

# The absence of Jesús Martín-Barbero in the Communication Studies in Portugal

## *A ausência de Jesús Martín-Barbero nos estudos de comunicação em Portugal*

ISABEL FERIN CUNHA<sup>a</sup>

Universidade de Coimbra, Faculdade de Letras, Centro de Investigação. Coimbra, Portugal

FERNANDA CASTILHO<sup>b</sup>

Centro Estadual de Educação Tecnológica Paula Souza, Faculdade de Tecnologia. São Paulo – SP, Brasil

University of São Paulo, School of Communications and Arts. São Paulo – SP, Brasil

### ABSTRACT

The objective of this work is to discuss the absence of Jesús Martín-Barbero in studies on communication sciences in Portugal. Considering that academic flows between Brazil and Portugal are intense, we would have as hypothesis the sharing of bibliography and methodologies from the introduction of Brazilian and Latin American authors in Portugal and of Portuguese authors in Brazil. However, this sharing is sporadic on both sides of the Atlantic, and it does not include Martín-Barbero systematically. Therefore, we aim to trace his presence, especially in reception and culture studies, and to determine the reasons that lead to such little presence in the context of Portuguese research.

**Keywords:** Jesús Martín-Barbero, Lusophone space, academic flows, anglo-internationalization

### RESUMO

O objetivo desse trabalho é discutir a ausência de Jesús Martín-Barbero nos estudos de ciências da comunicação em Portugal. Tendo em conta que os fluxos acadêmicos entre Brasil e Portugal são intensos, teríamos como hipótese o compartilhamento de bibliografia e metodologias a partir da introdução de autores brasileiros e latino-americanos em Portugal e de portugueses no Brasil. No entanto, esta partilha é esporádica nos dois lados do Atlântico, e nela não se inclui Martín-Barbero de forma sistemática. Objetivamos, por esta razão, mapear sua presença, nomeadamente nos estudos sobre recepção e cultura, e identificar as razões que a levam a ser tão discreta no contexto da pesquisa portuguesa.

**Palavras-chave:** Jesús Martín-Barbero, espaço lusófono, fluxos acadêmicos, anglo-internacionalização

<sup>a</sup> Associate professor at Universidade de Coimbra. She was the vice-president of Centro de Investigação Media e Jornalismo (2004-2006), and coordinates projects approved by Fundação Ciência e Tecnologia de Portugal. Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8701-527X>. E-mail: [barone.ferin@gmail.com](mailto:barone.ferin@gmail.com)

<sup>b</sup> Professor at Faculdade de Tecnologia do Centro Paula Souza. PhD by University of São Paulo, master and doctorate degree by Universidade de Coimbra and researcher of Centro de Estudos de Telenovela da Universidade de São Paul, University of São Paulo. Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2301-0554>. E-mail: [fernanda.castilho7@usp.br](mailto:fernanda.castilho7@usp.br)

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### INTRODUCTION

JESÚS MARTÍN-BARBERO, born in Spain, remade symbolically the route of Saramago's *A jangada de pedra* (1986) in establishing himself as a researcher in Colombia. He sailed the seas of the Atlantic and came crashing into the Americas, becoming theoretical reference in the Latin American tradition of communication studies. The main research question of this article consists in observing the inverse: discuss the presence/absence and the possible impact (or non-impact) of Martín-Barbero's thought on the field of communication sciences studies in Portugal.

The fundamental inspiration for this research came from the hypothesis that the academic flows between Brazil and Portugal would enable the sharing of common bibliographies and methodologies, especially in the sphere of the compared studies of the *lusophone media system* (Cunha, 2017a). Accordingly, the Latin American influence has been present from the early 1990s, especially through the Brazilian research, based on authors such as Martín-Barbero, Nora Mazzioti and Guillermo Orozco Gómez (Cunha, 2010).

In 2017, there has been 30 years since Martín-Barbero's reference work, *De los medios a las mediaciones: comunicación, cultura e hegemonía*, was first published<sup>1</sup>. In this book, the author's main objective is to research the communicative process through the mediations and the subjects, that is, through the interrelations between communication practices and cultural movements. In proposing the understanding of communication through culture, Jesus Martín-Barbero's work influenced much of the studies in the field of communication sciences in Brazil. However, we observe that the same did not occur in Portugal, where there was initial influence, in the 1970s and 1980s, from French semiotics, and from the 1990s, from Anglo-Saxon media and communication studies.

A simple perusal of abstracts and texts published in proceedings of congresses, conferences or seminars, which bring together Lusophone and Ibero-American professors and researchers, shows that authors from the latter are not present in Portuguese scientific publications, the contrary being equally observable.

