FROM THE CHILEAN LABORATORY TO WORLD-COMMUNICATION

ARMAND MATTELART'S INTELLECTUAL JOURNEY

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Contents

CHAPTER FOUR

The Connection-World, or the Cultural Networks of the Popular International of Communication

"Western Marxism," as defined by Perry Anderson in 1976, was the product of a fundamental change in Marxist discussion. Unlike the Marxism of the "classic tradition," which had its center of gravity in Central and Eastern Europe, Western Marxism—which Anderson (1998 [1976]: 115–117) places between the eclipse of the European revolutionary wave of the 1920s and the new cycle of struggle that began in 1968—has among its main characteristics the isolation of the producers of theory from the arena of practical politics; their retreat into the university world; the focus on philosophical, aesthetic, and epistemological problems; and finally, its lack of internationalism. Anderson was not referring to the international dimension as a strategic issue or dictate but to the actual conditions of production of a theory that, unlike the tradition of its founders, "increasingly proceeded, not merely at a distance from political militancy, but also from any international horizon. Theory gradually contracted into national compartments, sealed off from each other by comparative indifference or ignorance." The result, according to the English historian, "of this generalized parochialism and blankness towards extra-national bodies of thought was to prevent any coherent or lucid self-awareness of the lay-out of Western

Marxism as a whole" (87–88). While Anderson could be reproached for not considering intellectual traditions that had emerged in other parts of the world—his indifference toward Latin America is perplexing—he was right when he stated that one might have expected the cycle of struggle that began in 1968 to lead to the emergence of new geographical centers of intellectual production, new encounters between theory and practice, and, therefore, new theoretical syntheses and intellectual profiles. The emergence of the English New Left and the very enterprise of *The New Left Review* that Anderson helped drive–and which was, in his words, the source of his essay—were examples of the ferment he had in mind.

Armand Mattelart's active participation, in Chile and after his exile, in a vast and diverse network of international intellectual sociability serves to highlight the emergence of novel networks for the production and circulation of ideas. In a certain way, these networks point to new alliances that existed at the time between intellectual formations, emerging subjects, popular movements, and/or governments, whose scope extended well into the 1980s. Mattelart's trajectory is that of an emerging intellectual who is well aware of his unique status. His cosmopolitan profile, forged above all during his years of work in Chile and enhanced after his exile, was not tied only to his choice of issues to focus on; it grew out of his participation in spaces of sociability forged in the *Chilean laboratory* or would repeatedly draw on that experience: the editing of the journal *Comunicación y Cultura* (1973–1985); the formation and training work in peripheral countries convulsed by profound transformation processes, such as Mozambique and Nicaragua; his work editing and compiling anthologies in different languages, often as a result of these experiences—*Communication and Class Struggle* (1979–1983), *Comunicación y transición al socialismo. El caso Mozambique* [*Communication and Transition to Socialism: The Case of Mozambique*] (1981), *Communicating in Popular Nicaragua: An Anthology* (1986); his key role in organizing the International Conference on Cultural Imperialism held in Algiers in 1977; his work as *researcher* or *expert* or *advisor* for different international bodies; or his participation in publishing collectives that put out different French journals. All these interventions bear witness to these international spaces of cross-linking where Mattelart occupied a prominent place as a mentor and organizer. Of course, this is not about an exceptional individual—the result of some mysterious gift; it is about a profile forged amid collective processes through networks that in many cases Mattelart helped to establish and that point to the existence at the time of a kind of *popular international public sphere*, by definition variegated, fleeting, hard to map–because it is

also made from cross pollination and reciprocal loans with the dominant one—that does its work from subordinate positions and at the intersection of national intellectual spaces.[1] In the diversity of work that Mattelart performed simultaneously as editor, as advisor to different international bodies, and as activist involved in different ways in a variety of revolutionary experiences, we can make out a unique cosmopolitan intellectual profile: In those years he was a kind of *translator* or *mediator* devoted to putting disparate spheres of social practice in contact with each other (scientific research with pedagogy, cultural intervention through publishing with political activism), as well as intellectual traditions and cultural formations from different national spaces (it is about movement from "north to south" but also from "south to north"). Reconstructing a genealogy of these spaces will provide us with insight into the existence and nature of this *popular international public sphere* that, far from being a pure or autonomous space, proves to be a zone of imprecise and unstable boundaries where subjects can traverse its borders, simultaneously cultivating relations with more established institutions or mainstream elements. In the intersection of these spaces, they produce knowledge about the social and manage the tensions and conflicts that contribute to the reproduction of hegemony while also questioning it. Mattelart's participation in these zones of intersection will allow us to situate the social conditions of production of his thinking and the bridge that connects his life experience to the formulation of his theoretical positions.

