

## **The Invisibility of Latin American Scholarship in European Media and Communication Studies: Challenges and Opportunities of De-Westernization and Academic Cosmopolitanism**

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In this article, we critically revisit previous attempts to de-Westernize media and communication studies in Europe. Based on a review of the most reputational Europe-based journals and European academic conferences on our subject from 2010 to 2016, we show how European media and communication studies nurture a scholarly practice of talking about Latin American contexts rather than including voices from within the continent. We establish a historical perspective on the current situation by showcasing emblematic cases of past links between European and Latin American scholarship and discuss the invisibility of Latin American scholarship in the context of the de-Westernizing media and communication studies approach. Our analysis shows that a critical implementation of de-Westernization requires more geographically diverse editorial boards, greater international cooperation, and comparative accounts to capture diversity in regional contexts.

*Keywords: de-Westernization, academic cosmopolitanism, postcolonialism, European media and communication studies, Latin American media and communication studies*

The de-Westernization of media and communication studies has been addressed repeatedly for almost two decades. The core argument entails the problems of cultural centrism, a lack of plurality, and the exclusion of scholarly work from non-Western countries in media and communication studies. In this article, we critically revisit and analyze the core of the argument for the de-Westernization of media and communication studies by discussing the case of Latin American scholarship in European media and communication studies.

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The need for a more democratic and open approach toward scholarly exchange across continents has been underscored in the past by repeated calls to de-Westernize media and communication studies (Curran & Park, 2000; Lee, 2015; Thussu, 2009) and, more recently, for academic cosmopolitanism (Beck, 2006; Ganter, 2017; Livingstone, 2007; Waisbord, 2015; Waisbord & Mellado, 2014). These have been accompanied by calls to demonopolize intellectual discussions in favor of more just and diverse academic accounts and more adequate forms of theorization (Downing, 1996; Hallin & Mancini, 2012a, 2012b). In this article, we describe the position of current Latin American scholarship within European media and communication studies and analyze this example (Flyvbjerg, 2001, 2006) to expose the shortcomings in the de-Westernizing communication studies discourse.

Our analysis is based on locating Latin American scholarship within influential scholarly platforms in Europe. We conducted a content analysis of articles published in the seven most cited European journals and of papers presented at European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA) conferences between 2010 and 2016. Additionally, we communicated our findings to the editors in chief of the seven studied journals to further contextualize our findings and ask them for their assessments based on their expertise and direct involvement in the publishing process. Furthermore, through a literature review, we identified “emblematic cases” (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p. 78) of European scholarly brokers of earlier years between Europe and Latin America. Emblematic cases are examples critical to explaining a studied phenomenon and are therefore not expected to be “average” but rather informative and illustrative (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Based on the emblematic cases, we show that, while Latin American scholars had more influence over European media and communication studies during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, this tradition has broken in recent years. We refer to the few more recent examples of scholarly brokers identified through an analysis of articles published in the highest ranked European journals (HREJs) and papers presented at the ECREA conferences. Overall, our data reveal a European scholarly culture that limits access to articles drawing from Latin American intellectual traditions and lacks analyses based on data from within this regional context. Our data paint a picture of a European scholarly practice within which, despite the many attempts to de-Westernize media and communication studies, it is still more common to talk about Latin American contexts than to integrate work from within this regional context into intellectual realities. This practice of talking about other world regions rather than engaging in a scholarly dialogue is one of the main points of critique to which the scholarly tradition of de-Westernization refers (Curran & Park, 2000; Hall, 1992a; Waisbord, 2016). In this article, we show how attempts to open up media and communication studies have failed, and we analyze how the invisibility of scholarly diversity reveals the postcolonial practices that have shaped European media and communication as a field of study up to today. This article is to be read as a forward-looking critique of European media and communication studies proposed by two European media and communication studies scholars. The final section discusses the results in light of opportunities for academic cosmopolitanism to create cooperation and comparative studies with the aim of pluralizing European media and communication studies.

### **European Media and Communication Studies Between Postcolonialism, De-Westernization, and Cosmopolitanism**

As transnational currents have been on the rise in media and communication studies, so, too, have discussions concerning how to make media and communication studies an international but inclusive and integrative field (Boczkowski & Siles, 2014; Livingstone, 2007; Mansell, 2007; Wahl-Jorgensen & Hanitzsch,

2008; Waisbord, 2015). Academia as a field is defined by its national and international professional associations with their flagship journals, highly Westernized universities (de Sousa Santos, 2016), and a dualization of labor markets into “insiders and outsiders” with highly restrictive access (Alfonso, 2013). Those structures compose a system that feeds and responds to logics of the global knowledge economy in which subaltern epistemic locations are systematically silenced (de Sousa Santos, 2016). Media and communication scholars have been aware of the powerful influence of Anglo-Saxon academic contributions in both founding and protecting structural and substantial traditions in our field. The overarching success and structural control exercised by few geographically concentrated actors is the starting point for the criticisms the de-Westernization of media and communication studies stream articulates.

One of the main criticisms of the de-Westernization of media and communication studies is the scholarly reproduction of the Western idea when studying and talking about non-Western countries (Curran & Park, 2000; Lee, 2015). However, the discourse on the de-Westernization of media and communication studies has, itself, been shaped according to the initiative of European and North American scholars (Curran & Park, 2000) and, more recently, pronounced accounts from Asian scholars (Lee, 2015; Miike, 2006; Wang, 2011). Within this context, the contributions of scholars from Latin American and African academic affiliations are far less prevalent.

Calls for the de-Westernization of media and communication studies have been raised since the early 2000s (see, e.g., Curran & Park, 2000). Scholarship has been transformed and shaped through new technologies, and everyday scholarly life is enriched through the newfound ease of engaging in physical and, thus, intellectual connections (Waisbord & Mellado, 2014). Despite these increased opportunities for exchange and cooperation, however, cultural centrality remains the norm in European media and communication studies. Intellectual currents used in the de-Westernizing discourse reference literature from postcolonialism, translation, and cosmopolitanism (Lee, 2015; Rajagopal, 2011; Waisbord, 2016; Waisbord & Mellado, 2014) to explain the challenges linked to the de-Westernization of media and communication studies. In the following, we examine the main intellectual currents from which the advocates of the de-Westernization discourse draw. We then show how the arguments deployed in each intellectual current reflect tensions between scholarly realities and the aim to de-Westernize media and communication studies.