Researching deeper, we developed a set of questions to consult, through interviews, the researchers of the area who have been involved with the work of Martín-Barbero or that represent important names of research in Portugal, forming a small qualitative sample by convenience. The request was sent to ten researchers and we received six responses (two indicated little knowledge of the work to write about it), and four of them were converging in the sense of pointing to the actual absence of Martín-Barbero in Portuguese research in communication sciences.

<sup>1</sup> The first edition was published in 1987, by Gustavo Gili Publishing House (Barcelona/Mexico City).

At a second time, we conducted a systematic survey of the articles that cited Martín-Barbero at least once, by consulting the annals/proceedings of congresses organized by scientific associations of Portuguese-speaking or Ibero-American countries (Ibercom, Confibercom, Lusocom, and Sopcom). We observed all documents currently available in digital format on the official websites of these associations. Such selection originated a sample of 18 annals/proceedings published between 2000 and 2015, according to the periodicity of each event. In addition, we gathered all the International Annuals of Lusophone Communication between 2007 and 2016. A total of 27 publications<sup>2</sup> were consulted, whose results reinforce the content of the interviews.

For that reason, we question the causes that lead to mutual ignorance, considering the existence of a shared root language, such as Portuguese and Castilian; frequent and regular contacts through consolidated scientific events, and access to mutual production, through online libraries.

With these present findings, the aim of this work is to produce a theoretical reflection, based on exploratory empirical data, on this issue focusing on the presence, or absence, of the thought of the most important Latin America communication theorist, Jesús Martín-Barbero, in the field of communication sciences studies in Portugal. Associated with this purpose, we intend to determine the role of the academic flows between Brazil and Portugal in the disseminating the scientific work of this researcher and observe the scientific contribution attributed to him in media and communication studies in Portugal.

<sup>2</sup> The 27 documents total 29,541 pages and about 2,000 articles: Ibercom (3 proceedings/3 years); Confibercom (1 proceedings/year); Lusocom (9 annuals); Lusocom (5 proceedings/3 years) and Sopcom (9 proceedings/3 years).

## COMMUNICATION STUDIES IN PORTUGAL: A FIELD OF STRUGGLE

Communication studies in Portugal have a very particular history in relation to that of other countries that are historically and/or culturally close, such as Spain and Brazil. While these countries have also suffered dictatorial regimes, the primary characteristic that differentiates Portugal from these contexts concerns the extremely late start of communication schools, because of mistrust of this field during the Salazar regime (Ribeiro, 2016).

It is important to note that dictatorships in Iberian countries restricted freedom of expression not only by repressing and censoring content, but also by having control of ownership of media. However, while in Spain the first Journalism Institute was created in 1958, at the University of Navarra, the Portuguese dictatorship never supported the teaching of journalism or other fields of communication in technical and higher education (Ibid.). Although the dictatorship never supported a journalism program in

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university education, the truth is that this training had been present since 1963 in Overseas Studies at the Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas Ultramarinas, program that trained high officials of the colonial administration. The studies were initiated as a discipline of Sociology of Information (Gonçalves, 1963) and later as journalism program (Rego et al., 1963). The first School of Social Communication Media, of private funds, was created only in 1971, in Lisbon, and was closed after the Carnation Revolution, in 1974, with the consequent nationalization of the bank that financed it (Ribeiro, 2016). The first social communication program is effectively created at Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas at Universidade Nova de Lisboa, in 1979 (Mesquita; Ponte, 1997).

Another factor of interest refers to the historic interrelation between education and the Catholic Church in the Iberian Peninsula which, to some extent, is also observed when analyzing the beginning of communication education in the country. According to Paulo Serra, the “founding” professors<sup>3</sup> of the programs in the field, among which Adriano Duarte Rodrigues (Universidade Nova de Lisboa) and Moisés de Lemos Martins (Minho University), have a Catholic history associated with their life stories: “all of them had a more or less close connection with the Catholic Church, with 2 former priests, 1 former friar, and 2 former seminarists/students of Theology” (2017: 134). This genealogy is felt not just in the *modern* foundation of communication sciences, but comes from the Catholic Church’s interest in spreading its religious message, with this presence being observed since the beginning of Overseas Expansion, through translations and simplifications of religious texts directed to people from overseas (Cunha, 2017a: 18-22). If we also consider the period of dictatorship, we note that media agencies owned by the Catholic Church are numerous, as well as ecclesiastics with great power in the management of public information (Rego et al., 1963). We point out that in the re-foundation of the communication sciences in Portugal from the 1970s the faculty mobilized comes primarily from training fields such as Philosophy, Linguistics and History, in which the influence from French academy was felt until the mid-1980s. The arrival of professor Nelson Traquina, of Portuguese origin and educated in the United States, to the Universidade Nova de Lisboa in the 1980s, makes the paradigm in communication and journalism studies shift to Anglo-Saxon, North American and English schools (Cunha; Cabrera; Sousa, 2012).