[1] The notion of a popular *international public sphere* that we are proposing draws on different sources. Oscar Negt and Alexander Kluge (1983 [1972]) came up with the concept of *proletarian public sphere* in the 1970s as a counterpoint to Habermas's concept of *bourgeois public sphere*. Along similar lines, Terry Eagleton (1999 [1984]: 126–127) refers to the paradoxical existence of an "absent but desirable" *public countersphere* for the case of England in the second post-war period and contrasts it with its actual existence in the Weimar Republic in the 1920s. It is possible to read in his work a reflection on the ambiguous and paradoxical existence of this diffuse, inchoate space. Finally, with respect to its international character, it is helpful to consider the formula proposed by the sociologist Renato Ortiz regarding "popular international culture" as a way of referring to the symbolic and material relations and exchanges between cultures from different national spaces and the configuration of transnational identities. It should be noted that Ortiz (1997 [1994]) does not refer to class articulations, to counterhegemonic movements, or to the inequalities that govern their exchange. We will overlook here the debates about Habermas's concept of bourgeois public sphere and the difficulties that arise, as Eagleton points out (1999 [1984]: 135), when the concept is put forward—marked by rationalism—as the prefiguration of a socialist future.

Communication and Class Struggle*: Editorial Project and Intellectual Intervention*

One of the most interesting entry points for thinking about Mattelart's manifold and cosmopolitan intellectual profile might be his role as editor of *Communication and Class Struggle* (1979–1983). This was an extensive anthology in English, published in two thick volumes and containing 128 texts, which Mattelart compiled, edited, and wrote the prologue for, together with Seth Siegelaub. The first volume, subtitled *Capitalism, Imperialism* (1979), was followed by a second, subtitled *Liberation, Socialism* (1983). [2]

Siegelaub, a US artist, sculptor, editor and art curator with ties to avant-garde visual media in New York in the 1960s (although he preferred to identify himself by his job as a "plumber"), had left the art world to devote himself to publishing. In 1972 he moved to France, where he organized and published the first volume of *Marxism and the Mass Media: Towards a Basic Bibliography*, a sort of multilingual bibliographical catalogue that sought to bring together the entire state of the art of communication and media research from a leftist and Marxist perspective. Siegelaub published the catalogue on and off between 1973 and 1986 at the independent publishing house that he ran: International General, headquartered in New York, and the International Mass Media Research Center (IMMRC) that he founded in 1973 in Bagnolet, France. The institute sought to organize a collection of materials, books and documents that would address all aspects of media and communication. As its founders stated, its objective was to improve

[2] This was not an isolated effort. The urge to spread Marxism and write its history was felt intensely around the world between the late 1960s and the early 1980s. Ambitious publishing projects contributed to a renewal of Marxist thinking and opened up a space for advocating a socialism adapted to the historical moment and the ongoing search for possibilities for its transformation. In the English-speaking world, the translation and publishing projects of *The New Left Review*, founded in 1960, and of Verso, the journal's publisher, did noteworthy work in this sense and, as María Cevasco observes (2003: 131), in laying down the conditions that made it possible to formulate "cultural materialism," promoted above all by Raymond Williams. In Perry Anderson's assessment (1988 [1976]), *The New Left Review* had set out to remedy the lack of dialogue between the Marxism of the United Kingdom and the Marxist traditions of Italy, France, and Germany. It is also important to remember that in these same years a number of studies were made of the history and spread of socialism and Marxism, among them three major collective works: *Storia del marxismo contemporaneo*, which Feltrinelli in Milan began to publish in 1974; *Storia del marxismo*, which Einaudi in Rome began to publish in 1978; and the *Histoire générale du socialisme*, published in 1984 by PUF in Paris (Tarcus, 2007: 55). In short, a veritable field of studies on the spread of Marxism opened up in those years in Europe, consisting of debates, colloquia, specialized journals and collective works in which the works of different authors were brought together and reinforced one another (idem: 56).