As a theoretical framework, postcolonial studies are located within cultural studies and characterized by its emancipatory propositions (Hall, 1992a, 1992b). As such, postcolonial theory not only describes drawbacks but also aims to deconstruct the reasons for marginalization, inequality, and the evolution of a sentiment of otherness, ultimately seeking to propose ways to improve. As Shome and Hegde (2002) summarize, postcolonial studies confront institutionalized knowledge and aim to trigger not only a more democratic rereading of our own scholarly realities but also a greater diversity of perspectives in media and communication studies (Downing, Mohammadi, & Sreberny, 1996; Hall, 1992a, 1992b; Thussu, 2009).

As a school of thought, postcolonialism derives, like many other theoretical streams, from an interdisciplinary background. Such thinkers as Edward Said (1978, 1993), Dipesh Chakrabarty (2000), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1987, 1999), and Jacques Derrida (1978) have described the representation of the other, of subalternity—and, therefore, the hybridization of cultures (Hall, 1992b; Kraidy, 2002; Morley, 2006) as the outcome or reflection of an ethnocentrism that had to be deconstructed to allow for

the emergence of new cultural understandings, identities, and practices. The term “postcolonial” has been addressed critically (e.g., Kavoori, 1998; Shome, 1998), and Stuart Hall (1996) underscores the ambiguity of “the postcolonial” by warning that we should avoid universal use of the term and instead point out the particularities of each context referred to as postcolonial. Spivak (1999) notes that postcolonial theory tends to neglect the ways in which the postcolonial leads implicitly to practices of neocolonialism. This argument concerning postcolonialism as a practice and theoretical perspective is also important when it comes to the relevance of postcolonialism in the shaping of media and communication studies.

The connection between postcolonial studies and media and communication studies is founded in the field’s transnationalism and the awareness that internationalization not only poses new challenges for research but also establishes new subjects for study. These perspectives include, for example, the examination of local and global dynamics and their historical development throughout the diverse subject areas of the field (see, e.g., Ashtana, 2013, for an account in media policy studies). These power dynamics are also reflected in the circulation of representations of the “other” (see, e.g., Ganter, 2017). At the center of media and communication studies is the understanding and explanation of the mechanisms that shape the reproduction of knowledge about representations of the other; therefore, postcolonial thought manifests in, for example, scholarly works on popular culture or cinema studies that examine representations of the other (Ponzanesi & Waller, 2012).

Postcolonial theories are used for more than explaining the situation of former colonies as they foster their own cultural identities, which involves “otherness” or distinctiveness from the previous colonizer (Nayar, 2016). As Adriaansen (1999) rightly notes, the postcolonial role of Latin America differs from those of such nations as India or some Caribbean countries. Marginality, or “otherness,” in the relationship between Latin American and European countries is more complex to explain; however, through an examination of media and communication scholarship, the different forms and dimensions through which postcolonialism manifests become clear. Broadly speaking, on a macro level, postcolonialism is related to the observation that some nations present themselves and are thought of as “more advanced” or developed—a phenomenon rooted in the historical battles around economic resources, political and territorial expansion, and social influence. On the micro level, the term is used, in the wider sense, to describe how different groups—ethnic, religious, geographic, or gender-related—are situated within society. Presumed and experienced inequalities play an important role in postcolonial considerations, and postcolonial thought examines what creates the imbalances that shape the state of most modern societies (Nayar, 2016).

Hybridity as an expression of converging identities has been strongly rooted in postcolonial thought and has been established by media and communication scholars as opposing the theory of cultural imperialism (Canclini, 1998; Hall, 1992b; Kraidy, 2002; Morley, 2006; Parameswaran, 1997). Hybridity manifests the element of resistance against the hegemony that frequently characterizes postcolonial theoretical thought (see, e.g., Hamelink, 1983; Thussu, 2009). As Marwan Kraidy (2002) notes, “Hybridity needs to be understood as a communicative practice constitutive of, and constituted by, socio-political and economic arrangements” (p. 317). Building from this understanding, the question of whether identities are national or converging also needs to be analyzed in the context of postcolonial practices, which have fostered disconnection rather than dialogue across academic cultures for some time. In this article, we show that a

consequence is that the status quo has become a European cosmos of published media and communication research remarkably disconnected from scholarly work originating in Latin American universities.

In the context of efforts to de-Westernize media and communication studies, scholars have more recently advocated for cosmopolitanism as an approach that fosters difference and exchange and can help solve problems of translatability. Cosmopolitanism pursues the end of provincialism and fosters a multiperspective analysis (Beck, 2006; Boczkowski & Siles, 2014; Waisbord, 2016). However, cosmopolitanism lacks a stronger advocacy across scholarly fields and concrete strategies to successfully break from the isolationism, internal development, and self-absorption that characterize Western media and communication scholarship (Lee, 2015). In this article, we discuss the tensions that have emerged over time in the de-Westernizing discourse by examining the invisibility of Latin American scholarship in Europe.

### **Historical Examples of Connecting Latin American and European Media and Communication Studies**

As described, our field does, to some extent, include and reflect postcolonial thought and analysis. Despite this reflective sensibility, the reality of our subject is also one in which postcolonial thinking may remain present currently, as suggested by the invisibility of Latin American scholarship in European media and communication studies. In the following paragraphs, based on our data corpus and our own observations as scholars in European media and communication studies, we identify criticisms that reveal postcolonial practices visible in our field. We contextualize the current situation by showcasing some emblematic examples identified through a literature review, conducted to identify scholars based in Europe who have connected Latin American and European scholarship in both the past and the present.

In this article, we question the gaps that remain in the flow across academic cultures and traditions. We ultimately explain these gaps through the European postcolonialist perspective on the construction of knowledge in communication studies. We focus our analysis on the European context because this is where we are originally trained and educated. We argue that postcolonial realities manifest in European scholarship and its disconnection with the Latin American sphere. Specifically, we show that one of the consequences is a lack of publications and conference presentations (co)authored by scholars affiliated with Latin American institutions—a clear indicator of academic connections between the two regions—within the seven HREJs during the analyzed time frame.

Given the long-standing international engagement of both academic communities, it may seem surprising that European media and communication studies is not a bigger platform for Latin American scholarship. Latin American communication scholarship has been institutionally represented in the international context by such associations as the Asociación Latinoamericana de Investigadores de la Comunicación (ALAIIC, Latin American Association of Communication Researchers), founded in 1978. As in Europe, in Latin America, there are differences among countries in terms of infrastructure, integration into international networks, and academic productivity (see, e.g., Waisbord, 2016). As our data show, works from scholars in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Mexico are considerably shaping what is perceived as Latin American scholarship in Europe.