Systematically, the history of media in Portugal can be divided into periods consisting of well-defined historical, political and social landmarks, as proposed by the following periodization:

<sup>3</sup> Paulo Serra (2017) analyzes the trajectory of the works by Adriano Duarte Rodrigues, Universidade Nova de Lisboa; Aníbal Augusto Alves, Universidade do Minho; José Paquete de Oliveira, Instituto Superior de Ciências do Trabalho e da Empresa, Instituto Universitário de Lisboa; Moisés de Lemos Martins, Universidade do Minho; António Carreto Fidalgo, Universidade da Beira Interior.

1st period, during the Estado Novo [New State] (despite the very peculiar characteristics of certain periods), characterized by the relation established between communication, advertising and content, daily and periodic press expansion, deployment of radio and television (1935–1974); 2nd period, comprises the Carnation Revolution and the initiatives for nationalization and State intervention in the media field (1974–1976); 3rd period, comprises the years of Democratic Normalization (Maxwell, 1999) that span the years from 1977 to 1989; 4th period, between 1990 and 1999, corresponds firstly to the reorganization of the media field around the private television operators and, secondly, to the competition for ratings between these and the State group. The 5th and last period, from 2000 to 2005, comprises a phase marked by market contraction, rationalization of resources and investment on new products. (Cunha, 2011: 13-14)

Thus, we observe, as mentioned, that the information flows were restricted until the mid-1970s, culminating in the equally late emergence of communication studies. For this reason, the field is considered still recent in Portugal (Ribeiro, 2016).

Accordingly, we observe that the struggle for recognition and affirmation of this *scientific field* (Bourdieu, 1983) is a reality, since, on the one hand, the very history of communication studies is a topic debated by few Portuguese authors (Ribeiro, 2016). On the other hand, the difficulty in finding autonomous spaces in Portuguese universities is a barrier that weakens the field, especially in terms of seeking financing. Examples of the symbolic struggles in the structured spaces of schools, where, in the terms of Bourdieu (1983), there are dominators and dominated, can be found by observing the position of communication studies in the universities. Normally, communication departments are integrated to the schools of social sciences and humanities, which is the case of Universidade Nova de Lisboa. In Coimbra, emblematic example, as also pointed out by Nelson Ribeiro (2016), communication is currently a section of the Department of Philosophy, Communication and Information, component of the vast Faculdade de Letras<sup>4</sup>.

According to Serra (2017: 134), also in the sense of Bourdieu, the initiative of building the *field of communication* involves resistance in relation to established and consolidated fields, in particular because it is a field that gathers different types of knowledge, with much trans and interdisciplinary content, thus being often defined by other fields as supposedly lacking specificity or scientific purity.

<sup>4</sup>The Faculty of Languages at Universidade de Coimbra (FLUC) has a total of four major departments, with programs in several areas, from Archaeology to History.

**COMMUNICATION STUDIES IN IBERO-AMERICA: THE ROLE OF SCIENTIFIC ASSOCIATIONS**

Considering their proposals, the creation of scientific associations can be seen as an important strategy for strengthening the field of communication sciences in the Lusophone and Ibero-American space. They may represent a progress in terms of internationalization/reaffirmation of local knowledge (Romancini, 2017), promotion of debate and provision of greater awareness between communities of researchers (Marcos; Moreno, 2003; Melo, 2009). For the purpose of this article (which discusses the absence, in Portugal, of an important Latin American author), it is interesting to mention the purposes of the following organizations: Sopcom (Portuguese Association of Communication Sciences), Lusocom (Lusophone Federation of Communication Sciences), Assibercom (Ibero-American Association of Communication) and Confibercom (Ibero-American Confederation of Scientific and Academic Associations of Communication). Comparatively, all have similar goals, according to their geographical sphere of activity, with the aim, for example, to:

- Promote research in the fields of Communication Sciences (Sopcom);
- Foster the development of transnational research on communication (Assibercom);
- Develop and/or promote transnational research projects in the various areas of communication (Assibercom);
- Increase the international recognition of the Lusophone community (Brazil, Portugal, Palop – Portuguese-speaking African countries and other Lusophone countries and communities) (Lusocom);
- Establish coordinations with similar associations of related areas, representing the Ibero-American space in the world confederations of humanities or applied social sciences (Confibercom).