the conditions for international exchange in the field and to "contribute to the development of Marxist theory and practice of communication in the ideological and political struggle." The exchange of information and materials among people from different countries, it stated, but also between different areas of work (organizations, newspapers, journals, publishers, institutions and communication researchers) was a condition if the aim was to "reflect the reality of communication throughout the world" (Mattelart and Siegelaub, 1979: 446).

The origins of the relationship between Mattelart and Siegelaub once again go back to the Chilean laboratory and *How to Read Donald Duck*. As Mattelart tells it in retrospect, after visiting Santiago de Chile, Herbert Schiller mentioned the existence of the book to his friend Siegelaub, who immediately wrote to Dorfman and Mattelart to see about publishing it in English (Mattelart, interview with the author, 2011). Since Dorfman and Mattelart had already sold the worldwide copyright to the Italian publishing house Feltrinelli, which in turn negotiated with major publishers in the English-speaking world like Random House in the United States and Penguin in London, the authors could not accept the proposal at that time. Because the negotiations were going nowhere—the big publishing houses feared that Disney would sue them over the use of its images–after his arrival in France, Mattelart reached out once again to Siegelaub, at the time a kind of outsider in the publishing world, who convinced him to rescind the contract with Feltrinelli and assign him the rights to the English edition of *How to Read Donald Duck*. Siegelaub published it in 1975 through the International General publishing house, having entrusted the project to David Kunzle, who had been in Chile during the UP years studying emerging forms of political art, and who translated the text and wrote an introduction to the English-language version. This edition maintained the original title: *Para leer el Pato Donald* was translated more literally, *How to Read Donald Duck* (Dorfman and Mattelart, 1975).[3]

After establishing this tie, Mattelart began to collaborate with Siegelaub on making a catalogue for the IMMRC. He contributed his bibliographic knowledge of critical Latin American research on communication—which

[3] In the appendix to *How to Read Donald Duck*, John Shelton Lawrence recounts the legal acrobatics that the English-language version of the book was subjected to. Disney managed to block the book's distribution in the United States for a time, arguing that it violated intellectual property law by using images from Disney's comic books. The publishers hired lawyers from the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR), who prevailed in the court case by appealing to freedom of expression. To this day the case is considered a legal precedent for matters of freedom of expression in the United States (Lawrence, 1991 [1975]).

from then on occupied a significant part of *Marxism and the Mass Media: Towards a Basic Bibliography*—and above all, his contacts with researchers from around the world, thus helping to create a network connecting critical communication researchers and traditions from different national spaces and establishing ties between the world of research, activism and political or communicational militancy. According to information put out by the IMMRC itself, at the time the first volume of *Communication and Class Struggle* appeared in 1979, the institute had a collection of some ten thousand books, pamphlets, articles, and theses dating back to the nineteenth century, from roughly fifty countries (Mattelart and Siegelaub, 1979: 446).

While not encompassing a huge team—it revolved primarily around Siegelaub and Mattelart, who invited itinerant collaborators—the structure that was set up between the IMMRC and International General proved to be quite effective in terms of editorial production.[4] Its most ambitious project was undoubtedly the publication of *Communication and Class Struggle.* This was a heterodox endeavor, almost handcrafted, dependent to a large extent on voluntary work by the editors and translators. While Siegelaub and Mattelart began to envision the project in 1975, due to its peculiarities and especially to financial problems, it was not until 1979 that the first volume came out, and the second was not published until 1983.[5] The anthology's stated aim was singularly ambitious: to lay the theoretical, conceptual and epistemological groundwork for Marxist thinking about communication and culture, which Mattelart would call, in his long introduction to the first part, a *class analysis of communication*. Thus, the division into two volumes was meant to express a conceptual unity. Broadly speaking, *Capitalism, Imperialism* (vol. 1) set out to introduce the authors, conceptual references, and research that the editors felt were indispensable for a Marxist analysis of the way communication functions under capitalism: from Karl Marx to Antonio Gramsci, from Pierre Bourdieu to Jürgen Habermas, passing through Herbert Schiller, Raymond Williams, or Henri Lefebvre, among