At the same time, Latin American scholars are important representatives of intellectual traditions and research streams that have been evolving simultaneously with traditions in North America and Europe. These traditions have been analyzed and understood as dissimilar and as offering different perspectives on the subject area, such as the creation of new, more democratic perspectives in communications (see, e.g., Beltrán, 1976; Freire, 1969; Huesca & Dervin, 1994; Kaplún, 1985; Martín-Barbero, 1981; Segura, 2012). This participatory paradigm is one powerful example of how Latin American media and communication scholarship challenges and/or complements the dominant Western theoretical models of communication (Barranquero, 2011). Alternative perspectives can be particularly powerful at times when long-established and settled democratic models and understandings are being fragmented, and the role of communication systems in safeguarding democratic checks and balances is being critically reconsidered by scholars, practitioners, and citizens alike.

Regardless, only a few European media and communication scholars link their own work to Latin American scholarship. Collaborations with and active integrations of work from Latin American scholars can mainly be found in works from the late 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. For example, Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart worked together on the cultural imperialism thesis in their essay *Para leer al Pato Donald. Comunicación de masa y colonialism (How to Read Donald Duck. Mass communication and colonialism)*, first published in 1971 (Dorfman & Mattelart, 2001). More recently, Michéle and Armand Mattelart (2007) include Latin American scholars in their work *Historia de las teorías de la comunicación (History of Communication Theories)*, which juxtaposes the European, U.S. American, and Latin American research traditions and serves as a rare example of pinpointing and valuing theoretical developments across geographical settings.

Other European scholars, such as Jan Servaes (1999), have spread the participatory paradigm to the European community by establishing work-around theories of dependence, participative communication, and communication development. Jesus Martín-Barbero is a scholar who emigrated from Europe (Spain) to Colombia and has worked across Latin America. His work is both strongly influenced by Latin American scholars and critical of communication studies on the continent, contributing to the analysis of communication as a cultural practice (Martín-Barbero, 2001; Martín-Barbero & Herlinghaus, 2000; Martín-Barbero & Rey, 1999). His work has spread internationally, as Martín-Barbero has visited and taught at universities around the world.

Furthermore, European scholars have established good links with Latin American media and communication studies while working in European countries. Ramón Zallo facilitated exchange via his work as president of the Spanish section of the Unión Latina de Economía Política de la Información, la Comunicación y la Cultura (ULEPICC, Latin American Union of Political Economy of Information, Communication and Culture). Philipp Schlesinger wrote the introduction for the English translation of *Communication, Culture and Hegemony: From the Media to Mediations* (Martín-Barbero, 1993) and also serves on the ALAIC advisory board. Other European scholars who have brought Latin American scholarly work to Europe include Cees Hamelink and Thomas Tufte. Hamelink (2015) included the participatory approach in his book *Global Communication*, in which he also references Beltrán's (1976) work. Thomas Tufte publishes in Spanish, Portuguese, and English and represents Europe's communication and social change tradition. In *Communication for Social Change Anthology: Historical and Contemporary Readings*,

editors Alfonso Gumucio Dagron and Thomas Tufte (2006) bring together important works on communication, social change, and development from Latin American, European, and North American scholars. These are some emblematic examples of scholars who have linked European and Latin American media and communication scholarship in the past. In the following, we examine the extent to which these links have translated more recently into publications in top-ranked scholarly platforms in Europe.

### Revision of Reality: The Invisibility of Latin American Scholarship in European Media and Communication Studies

We conducted a content analysis of the contributions to (1) the seven HREJs in media and communication between 2010 and 2016 ( $n = 2,471$ ),<sup>2</sup> as identified by the 2015 *Scimago Journal and Country Report* (SJR) on communication (see Figure 1), and to (2) the conferences held by the ECREA, the main European conference in media and communication, between 2010 and 2016 ( $n = 3,784$ ).<sup>3</sup> These are the main academic sources informing European scholarship in our field between 2010 and 2016.

Title	Type	↓ SJR	H index	Total Docs. (2015)	Total Docs. (3years)	Total Refs.	Total Cites (3years)	Citable Docs. (3years)	Cites / Doc. (2years)	Ref. / Doc.
1 Journal of Communication	journal	3.327 Q1	82	68	194	2936	846	186	3.03	43.18
2 New Media and Society	journal	2.592 Q1	61	103	223	4860	871	214	3.60	47.18
3 Public Opinion Quarterly	journal	2.295 Q1	73	42	132	1847	259	126	1.39	43.98
4 Human Communication Research	journal	2.199 Q1	61	28	67	1623	205	66	2.73	57.96
5 Communication Education	journal	2.090 Q1	42	45	69	1422	166	68	2.26	31.60
6 Information Communication and Society	journal	2.009 Q1	36	114	243	4557	869	215	2.86	39.97
7 Journalism	journal	1.932 Q1	33	65	186	3044	328	181	1.52	46.83

**Figure 1. SJR 2015 listing for top journals in communication based in Western Europe.**

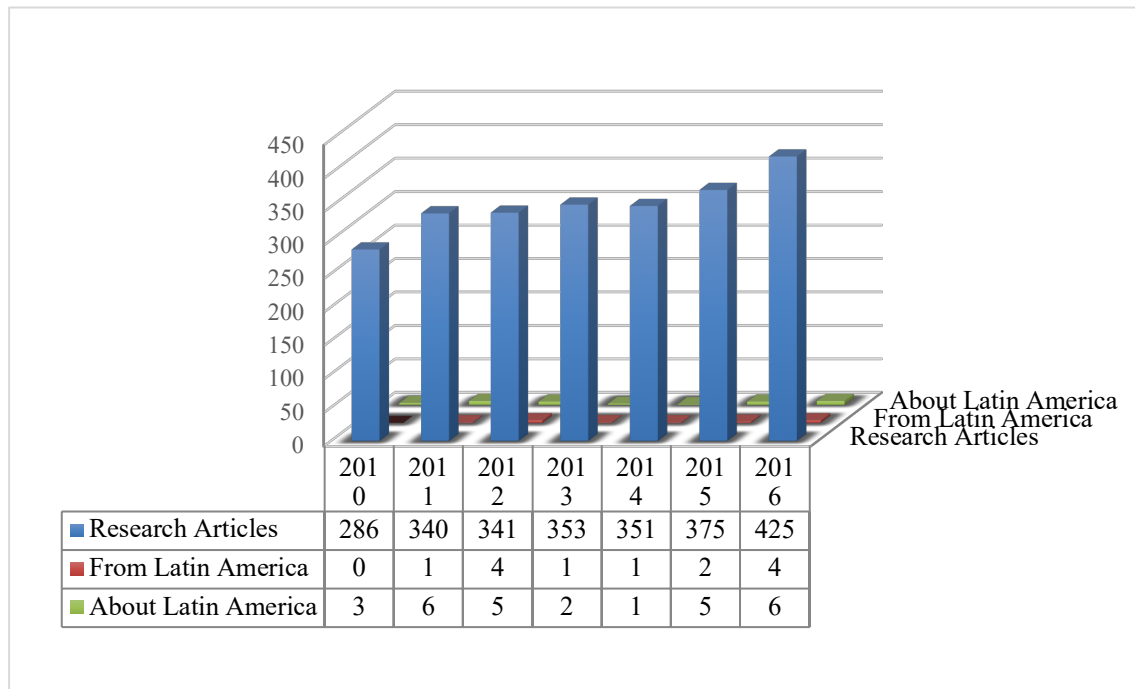
<sup>2</sup> We counted full published articles, but did not include editorial notes and book reviews.