It is interesting to note that all organizations mentioned, except the most recent, Confibercom (2009), were created in the same year: 1998. At this time, in celebration of their 20-year anniversary, it is likely that these associations are assessing their contributions and advances regarding the field of communication sciences.

In terms of advances, it is certain that the scientific events organized by these agencies and their collective publications are essential to the field, especially considering that much of this volume of knowledge produced is available for consultation in online libraries. However, although there is such democratization of knowledge, it is still observed

a growing fragmentation and uneven distribution of resources when it comes to teaching, learning and cultural criticism. This dichotomy is valid at various levels – at the local and regional level, at the national and transnational level, but also between regions and continents – which means that not all social scientists have access to the same scientific and methodological resources and apparatus. (Cunha, 2013: 153)

These are still unresolved barriers that negatively impact the development of collective international projects and the consequent possibility of using a shared Latin-American bibliography, and reinforce the idea that “the existence of a common institutional space is not necessarily related with the existence of a shared cognitive space, nor of a collective research agenda” (Romancini, 2017: 4).

On the other hand, the difficulties in carrying out scientific researches, either collective or not, are intensified as we are not native speakers of the current lingua franca, as we do not dominate the editorial bodies of the leading Anglo-Saxon journals and, perhaps a consequence of these last two points, we publish articles sparsely in journals indexed to the major databases that dominate the global market (Cunha, 2013; Serra, 2016).

Thus, the communication research field in countries of Portuguese and Castilian language attempt the difficult balance between following the strict processes of globalization of knowledge, following the standards imposed by the Anglo-Saxon scientific market, in attempt to internationalize the knowledge produced by the South and, at the same time, joining forces with the countries that share the same language and, to a large extent, have a common repertoire of historical and cultural memories. Particularly in Portugal the same phenomenon seems to occur – researchers are divided between focusing on Europe or on the countries that compose the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP). The problematization of the second point, related to the first, interests us particularly. What initiatives have been implemented to foster dialogue between the Lusophone and Ibero-American scientific production in order to increase the overall impact of these countries in relation to dominant *North*?

### **MARTÍN-BARBERO IN THE TEXTS OF LUSOPHONE AND LATIN AMERICAN EVENTS**

In analyzing the citations in articles published in the proceedings/annals of these conferences, we observed that still persists the absence of dialogue

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between the countries that form the Lusophone and Ibero-American scientific community. Serra (2016) confirms this phenomenon when evaluating the degree of mutual knowledge/ignorance of researchers through the analysis of communication sciences journals in three countries (Portugal, Brazil and Spain). The results of his research indicate two trends: authors often cite authors from the same country and language, that is, there is little crossover between countries; citations of Anglo-Saxon authors are the most prevalent. Even when there is a proximity generated by developing common projects, for example, in the area of television fiction (Cunha, Castilho; Guedes, 2017) and of communication and politics (Cunha, 2017b), we observe that most common authors cited by both nationalities are English-speaking or French-speaking authors, although there are authors of the two nationalities participating in the text produced.

Accordingly, Cicilia Peruzzo found that the scientific production of the journals of the area is dispersed (also including the issues of financing, databases and international circulation), there is little consumption of texts from scientific journals and “foreign literature still seems to be the most sought after, mainly those wrote by Americans and Europeans, taking as example the papers presented at congresses. Someone said in one of the forums: “We produce more and more, but cite ourselves less.” (2017: 221).

In the first phase of analysis of proceedings/annals organized by the above-mentioned associations, we observe the presence/absence of authors through a list of founders of the Latin American thought, including Martín-Barbero, mentioned by Omar Rincón<sup>5</sup> in the opening conference of the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) congress, held in Cartagena das Índias, Colombia, in 2017.

In addition to confirming the previous trends, Table 1 shows the space occupied by Latin American authors in nearly 2,000 papers published in proceedings/annals of Lusophone and Ibero-American events of the last 15 years. Jesús Martín-Barbero and Néstor García Canclini are the most cited authors, the first being the most prevalent, as expected. Anyway, the 212 articles that referred at least once to Martín-Barbero represent about 10% of this sample (Table 1), showing relative absence of the founders of Latin American thought in the scientific knowledge produced by their fellow citizens in the current context. It is observed that this trend is more evident in the congresses held by Sopcom and Lusocom, that is, events hosted mostly in Portugal. The same occurs in the texts published in the International Annual of Lusophone Communication.

<sup>5</sup>The opening speech of the IAMCR congress, “Bastard mutations of communication,” is available for consultation at: <<https://goo.gl/6HxqZi>> (access on: Mar. 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018), and also published in this issue of MATRIZES.