[4] One can consult the index attached to the two volumes of *Communication and Class Struggle.* It is also interesting to see the presence of Latin American authors in the index prepared by Michèle Mattelart together with the IMMRC in the appendix to *Donald l'imposteur* (Dorfman and Mattelart, 1976).

[5] The anthologies were never translated into Spanish or French. In the case of Mattelart's introductions to the two volumes, we will refer from here on to the recent editions in Spanish that came out in Buenos Aires (Mattelart, 2010 [1979], 2011 [1983]). [Translator's note: Zarowsky edited, translated, and wrote an introduction for a Spanish-language version of the work: Mattelart, Armando, *Comunicacion, cultura y lucha de clases. Génesis de un campo de estudios,* Madrid: Siglo XXI, 2021. Translation, editing and introduction by Mariano Zarowsky.

others. *Liberation, Socialism* (vol. 2) for the most part brought together a series of studies that analyzed or gave testimony of a range of practices of resistance and popular communication arising in processes of intense social mobilization, in countries from both center and periphery from the Soviet Union to Cuba, from Chile under the UP to France in May of 1968 or the Italy of "free radios." What stands out in both volumes is the breadth and diversity of the spectrum of theoretical reflections, research, and alternative experiences included, in terms of both geographical perspectives and social spheres set in relation to one another: The anthologies include studies that came out of a strictly academic context alongside programmatic political texts and accounts written by social actors who participated in experiences of cultural resistance or alternative communication.

Moreover, the compilation and editing of the anthology aimed to improve and promote the material conditions of production and circulation of a critical tradition that was considered marginal in the field of communication studies, especially in the English-speaking world. In his preface to the first volume, Seth Siegelaub specified, with ample detail and quantitative data, the conditions and limitations that the concentration of the publishing industry and its distribution and sales system imposed on the production and circulation of Marxist-inspired works, especially in the United States. He also identified as an obstacle the fact that leftist thinking about communication was limited to the university setting, with no connection to the production connected to other kinds of intellectual workers or communication practices such as those that took place in labor unions, political parties, or grass-roots organizations. In this sense, Siegelaub drew attention to the paucity of materials written by left-wing journalists or unionized communication industry workers in libraries and archives. Workers' organizations, he observed, usually lacked the means to properly document their production: by making do with the low-cost resources at their disposal, they could not help but condemn their production to a fragmentary and ephemeral existence.[6] By way of contrast, Siegelaub (1979: 15–16) highlighted the anthology's citation policy and the bibliographic presentation that it proposed as an explicit part of the

[6] It was no coincidence that the first volume of *Communication and Class Struggle* included "Notes for the History of the Subaltern Classes: Methodological Criteria," a text in which Antonio Gramsci analyzes the difficulties entailed in making a history of the subaltern classes. According to Gramsci, these difficulties consisted of the subaltern classes' inability to articulate a unitary vision of the world and to constitute themselves as a power block, or put differently, to procure the material conditions for establishing an alternative cultural infrastructure.

overall project's objectives, stating that the very act of documenting was a political action.

The anthology was thus put forth simultaneously as a theoretical-epistemological project (as affirmed in the overall framework that Mattelart formulated in the respective introductions), an effort in documentation, and finally, though no less importantly, an exercise in *translation*. In this last sense it aimed to contribute to a Marxist dialogue and interchange among different traditions of "Western Marxism," but also to foreground what were considered to be fundamental theoretical contributions developed in peripheral countries, such as that of José Carlos Mariátegui, whom Mattelart characterized (2010 [1979]) as "a contemporary of Gramsci who continues to be relatively unknown by Marxists in central countries." He went on to point out the need to question "the law of one-sided exchange, which operates even within the revolutionary field" (137).[7] But the exercise in *translation* that ran through *Communication and Class Struggle* can also be understood in a metaphorical sense, not just as a question of relating theoretical traditions forged in different national spaces and historical moments, but also as an attempt to articulate diverse social practices. This work blended a pedagogical aim and an intention to bridge spatial and social gaps. Recovering the memory of the struggles and records of historical experiences of popular communication was presented as a condition for developing a critical tradition.