<sup>3</sup> We counted proposals accepted, per the statistics provided by the conference organizers.

In the analysis, we look at the number of contributions from scholars at Latin American institutions and the number of contributions examining Latin American contexts over the years.

We code according to whether each contribution is a result of cooperation beyond the continent. We also include numbers on the geographical constitutions of editorial boards and citations. The analysis does not include the number of submissions and/or rejections of work coming from Latin American institutions, as we did not have access to these numbers. The aim is to achieve a better understanding of the visibility of Latin American scholarship in recent years in European media and communication studies platforms and to derive possible explanations from the presented figures.

Regarding Latin American contexts, looking at the data collected, we find that the ECREA conferences and the top seven journals in media and communication studies published in Europe have been minor platforms for presenting and publishing work from scholars working in Latin America and studying Latin America from academic bases elsewhere. Further, the data suggest that journals tend to publish work about Latin America more often than they include work published by Latin American scholars (see Figures 2, 3, 4 and 5).

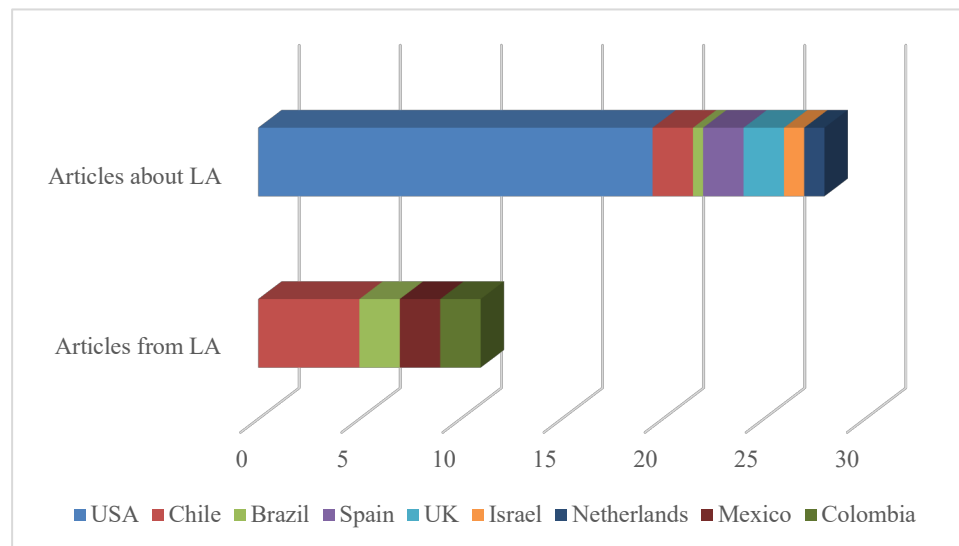


**Figure 2. Research articles published in the seven HREJs in media and communication studies (2010–16), with the portions about Latin America and from Latin American institutions in absolute numbers.**

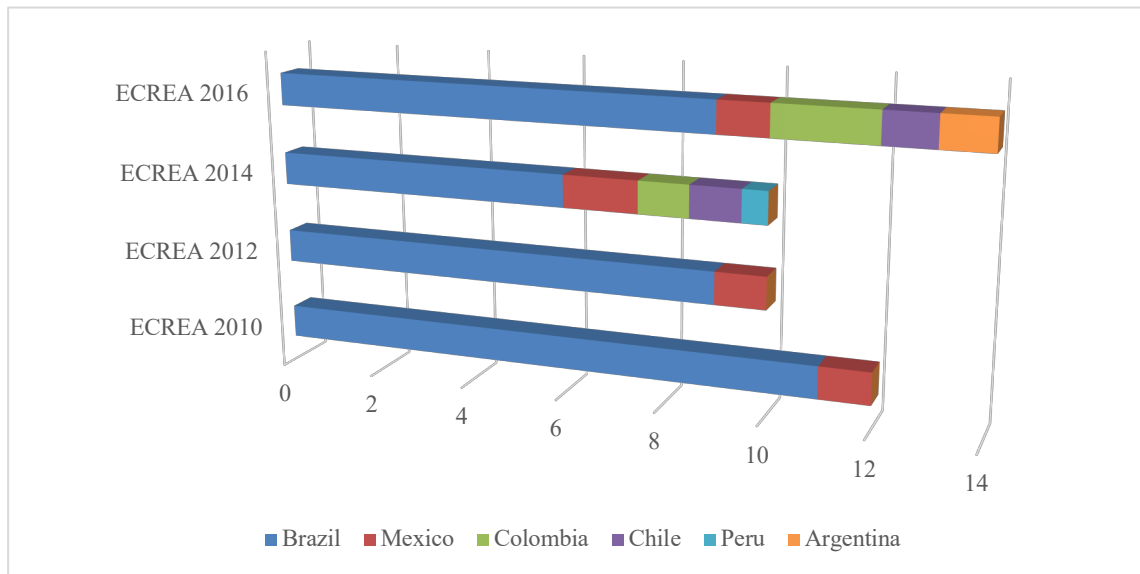


The analysis of the research articles ( $n = 2,471$ ) published in the seven top-ranked journals between 2010 and 2016 shows that only 0.53% come from scholars affiliated with Latin American institutions (see Figure 2). Of the 41 articles published about or from Latin America, 31.70% are by academics affiliated with institutions in Latin America, and 68.29% address Latin America. The numbers about the biannual ECEA conferences are a bit higher: 1.29% of all presenters came from Latin American institutions ( $n = 3,784$ ). Furthermore, 49 presentations were given about Latin America or by scholars affiliated with an institution on that continent, representing 1.29% of all presentations between 2010 and 2016. Of these, 38.77% were presented by scholars from Latin American institutions, and 61.23% were presented by scholars affiliated with institutions outside Latin America (see Figure 5). These statistics resemble the numbers of papers published in the top seven journals.