Latin American authors	Ibercom	Con5ber-com	Lusocom (Annual)	Lusocom (Proceedings)	Sopcom	Total
Jesús Martín-Barbero	112	32	10	29	29	212
Néstor García Canclini	58	21	9	20	14	122
Paulo Freire	35	11	4	19	9	78
Maria Immacolata Vassallo de Lopes	44	11	6	6	10	77
Guillermo Orozco	24	5	4	3	6	42
Arlindo Machado	14	4	2	–	7	27
Ismar de Oliveira Soares	11	7	–	4	3	25
Renato Ortiz	4	4	5	6	4	23
Eliseo Verón	9	5	–	–	4	18
Mario Kaplún	8	5	–	1	2	16
Luis Ramiro Beltrán	4	–	2	3	3	12
Rossana Reguillo	7	1	–	–	1	9
Valerio Fuenzalida	2	2	1	2	–	7
Rosa María Alfaro	3	1	–	2	–	6
Aníbal Ford	–	–	–	1	2	3
Antonio Pasquali	–	–	1	1	–	2
María Cristina Mata	2	–	–	–	–	2
Carlos Monsiváis	–	1	–	1	–	2

TABLE 1 – Number of articles that cite the founders of the Latin American thought

Source: Data and preparation by the authors

By analyzing the nationality of the authors of articles that used Martín-Barbero as one of their references (Table 2), we see a much higher amount (182) of Brazilians that cite him in all congresses observed, highlighting his presence in the articles of Ibercom. The Portuguese wrote only six articles with mention of this theorist, representing 0.3% of the sample. Thus, unlike the Portuguese, the Brazilians are closer to the Latin American thought in the texts analyzed.

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In addition, although there is an increasing flow of Brazilians having higher education and postgraduate training in Portugal (Oliveira et al., 2015), there are no citations of Brazilian authors and of Martín-Barbero in articles of Brazilian authors enrolled in Portuguese institutions. Moreover, there are no data on the number of Portuguese graduate students in Brazilian and Latin American universities. This finding indicates, on the one hand, to the need to deepen the exchange of students and professors in Latin American space (Oliveira; Baldi, 2017), on the other hand, it suggests that the movement of attraction of researchers occurs preferentially towards Iberia, where access to dominant research and scientific repertoire, namely Anglo-Saxon, becomes closer.

Nationality of the authors of the articles	Ibercom	Con5ber-com	Lusocom (Annual)	Lusocom (Proceedings)	Sopcom	Total
Brazilians from Brazilian institution	94	29	9	28	20	182
Brazilians from Portuguese institution	–	–	–	–	–	–
Brazilians from other CPLP/Ibero-American institutions	1	–	–	1	–	2
Portugueses from Portuguese institution	2	1	–	–	3	6
Portugueses from Brazilian institution	–	–	–	–	–	–
Other Ibero-American countries	15	2	1	–	6	24
Other countries	–	–	–	–	–	–
<b>Total</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>212</b>

TABLE 2 – Nationality of the authors in the articles that cite Martín-Barbero

Source: Data and preparation by the authors

### ABSENCES AND PRESENCES OF MARTÍN-BARBERO IN PORTUGAL

One of the reasons pointed out in the interviews for the absence of references to Martín-Barbero in the texts of the Portuguese researchers is the ignorance of the Latin American studies in communication. This ignorance is reflected in the official bibliographies of programs of disciplines taught in higher education institutions in Portugal, where there are rare mentions of Brazilian and Latin American authors. In addition to the ignorance of Brazilian and Latin American studies and researchers, we highlight the difficulty of having physical access to classical works with this origin combined with a certain retraction of Portuguese

students with regard to reading works in Brazilian Portuguese and in Spanish. In addition to these elements, verified empirically, we add the evaluation policy of graduate courses that favor the internationalization of the bibliography used, understanding that it should include references to Anglo-Saxon bibliographic repertoire. We highlight that the stay and the development of master's and doctoral theses of Brazilian students in Portugal have allowed the crossing of bibliographies and authors by these students, since, in order to obtain recognition of their graduate degrees in the institutions in Brazil, they need to include in their academic work references that can be identified by the judges of those institutions.

For example, the opinions of professors and researchers, such as Cláudia Álvares<sup>6</sup>, Paulo Serra<sup>7</sup> and Rita Figueiras<sup>8</sup>, are instructive when they recognize that they do not know Portuguese researchers whose work was somehow influenced by the work of Jesús Martín-Barbero, particularly *De los medios a las mediaciones*. Those using Martín-Barbero as a reference are isolated cases, as in the book of Manuel Pinto et al. (2011), on education for the media in Portugal, in which the importance of social mediations indicated by Martín-Barbero<sup>9</sup> is an idea used to oppose the instrumentalist view of information and communication technologies (ICT).