There can be no doubt that Mattelart played a key role in selecting the texts that make up the diverse and cosmopolitan array of works that appear in *Communication and Class Struggle.* One need look no further than the references to critical research in Latin American communication listed in the bibliographies at the end of each volume and the inclusion in his introductions of references to authors from such a wide range of geographical regions, political-intellectual and disciplinary traditions—many of whom were unknown in the English-speaking countries that were the intended audience, or in the French intellectual tradition–: from the theorists of the so-called "countries of real socialism" to the Anglophone political economy of communication, from African decolonization theorists to French cul-

[7] As a mark of the project's significance, one notes the first English-language publication–or says the editors' introduction to the article—of Antonio Gramsci's observations on popular national literature and folklore, translated directly from the volume *Marxismo e letteratura* (edited by Giuliano Manacorda for Editori Riunitti of Rome in 1975) (Mattelart and Siegelaub, 1983: 71–75). As an example of the effort to reverse this one-sided exchange flow, one can mention the quotes that Mattelart took from Gramsci in his introduction to the first volume, drawn from the *Antología* published by Siglo XXI of Mexico City, under the direction of Manuel Sacristán (Mattelart, 2010 [1979]: 137).

tural sociology, from Gramsci to Latin American dependency theorists, etc. Especially at the end of his introduction to the anthology's second volume, Mattelart laid out his conception of the project when he proposed a non-Eurocentric gaze that called for building bridges between different experiences of struggle, and between these experiences and the production of theoretical syntheses. The theoretical-practical experiences of the Third World had much to offer. He wrote:

> Rather than posing the eternal question […], Can the models of Western science serve the Third World?, it is perhaps time to pose the inverse question: What lessons can be drawn from the experience of struggles undertaken by peripheral countries in the domain of popular communication networks, for use in Europe and the United States? […] Questions which have been posed in the revolutionary processes of so-called backward countries have been the forerunners of questions that progressive forces in advanced capitalist countries have only posed later. Well before free radios re-appeared in Europe, the questions which they provoked, notably concerning the impossibility of dissociating form and content, were sharply posed in a movement of reflection such as in Chile between 1970 and 1973. However, to avoid repeating past errors in which experiments unfolding in the Third World have been taken as recipes and read as catechism […] there is a greater need than ever for *a theoretical reflection enabling us to unite the general and the specific and vice versa*. This *detour through theory* is necessary in order to approach these experiences as being problematic, knots of questions, both similar and different, and would have the advantage of replying to the current objection "that which happens far away doesn't concern us." (Mattelart, 2011 [1983]: 135; italics mine)

The translation metaphor that we have used to characterize this project and Mattelart's activity does not imply the transposition of texts to other temporal and national realities, or a linear recovery of historical memory. On the contrary, it involves deliberate reflection that tries to connect *the general* (the tendency toward homogenization that is inherent to the internationalization process and the absorption of communication and culture into the sphere of value; but also what the struggle for justice and equality might have in *common* as a collective aspiration) to *the specific* (the particular shape that these processes take in each national social formation) on the basis of an indispensable detour through theory that can spark questions and distinguish similarities and differences between historical processes. The history of the traditions of communication research in the particular

conditions of Latin America, the United States, and Europe that Mattelart proposed in his introductions to the two volumes was a call to steer clear of unthinkingly transposing concepts and theories as well as models and conceptualizations about popular communication that were developed in specific conditions and historical situations.

Mattelart in Algeria, or the International Networks of Comunicación y Cultura

The nature of a project like the one embodied in *Communication and Class Struggle* was grounded in functioning international networks of articulation, exchange, and production. In other words, in the existence of an international intellectual collective. A clear example of the existence of these networks and of the role Mattelart played in them is his participation in the International Conference on Cultural Imperialism organized jointly by the government of Algeria and the Lelio Basso International Foundation for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples.