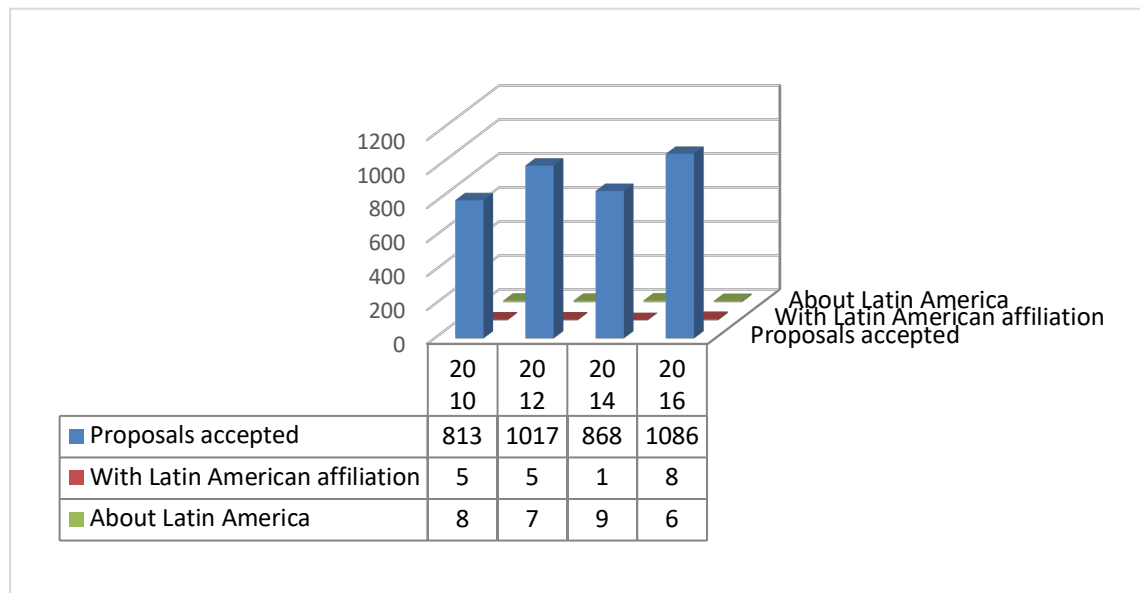
The intraregional imbalance becomes obvious when summarizing the numbers gathered for the ECREA conferences taking place between 2010 and 2016. Countries like Chile, Brazil, Mexico, and Colombia are far more represented than other Latin American countries in the seven top European academic journals (see Figure 3) and the ECREA (see Figure 4). Chile is the most represented country, with 45.46% of published authors based in Latin America working there; by comparison, 18.18% of authors work each in Brazil, Colombia, and Mexico. These percentages resemble those four countries represented in the top 20 of the Times Higher Education ("Latin American University Rankings," 2018) World University Ranking of the best departments in communication and media studies in Latin America. Scholars based in the U.S. account for 69.64% of the articles using data from Latin American, scholars based in Europe account for 17.85%, and scholars based in Latin American countries account for 8.93% (see Figure 3). The results show a culture of talking "about" rather than "with," indicating that European and U.S. scholars still tend to carry more privilege and weight in researching, speaking, and talking about Latin America than do scholars from the region.



**Figure 3. Distribution of countries/scholars based on articles from authors with institutional affiliations in Latin America and authors addressing Latin American issues published in the seven HREJs in media and communication (2010–16), in percentages.**

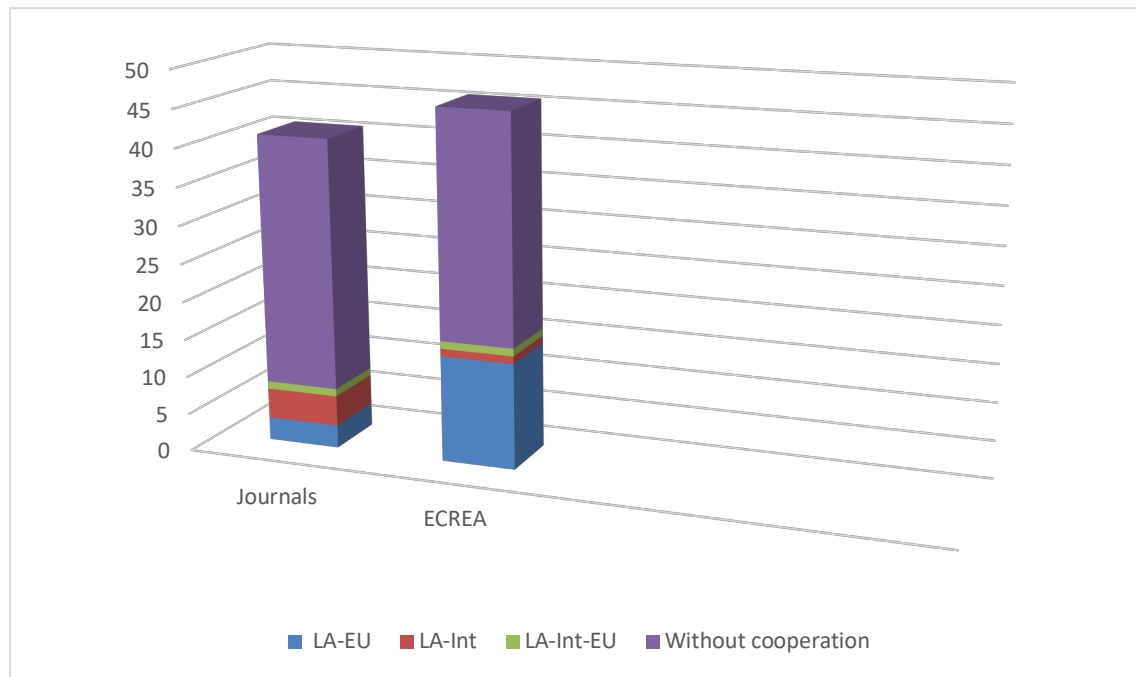


**Figure 4. ECREA conference contributions from scholars with Latin American affiliations, in absolute numbers per country (2010–16).**



**Figure 5. Paper presentations given at ECREA conferences (2010–16), with proportions about Latin America and presented by scholars from Latin American institutions in absolute numbers.**

Cooperation seems to play a minor role in works visible in the European context. The data show that eight articles (19.5%) of the 41 published in the top seven journals are products of cross-continental cooperation. Of these, two articles were the result of cooperation between Latin American and European countries: One was the result of cooperation between Latin American and the U.S., and one involved cooperation among three partners from three different continents. In the work presented at ECREA conferences, cooperation between authors seems more important. Of the presentations given from or about Latin America within the studied time frame, 32.65% involved cooperation (see Figure 6).