In general, Serra considers that the influence of Martín-Barbero was minimal or null in the affirmation and development of the field of research in communication sciences in Portugal. According to him, although the “founders of the field”<sup>10</sup> (Sierra, 2017) may have read and discussed the work of Martín-Barbero, none of them shows influence from this author in their lines of research.

Another point highlighted concerns the fact that the field of communication sciences in Portugal was formed based on French tradition and, more recently, on Anglo-Saxon tradition, in which the thought of Martín-Barbero has less significance<sup>11</sup>. The dialogue between the thought of Martín-Barbero and these theoretical matrices is at times seen as inadequate, as illustrated by Cláudia Álvarez. Despite having used Martín-Barbero as one of his bibliographic references, in text sent to a scientific journal, Álvarez removed the reference at a later time based on the argumentation of the reviewers: Martín-Barbero did not fit fluidly in the text, because his thought deviated from the main “guiding line” of the work.

It is in this sense that Ciro Marcondes Filho indicates that certain theoretical impasses were not properly problematized by Jesús Martín-Barbero, Néstor García Canclini and Guillermo Orozco Gómez, main exponents of Latin American studies in communication.

<sup>6</sup> President of the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA) between 2012–2016 and Professor at the Universidade Lusófona de Humanidades e Tecnologias.

<sup>7</sup> President of Sopcom and of the Faculdade de Artes e Letras at the Universidade Beira Interior (Portugal).

<sup>8</sup> Professor at the Faculdade de Ciências Humanas da Universidade Católica Portuguesa (UCP), in the field of communication. Develops works whose research line is dialogues with Martín-Barbero (Figueiras, 2017).

<sup>9</sup> Martín-Barbero (2002).

<sup>10</sup> In particular: Adriano Duarte Rodrigues, Aníbal Alves, Moisés de Lemos Martins, José Paquete de Oliveira and António Fidalgo.

<sup>11</sup> Also according to data from the bibliometric study conducted by Abadal and Vidal (2017: 50).

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The Latin American communication theory is a lonely island, which seeks with its own – and often scarce – theoretical resources to deal with the complexity of a communicational process at a time of radical changes [...]. Maybe because of that it produces little echo in the United States and Europe. (Marcondes Filho, 2008: 69)

Another issue pointed out concerns the ideological characteristics taken by Latin American studies, according to Marcondes, of inextricably political character, perfectly suited to those who believe in communication as an instrument of social and political change through culture. This observation points to a deeper discussion about the paradigm of dominant science of Western, colonial and patriarchal character (Grosfoguel, 2013), and another paradigm centered on the possibility of a post-colonial scientific approach, in which the thought of Martín-Barbero is introduced in a disruptive and autonomous manner in relation to the models established by the *North*.

In fact, Martín-Barbero's proposal is a perspective centered on the analysis of the communication phenomena through the trinomial communication-culture-politics (Lopes, 2014). Martín-Barbero thought the *mediations* as a “‘place’ from where it is possible to understand the interaction between the space of production and the space of reception” (Martín-Barbero apud Lopes, 2014: 68), therefore:

This contribution can be seen as an attempt to overcome fragmented and simplified theoretical approaches by positioning the mediations as an integrated theoretical perspective of production, product and audience in communication studies. Then, communication comes to be seen as a privileged domain for the production of meaning of life. (Lopes, 2014: 66)

The contribution of the theoretical perspective of the *mediations* of Martín-Barbero became fundamental for the Latin American studies on reception (Ibid.). In Brazil, we can even say that the tradition of studies on reception is founded on the thought of Martín-Barbero: “Today the theoretical perspective of mediations and hybridization has a central presence in the research on reception in Latin America” (Ibid.: 67).

It is through studies on reception, especially of the telenovela, that Martín-Barbero's thought emerges in researches in Portugal. It occurs sporadically and fundamentally in researches conducted by Portuguese researchers who experienced a period of study in Brazil (and their students) or by Brazilians who conducted studies in Portuguese institutions.

Accordingly, this is favored by the fact that the flows of the Lusophone media system are fundamentally marked by the circulation of content between the countries, with emphasis on the penetration of the Brazilian cultural industry, especially the Brazilian popular music (MPB) and television fiction (mainly telenovelas of Rede Globo). Especially after the expansion of the Portuguese media market, as “with the end of dictatorships, there is the beginning of the democratization of political systems and the legislative restructuring of the media system” and “Brazil began to export content: music and fiction products. The publics became massive and more demanding” (Cunha, 2017a: 37).