With a clear political profile—Third World and internationalist—the Conference on Cultural Imperialism was convened as a follow-up to the conclusions reached at the Algiers Conference (1973), and it was held in the same city in October 1977. According to its final statement, attendees included individuals and groups from the fields of information, art, and the social sciences, from Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and with representatives from Europe and North America. In general terms, again according to its final statement, the conference addressed experiences of cultural domination in the areas of mass media, science, education, and language, but also "experiences of struggle against imperialism" (in *Comunicación y Cultura*, no. 6, 1978). Working from the assumption that cultural exchange—and consequently the very conditions of research and knowledge production—"is subjected to the same power relations that govern the unequal exchange that takes place in the worldwide economy," the conference recommended, in its conclusions, the implementation of a series of initiatives aimed at reversing this one-sided flow: the creation of working groups to analyze the different forms that cultural imperialism takes, the creation of a center for documenting and distributing materials related to the study of mechanisms of cultural domination and developing resistive action, and solidarity with "recently liberated" peoples through cultural exchange.

As we have said, Mattelart played a key role in organizing the conference and the event's working groups. He had been invited as part of the conference's scientific organization by the Lelio Basso Foundation, with which he had ties since participating in sessions of the second Russell Tribunal, [8] also organized by the foundation. He was assigned the opening presentation in the inaugural session, and he tried to set the tone for the debates by dissecting the idea of cultural imperialism itself, discussing certain ambiguities in the concept and the way it had been addressed to that point. This intervention, different versions of which later appeared as articles or parts of books, is considered a sort of watershed moment in the development and rigorous definition of the concept of cultural imperialism. In the eyes of Collen Roach (1997: 49), it produced some of the "cracks" that can be seen in cultural imperialism theories of the late 1970s. In the same tenor, Víctor Lenarduzzi (1998: 52–53) argues that Mattelart's critical observations about the "counterfascination of power"—which he attributed to many analyses of cultural imperialism—and his reference to Antonio Gramsci—from whom he posited the need to analyze the system of correlations of international force as always linked with the correlations of local forces—constituted a "moment of transition" on the map of studies of communication in Latin America, since it opened distance from an imaginary of power without seams or gaps, situating mass culture historically, in relation to "popular cultures." This degree of problematization marked a stark contrast with the level of debate in France, where the issue was much less developed. [9]

Mattelart's role at the conference, as the hub of a network of international sociability and intellectual exchange, was complemented and enhanced by his editorial work. In addition to his editorial project with Seth Siegelaub, Mattelart was also coordinating a collection at the French publishing house Anthropos (called *Mass media et idéologie* ["Mass Media and Ideology"]) and, together with Héctor Schmucler, directing the journal *Comunicación y*

[8] The second Russell Tribunal was held in three sessions: Rome (1974), Brussels (1975), and Rome (1976). It dealt with the political and human rights situation in Latin American countries, focusing particularly on Brazil and Chile.

[9] A good indicator is the presentation made by Ignacio Ramonet (1977) for the short dossier about the Algiers Conference that *Le Monde diplomatique* put together at the time. There, rather than problematizing anything, Ramonet highlighted the deployment of the concept of cultural imperialism as a positive development in and of itself, since it broadened a notion of imperialism that was usually limited to economic and political matters. Paying less attention to the ambiguities and limits of the notion emphasized in Mattelart's address in Algiers, Ramonet emphasized the way Mattelart described the new narrative techniques of Hollywood films, which made a compelling case that films from other places are not always innocent and that the predominance of the ideological dimension "is more widespread than people believe."

