in the Global South, both referring to the practices of researchers (BENNETT, 2014) and editorial and financing policies of science (OLIVEIRA et al, 2020).

In her article, Ana Lúcia Nunes de Sousa visits a field frequently associated with Latin American research, that of popular, alternative and community communication. The author argues about the relevance of Ubu-ntu to rethink and deepen the studies of community communication, from the Global South. Her article builds on the work of Muniz Sodré and Raquel Paiva, including other Western and Latin American authors to present and reflect about the African philosophy of the common, Ubu-ntu, explicating their main characteristics.

Isabela Rega and Andrea Medrado explore the approximation between community communication and media activism. The authors present the Models of Scales of Visibility to map the paths of visibility of media activists in countries of the Global South. The model is discussed through analyses of activists' practices using social media to mitigate and prevent police violence in the community of Maré, in Brazil; and the work of a Kenyan photographer that produces night images of Nairobi to discuss social issues.

Matheus Cestari Cunha and Marli dos Santos reflect about media education through another widely known Latin American reference, Jesús Martín-Barbero's Mediation Theory, considering communication as an essential aspect of media education. The article proposes connections between media education and the mediation theory, foregrounded on the concepts of two theoretical propositions arising from the concept of media literacy and media skills presented by Paolo Celot and José

Manuel Pérez Tornero. The authors argue that mediations are essential to understand media literacy and media skills, overriding surrounding elements.

The last two texts of the dossier prompt us to rethink theories of Journalism and Advertising. Aníbal Orué Pozzo discusses the relationship between social actors in the Latin American journalistic practice. Coming from the consideration of journalism as an expression of modernity, the author revisits the work of Latin American thinkers such as Fausto Reinaga, León Cadogan, Jesús Martín-Barbero, Juan Díaz Bordenave and others to advance an epistemological proposition anchored on journalistic practice and theory developed in the region.

Lastly, Patrícia Saldanha discusses to which extent the empirically developed counter-hegemonic perspective of Latin American Social Advertising can be a fertile ground capable of feeding discussions that contribute to the strengthening of participatory and diverse citizenship. Saldanha sketches out an epistemological map developed in six years of action research and introduces a typification of Social Advertising as affirmative, community, cause, public and transversal interest.

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