The study of these important media, cultural and popular phenomena, especially the problematizations concerning the telenovela (Brazilian/Portuguese) in the Portuguese social contexts, which acquire analytical dimensions of gender, class and other aspects of the consumption of this product (Burnay, 2005; Tranquilin, 2007; Santana, 2010), is frequently conducted based on the concepts of Martín-Barbero. Thus, “the Latin American theoretical inspiration was felt since the beginning of the studies on the telenovela, either on the production or on the reception” (Cunha, 2010: 111).

### **(IM)POSSIBILITIES OF DIALOGUE: FROM MEDIA FLOWS TO ACADEMIC FLOWS BETWEEN BRAZIL AND PORTUGAL**

As mentioned previously, from the 1950s the cultural and artistic flows between Portugal and Brazil continued to intensify, following the economic and political relations, migrations and the technological development of the communication media. Regardless of the different conception of media and political systems, the exchanges of multiple natures and the migrations continued to intensify between the two countries. These trans-Atlantic movements involved, and involve, popular music, the tours of theater companies, shows of humorists, editing of books, movies and documentaries festivals, the exhibition in art galleries of artists, authors and composers of both countries. From the 1970s, this exchange comes to include advertising and television products, among which the telenovela of Rede Globo, which acquires great protagonism in the Portuguese society and in the Lusophone space, for more than twenty years.

In Portugal and in the Portuguese-speaking world the influence of Brazil's culture and language, which according to many Portuguese intellectuals meant a *revenge* of the colonized against the colonizer, originated resistance and the emergence of colonial prejudice, in different forms. Portugal's accession to the European Union (EU) in 1986, and the need for convergence with the richer and more developed countries in the group, brought the Portuguese researchers

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closer to the social sciences and humanities – including the communication sciences – of Anglo-Saxon academic canons, and simultaneously set them apart from most of their Brazilian academic partners.

We determined three objective reasons mirrored in the periodic evaluations carried out both in the Bachelor, Master's and Doctoral degree programs and in the research centers, and also in the applications for projects supported by the research support institution in Portugal (Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, FCT). In these evaluations that dictate the quality of teaching and research in the area, the internationalization criteria favor: 1) relations with Northern Europe, considered *more advanced*; 2) use of updated international bibliography (namely in English); and 3) proposals that fit in methodologies consolidated in previous international projects.

In this context, the specificities of small countries, such as Portugal, should be integrated in the analytic frameworks, surveys and questionnaires set by countries of the North, in order to make comparable phenomena considered common. Although the European research, teaching and evaluation agencies consist of members from all countries, actually there is a hierarchy, which we would call colonial and linguistic, which emerges in this participation. Perhaps for this reason many Portuguese researchers find interest in partnerships with Brazil, in which they often attribute to themselves the status of *mediators* between European and Brazilian colleagues, replicating a certain, and often unconscious, colonial relationship.

We note, based on the data collected and on the previously referenced events, the existence of an intense flow of academic, scientific and interpersonal contacts between Portugal and Brazil and, with lower intensity, although frequent, between Portugal, Spain and the set of countries of Latin America. However, this coexistence has not involved, to date, a sharing of knowledge in the scientific area and much less mutual recognition of researchers.

How to understand and justify a close relationship of academic flows, at the personal level, and an almost absolute disconnection at the level of interpenetration of research? Next, we will attempt to advance with some explanations that necessarily should consider the globalized world and the economic and political climate in which the practice of science is situated.

In recent years, the controversy around the *ways of doing research* in social sciences and consequently in studies on media and communication has been growing. The discussion on *how to do research* in social sciences has primarily involved challenges regarding the crystallization of designs and the use of consolidated procedures, which tend to reflect the geo-economics of hegemonic globalization. The criticism focuses on many aspects, such as the hierarchization of

researched objects, the valuation of *research formats* and canons to the detriment of the contents of the *discovery*, the structure of mobilized citations, namely of authors that acquired a consensual view from the Anglo-Saxon research, in order to support statements and findings. The criticism highlights, equally, the primacy of form over content, of the *authority of citations* over originality of thought, of reproduction over innovation.

This criticism stems from the tendency for theoretical and methodological crystallization and hierarchization, in which seems to be patent an internalized scale of approaches and of legitimation that depend directly on factors such as geographical and linguistic origin of the authors, as well as on the accesses provided. This procedure has become generalized and is today present in the social sciences in general, but also in media and communication studies, in which prevail the hierarchization and the legitimation of research according not to the results achieved, but especially to compliance with consolidated research designs and formats, as well as with well-established theoretical and methodological affiliations.