**Figure 6. Cooperation leading to ECREA presentations and journal articles published in the top seven ranked journals (2010–16) in relation to overall contributions about or from Latin America.**

Looking closer, the sample contains a few examples of fruitful cooperation between Latin American and European communication scholars. One such example is the Chilean journalism scholar Claudia Mellado, who has worked with several European scholars. Her article published in *Journalism* in 2012 was coauthored with María Luisa Humanes from La Universidad de Rey Juan Carlos in Spain. Beyond this contribution, and outside our sample, Mellado publishes her research results regionally and internationally from within the Latin American context and often in cooperation with scholars from Europe. This more cooperation-oriented approach is also at the foundation of a recent book project titled *Research traditions in dialogue: Communication studies in Latin America and Europe*. (Vicente-Mariño, Paulino, & Custodio, 2019), which emphasizes bringing together European and Latin American scholars for the first time within a single project to build an active dialogue about various research traditions and linked conceptual approaches (Paulino, Vicente, & Custodio, 2015). These two examples show that some recent projects have emphasized active cooperation and dialogue between Latin American and European

scholars. The question is, to what extent will such cooperation yield a visible, long-term dialogue accessible to everyone?

### **Challenges of De-Westernizing European Media and Communication Studies**

The results raise important questions about the reasons for (a) the invisibility of Latin American scholarship, (b) the tendency to talk about rather than with, and (c) the lack of cooperation. In the following, we highlight some important challenges related to the process of de-Westernizing European media and communication studies. The marginalized position of Latin American media and communication scholarship in Europe is part of a postcolonial reality of a discipline in which the research of a whole region is vastly underrepresented and more talked about than talked with. This indicates that we face major challenges in the process of de-Westernizing media and communication studies.

Language is certainly one of these challenges. Waisbord (2016) has explained academic geocentrism by outlining the problem of media and communication scholarship translatability in the context of an increasingly globalized academia. Knowledge without frontiers confronts language gaps and dogmatisms that foster misunderstanding and challenge exchanges across geographical areas. The two biggest media and communication communities by language are those of English (of course) and Spanish. As Waisbord (2016) points out, scholars are increasingly pressured to publish in English as its hegemony becomes accepted as inevitable. The development of English into the de facto ruling language described by Gordin (2015) in the context of science in his book *Scientific Babel* is similarly accountable for the lack of critical discussion and inclusion of Latin American scholarship in European media and communication studies. Journals like *Intercom*, *Communication & Society*, *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, and *Comunicar* accept and publish articles in Portuguese, Spanish, and English. This practice gives scholars some authority in deciding the possible reach of their work and simultaneously enables European readers who lack the requisite language skills to read work produced by Latin American scholars. *Comunicar* has been a first-tier journal since 2014, indicating the growing importance of the Spanish-speaking community in Europe.

The pressure to publish in English (Waisbord, 2016) is also visible in citation habits. Our data show that, once published in our examined journals, articles written by scholars affiliated with Latin American institutions gain visibility and are quoted. Our data corpus shows that works (co)authored by a scholar based in Latin America and published in one of the seven most quoted journals in the European context had been cited 1,305 times at the time of this writing. Of these citations, 4.14% came from the seven top-ranked journals from our sample. By comparison, articles written about Latin America-specific contexts but authored by scholars located outside Latin America were cited 1,269 times, and 5.44% of these citations came from the seven top-ranked journals from our sample. These results suggest that once scholars affiliated with Latin American institutions publish in the seven top-ranked journals, their works are well positioned to gain international visibility. However, colleagues from outside Latin America who study Latin American contexts seem slightly more frequently quoted in the seven top-ranked journals. Our data also show that, of the articles in our sample studying Latin American contexts, very few refer to academic works published in Spanish or Portuguese (0.97 references per publication). It is astonishing that this is also true for scholars working in Latin America (1.69 references per publication),

as these scholars could be assumed to have the access and skills necessary to refer to work published in Spanish or Portuguese. In their publications, Latin America-based scholars refer an average of 2.54 times to scholars affiliated with Latin American institutions, whereas scholars not based in Latin America refer to such scholars an average of 1.47 times per publication (see Table 1).

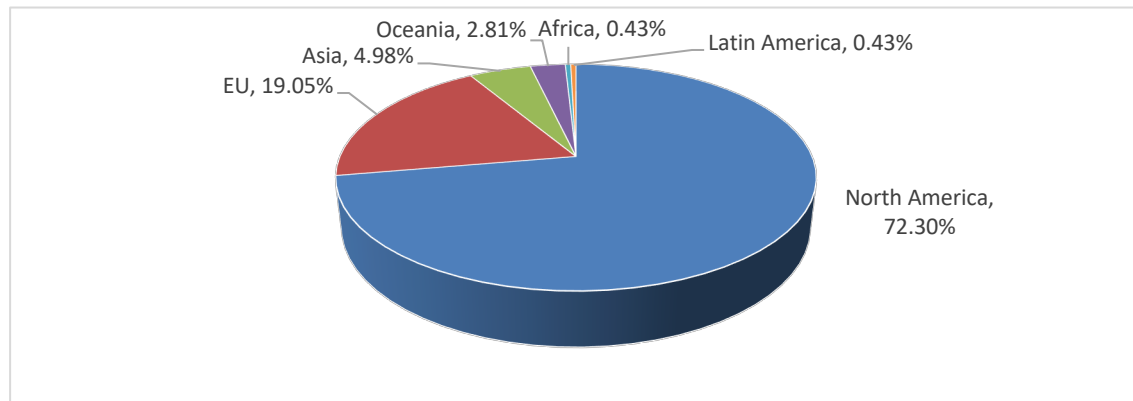
**Table 1. Citation Patterns for and of Published Articles in Absolute Numbers.**

	From Latin America	About Latin America
<i>n</i>	13	28
Number of citations	1,305	1,269
Numbers of citations in seven HREJs	54	69
References to literature in Spanish/Portuguese	22	27
References to work from scholars affiliated with Latin American institutions	33	41

Source: Analysis of the seven HREJs in media and communication studies ( $n = 2,471$ ) according to the SJR (2015) and citation figures retrieved from Research Gate and Google Scholar, using Harzing (2007).

Based on our data, we can therefore suggest that publishing Latin American scholarship in European scholarly platforms could be an important contribution to broader distribution of, and thus access to, this scholarship for the European media and communication community.

A second important challenge is the constitution of editorial boards. Editorial board members from universities outside Europe or the U.S. are rare, just as it is rare for the main English-language media and communication studies journals to include individuals from Latin American universities on their editorial boards. For the journals included in our analysis, across the seven editorial boards, only two of the 462 board members were affiliated with a Latin American university at the time of this writing. These data indicate that Latin American affiliations are underrepresented across editorial boards and that scholars based in Africa, Oceania, and Asia share this underrepresentation. What we find is an overwhelming domination of editorial board members based in North America (72.30%) and a comparatively very low representation of EU-based scholars (19.05%). This unbalanced situation might contribute to the invisibility of Latin American scholarship in the studied context (see Figure 7).



**Figure 7. Geographical distribution of editorial board members by affiliation (n = 462), in percentages.**

However, although our sample indicates a link between the geographical distribution of editorial boards and the geographical distribution of published articles, the journals that included members affiliated with Latin American institutions did not show significantly higher publication rates than those without any such board members (see Table 2). Still, based on our findings, we can speculate that the inclusion of more board members from Latin American institutions could lead, in the longer term, to more articles from Latin America gaining more citations in top-ranked journals (see Table 2). Given the overall low number of articles authored by scholars from Latin America detected in our sample, more research needs to be done to confirm our preliminary findings.

**Table 2. Citations in the Seven HREJs of Articles Published in the Seven HREJs With and Without Board Members (Yes/No) From Latin American Institutions, in Absolute Numbers.**

Articles from Latin America				Articles about Latin America		
	n (articles)	Citations	Mean	n (articles)	Citations	Mean
NO	7	22	3.14	22	47	2.14
YES	6	32	5.33	6	22	3.67

Source: Analysis of the seven HREJ in media and communication studies ( $n = 2,471$ ) according to the SJR (2015). Citation figures retrieved from Research Gate and Google Scholar, using Harzing (2007).

However, we must also consider that the most important scholarly platforms for European scholars might simply not be as appealing to scholars from other continents. Therefore, a third challenge could be making publishing research on these platforms more appealing to Latin American scholars. As we had access only to the manuscripts published, we contacted the editors in chief of the journals in our sample and asked them whether they could accommodate us with submission rates and potential explanations for the low number of articles published from and about Latin America. The editors who did answer our request stated that tracing the geographical metadata of a submission was difficult and time-consuming, and that numbers were not available. One editor specified that, in the case of their particular journal, geographical data were

no longer easily accessible following a change to the submission system (personal communication, June 28, 2018). Therefore, we did not have access to the submission rates for the journals included in our sample. More research is needed to investigate the possibility that Latin American scholars find the journals examined in this study unattractive for publishing their research. We see a recent development in which Latin American scholars actively approach journals that are important in the European context with ideas about special issues focusing on themes around Latin American scholarship and assuming region-specific foci (see, e.g., Boczkowski & Mitchelstein, 2018, in *Digital Journalism*; Enghel & Becerra, 2018, in *Communication Theory*). In line with our findings, we are hopeful that these contributions will trigger more active engagement with scholars working at Latin American institutions, thereby increasing their visibility in and cooperation with European media and communication scholarship.

It is, however, equally important that European scholars actively engage with the scholarship undertaken in Latin America. The invisibility of Latin American scholarship in the European media and communication studies literature reflects a general tendency to exclude scholarship stemming from outside Europe. Hallin and Mancini (2012b) have critiqued the general failure to include scholarship from certain regions and observed that such oversights are particularly striking when a piece of research focuses on a certain geographical context:

Too often we see scholars trying to write about the role of journalism in politics in a certain region of the world without any reference to the existing literatures on the nature of the state in that region, the nature of civil society, the development of political culture, or the pattern of economic development. (pp. 217–218)

This observation shows how the dismissal of an entire account of often very rigorous information and analysis also raises fundamental questions about the ability to understand contexts by drawing exclusively on secondary accounts from outside the region or country under study. However, besides this epistemological critique of a systematic exclusion of original literature, there is also the deeper issue of dismissing or not accounting for analytical and theoretical perspectives stemming from within the studied context. Our findings speak directly to this concern as they unpack the repeated failure of opening up media and communication studies. We observe a practice of reproducing known structures and academic accounts. This practice favors a monoculture of defining theoretical soundness, methodological rigor, and “good scholarship.” Consequently, our field is coined by a tendency of reproducing islands of knowledge that exist at the expense of scholarly diversity, while rejecting the idea of knowledge being everywhere (de Sousa Santos, 2016).

### **Opportunities for Academic Cosmopolitanism in European Media and Communication Studies**

The question is whether we are in a state of transition toward academic cosmopolitanism or whether postcolonial realities will continue to shape our field. In accordance with the particular role that change assumes in academia and the resistance to different or new paradigms in scholarly work (Kuhn, 1970), this question seems appropriate to ask. The development of media and communication scholarship over the past 10 years reveals calls for greater cosmopolitanism (Beck, 2006; Ganter, 2017; Livingstone, 2007; Waisbord,

2015). These calls refer to either methodological or theoretical cosmopolitanism and can be subsumed into the stream of academic cosmopolitanism emerging from the current realities of academics. Academic cosmopolitanism can be explained as a positioning in research that seeks multiculturalism in academics' curricula and research interests, and rejects strong nationalisms. In this respect, academic cosmopolitanism is very much in line with what the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* ("Cosmopolitanism," 2013) describes as indicating "an attitude of open mindedness and impartiality" and refers to a researcher who "is fond of traveling, cherished a network of international contacts, or felt at home everywhere" (p. 5).