As observed by Janine Ribeiro (2003: 146), there is a tendency towards creating franchisings of renowned authors in the countries of the South, in a clear relationship of subalternity, since the national researcher generally does not assume such prominent position abroad, but this practice continues to be valued in the academy in Brazil, as is the case in Portugal.

In this research ecosystem we have seen the emergence of a *star system of authorities* in thematic areas, replicating the media *stardom* and mediatization strategies observed in other areas, such as politics or justice. As in other social activities and particularly in the cultural industries, this phenomenon has emerged among peers, at national level, but also among peers at the regional and global level. This phenomenon is not necessarily linear, as national *stars/authorities* unable to access the international scene are recognized, whereas international stars/authorities are not recognized within their national area of activity. What is common to the *stars/authorities* that compose the *star system* of research is the ability to impose, maintain and perpetuate, through national or international schools and research centers, the predominance of certain paradigms, confirming *old* observations performed by Thomas Kuhn (1998) in the 1960s on the structure of scientific revolutions. This small group is also characterized by the power it holds and the accesses it controls in universities, research funding centers, research centers, publishers, professional organizations, media, etc. In some ways, the dominant parameters of the globalized society are reproduced in the world of science and research, in the way that the distribution of power is processed in the areas of influence and also in the accesses to the

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communication media, in this case specialized journals and websites – preferably of Anglo-Saxon publishers – and national and international forums (associations, congresses, conferences, etc.).

### FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Although Martín-Barbero is the Latin American thinker that is most widely read and cited (or one of) in the field of communication in Brazil, in Portugal he appears as a reference that is virtually ignored by most of the intellectuals and by the graduate programs in this area.

This absence of Martín-Barbero in Portugal should be understood within the contexts presented (legacies of colonialist thought and post-colonialist positions, the establishment of proximity to the European Union, valuation of Anglo-Saxon matrix, thus configuring an anglo-internationalization), and it is not expected that, for the same reason, there is greater interpenetration in Portugal of Latin American authors, although the opposite – that is, Portuguese and European authors in Brazil – is, in the light of this globalization of science, more plausible. It is no coincidence that the works of Portuguese researchers that translated, commented or reorganized texts of Anglo-Saxon and French origin are among the most cited in Brazil.

This process contrasts with and follows the massification of higher education and research required from students, professors and researchers in higher education, both in Portugal and in Brazil. The massification of research, mainly in the social sciences, democratizes at the base the access to fundamental knowledge about the social dynamics, creates a critical mass able to question the *status quo* of a given society. This democratization enables the emergence of multiple currents of thought that, naturally, compete, cooperate, compare and mutually tend to exclude one another. *Doing science* has become an imperative in higher education, particularly in the social sciences, but the conditions for production of science are increasingly differentiated, depending on the geographical (in which continent, country, city, neighborhood researchers are located), linguistic (for example, Portuguese, Spanish or English), political and socioeconomic spaces. *Doing science* in social sciences is thus an undertaking, at first, highly conditioned by the circumstances outside the scientific activity.

The neoliberal drift of globalization over the last decade added new elements to the dynamics of knowledge and research in social sciences, such as the evaluation rankings for teaching and research institutions, for graduate programs and for the activity of professors and researchers, based on *production* measurement criteria reproduced from exact sciences, biomedical sciences,

health sciences, etc., in order to measure the productivity and, therefore, the productive applicability of the scientific activity. In light of this situation, the social sciences – regardless of accounting for a huge production and feeding thousands of journals (paper and online), websites, collections of books, proceedings of congresses, etc., mobilize thousands, or millions, of professors, researchers and students – behave poorly. The social sciences are not *productive* in the sense defined, and in process of consolidation, by public policies of neoliberal capitalism, despite involving substantial economic activity, such as teaching and publishing. However, the results of researches, in general, do not result in immediate increases in production, do not lead to patents or immediate applicability in product innovation or increase in exports. On the contrary, social sciences tend to create a huge critical mass, able to question the same public policies, contributing to *disqualify* the neoliberal productive agenda.

Media and communication studies that fall within the *umbrella* of the social sciences are among the few areas with potential to impact directly the productive activity and change, from the ground, behaviors and *habitus* of companies, institutions and people.

To date, the media and communication studies in Portugal continue to replicate the conducts of its wider regional area by inaugurating and perpetuating branches of studies from the *North* in order to adulate the *academic celebrities* of our time. In this context, there is little to expect in terms of contribution to critical advances in the field, considering that such *authorities* are unaware of the local issues and the particularities of countries that have cultural and historical roots that are closer to other contexts, such as the Latin-American context.

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