These characteristics of cosmopolitan researchers foster not only international careers but more importantly the pursuit of research projects that are, by nature, cosmopolitan. However, international networks and adaptability to different academic cultures alone are not sufficient to build a cosmopolitan research program. Academic cosmopolitanism is implemented through cooperation across countries and intellectual interest in scholarly work from various contexts. This, however, goes far beyond methodological cosmopolitanism and requires intellectual engagement with the works of scholars from non-Western backgrounds. Cosmopolitanism is a necessary precondition for keeping scholarship alive by inspiring and introducing new perspectives for studying research problems. The case of European–Latin American scholarship is only one example showing how challenging it is to introduce, shape, and maintain a truly international intellectual dialogue. The same situation could be argued to exist for various different regional constellations.

Recognizing increasingly international and cosmopolitan media and communication scholarship (Livingstone, 2007) is not enough. What we need is a self-reflective approach that includes thinking about the merits and limits of such a redefinition of the points of departure for scholarly thinking on both epistemological and ontological levels. We must inquire about the circumstances under which media and communication scholarship is to withdraw from artificial boundaries and foster open exchange across continents and, thus, scholars and traditions. Cosmopolitan scholarship recognizes, for example, the difficulties in conceptually distinguishing between "European" and "Latin American" scholars. Therefore, in this article we have focused on authors' scholarly affiliations, as these affiliations represent the structural levels of academic ecosystems.

Comparative research, particularly Hallin and Mancini's (2004) widely used and distributed *Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics*, has been previously critiqued for excluding non-Western countries (Brüggemann, Engesser, Büchl, Humprecht, & Castro, 2014; Hallin & Mancini, 2012b) and for risking misrepresentation in cases involving the application of their model to non-Western contexts (Chakravartty & Roy, 2013; De Alberque, 2013). Hallin (2000) and Mancini (2000) offered early contributions to this discourse, and their response to the voices criticizing their Western-centric take on studying media systems (Hallin & Mancini, 2012a) exemplifies the need for an ongoing discussion and subsequent action. The critical dialogue within the comparative research tradition summarizes the tensions that challenge attempts to de-Westernize media and communication studies.

The aim of academic cosmopolitanism, the opening of English, Spanish, German, and French mainstream media and communication academia, and the bridging of intellectuals and schools of thought in a more balanced manner, can only be beneficial in the spirit of enriching academic knowledge. Therefore,



we need to include new scholarly realities on structural and administrative levels that we should also consider when talking about methodologies and contemplating “methodological cosmopolitanism” (Beck, 2006; Ganter, 2017). Additionally—and this is likely the bigger challenge—we need to start exercising “theoretical cosmopolitanism” (Waisbord, 2015), which allows and even demands the use of scholarly work, concepts, and theoretical elaborations from different countries and world regions as a natural given, rather than a rare exception. This latter accounts for both sides of the coin considered here. The flip side of the natural acceptance of English as a lingua franca is that theoretical perspectives not published in English are often excluded; therefore, a multilingual approach to research is vital, and it should feed what we call the “triangle of diverse communication studies”: cooperation, comparison, and cosmopolitanism. Crucial for this endeavor is a reciprocal and mutual approach of respect in the search for a truly cosmopolitan academic relation of scientific enrichment that must be undertaken broadly. The dominant Anglo-Saxon academia should regularly open a publishing window to other non-English mainstream communication works.

Theoretical cosmopolitanism would help prevent the acquisition of knowledge through exclusively Western concepts, an aspect Waisbord (2015) points out in his work. The inclusion of wider theoretical perspectives is necessary to end the “post-colonial logic of knowledge” (Torrez & Yuri, 2006) and engage in what Walsh (2002) called “epistemic transformation.” As Waisbord (2015) put it, cosmopolitan scholarly work should be guided by empirical and theoretical questions that are relevant across borders. Therefore, structural balance and openness in the research and publishing process are crucial for enabling theoretical, methodological, and, ultimately, academic cosmopolitanism.

Epistemic transformation is a long process, and legitimization is a state of many negotiation processes across the field. Cooperation and dialogue are important and necessary aspects of developing such scholarship. As our analysis has shown, thus far, only a few articles stemming from Latin American and European cooperation have been published in the main European media and communication studies platforms. A type of cooperation that not only fosters the gathering of data beyond continental limits but also engages in longer term theoretical discussions, thereby helping to circumvent translation issues, is crucial for the success of academic and theoretical cosmopolitanism.

Therefore, we suggest that cosmopolitanism in media and communication studies should be developed across three pillars—(1) institutional, (2) scholarly, and (3) educational—to foster connections that will go beyond critiques of our field’s current postcolonial situation. Academic cosmopolitanism means (1) actively fostering and supporting institutional academic exchange across world regions and including staff from different world regions; (2) not automatically dismissing work from other regions or attributing greater legitimacy to works stemming from Western countries, as well as becoming familiar with not only English-language literature, but also literature in other languages; (3) encouraging students to study languages from non-Western countries and to become familiar with other media and political systems, as well as to actively travel and study related contexts and scholarly works; and (4) actively creating room for this exchange on the administrative, logistical, and financial levels, in addition to fostering the requisite active intellectual exchange. Academic cosmopolitanism needs to be naturally developed, but such development requires an institutional anchor. The English-dominant media and communication journals and publishers should open their editorial boards and publishing practices to a cosmopolitanism perspective, both digital and multilingual. Doctoral programs in media and communication studies should build bridges

for collaboration between researchers and scholars on a regular basis. The implementation of transnational media and communication studies research funding within the EU, Latin America, and North America prioritizing scholars' mobility within joint research programs should be fostered. The inspiration and methodology implemented in the EU within Erasmus-Socrates, COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology), and the Framework or Horizon 2020 and similar programs are a good starting point for transoceanic scholarly schemes. Examples of active exchange exist, but are rare. Of course, academic cosmopolitanism goes far beyond the regional context of this article. However, the experience of the European and Latin American contexts is one emblematic case for observing the possibilities and challenges of this endeavor.

Bridges across academic worlds will only be sustainable if the paradox of postcolonial practices and critique is actively tackled. As both of the authors of this study are European, we understand this as an outward-bound strategy to enrich European scholarship and open channels for understanding and studying other regions and countries from a less Western perspective, but also for gaining a better understanding of some of the most critical theoretical questions studied in our field. The various media and communication schools in both the EU and the rest of the world must begin to actively share common space to pursue an academic cosmopolitanism that aims to address the theoretical contentions of our field emerging from different cultural and geographical contexts.

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