Cultura, published in Mexico. Mattelart would thus become disseminator and translator of the debates and conclusions reached at the Algiers Conference. A year after it was held, he coordinated a thematic special issue for the journal *L'Homme et la Société*: "Mass media et idéologie. Impérialisme et front de lutte" ["Mass Media and Ideology. Imperialism and Battlefront"] (January–December 1978) where, among other articles, he included three papers from the conference (those by Bernard Cassen, Luis Nieves Falcón, and Michèle Mattelart) and a text of his own called "Ideología, información y Estado militar." In addition, under his direction jointly with Héctor Schmucler (who had attended the conference from Mexico), *Comunicación y Cultura* devoted its sixth issue of 1978 to the Algiers Conference and the issue of cultural imperialism. Aside from Mattelart's inaugural address ("Notas al margen del imperialismo cultural" ["Marginal Notes on Cultural Imperialism"], 1978b), the journal published in their entirety more than ten of the papers presented at Algiers by authors of very diverse backgrounds and, by way of conclusion, the Conference's final statement. In their introduction to the issue, the editors pointed out that, "like all concepts, cultural imperialism was marked by the concrete (material) conditions of its formulation"; therefore, they suggested, it was necessary to recover a dialectical view that, even when taken up, sometimes neglected to consider the contradictions and the diverse "situations in specific countries" where different alternative projects were confronting cultural domination (*Comunicación y Cultura*, 1978: 3-4).

In short, through its dissemination and translation work, *Comunicación y Cultura* extended the scope of the debates and the networks of exchange and documentation that the conference had set out to promote, by shining a spotlight on the theoretical contributions being made in peripheral countries. To be sure, we will see that the journal would repeat this work for other papers and interventions that Mattelart made in contexts outside of Latin America (his experiences in Mozambique or the report he would write up for France's Ministry of Industry and Research).[10] In the issue dedicated to the debate about a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO, or NOMIC in its Spanish acronym) (*Comunicación y Cultura*, no. 7,

[10] Since its fifth issue in 1978, *Comunicación y Cultura* had been published in Mexico and its center of gravity had shifted to Héctor Schmucler and the group he had put together at the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana de México. Mattelart's role from that point on, while more distant than during the Chilean stage, was important for connecting the journal with French and European researchers who published their own work there, thus bringing issues and discussions from Europe to Latin America. Among these researchers were David Buxton and Michael Chanan, who at the time were the translators of Mattelart's work into English.

1982) we find a reflection by the editors that applies to the journal's broader intellectual program. There, in an editorial, Mattelart and Schmucler wrote:

> If we want to generate a real critical theory of communication that can be useful for an equally critical practice that stands up to the dominant models, we need to *cross-pollinate experiences from different parts of the world* (north-south, south-north) that foster forms of democratic communication, take them as common problematics–with similarities and differences—and from them develop conceptualizations that lead us to a theoretical formulation. *The character of the problematic is very often more important than its geographical location.* In response to the internationalization driven by transnational culture *it is necessary to propose a new type of internationalism* that will wipe away the vestiges of unidirectional transfer of theoretical models, which have so often boxed us into problems and solutions that were actually one more expression of the unequal flow of information.
>
> For this to happen, it is essential to recover the recent history of Latin American experiences that attempted or attempt to encourage forms of popular communication. No future experience should fail to take account of the mistakes and successes of this already considerable historical storehouse that is a legacy of popular culture. *Amnesia is a poor guide when it comes to building a scientific theory.* (Mattelart and Schmucler, 1982a: 10, italics mine)

As the quotation shows, though in a less programmatic mode than in the inaugural issue of 1973, this was the mission and aim that the directors of *Comunicación y Cultura* imagined for their journal almost ten years after its founding. And this self-representation is in tune with other international intellectual and editorial projects that Mattelart was involved in at the time, like the publication of *Communication and Class Struggle*. Aside from laying out the international-scale political-cultural project that this formation was trying to accomplish, this snippet of the editorial stakes out a clear epistemological position. If, as Schmucler wrote in 1975, one of the journal's founding principles had been the idea that political practice was a condition of truth for the social sciences, now this principle assumed a new dimension: In the era of the internationalization of cultural exchanges, Schmucler and Mattelart proposed "cross-pollinating experiences from different parts of the world" (both theoretical and taken from popular communication) and posited this task as a condition for formulating a critical theory of communication or, in their words, "a scientific theory."

Mozambique and Nicaragua: Between Editorial Activity and Communication Policies

A clear line can be drawn from the questions posed by Mattelart in his inaugural address at the Conference on Cultural Imperialism in Algiers to his work in Mozambique, where he was invited in April 1978 by the governing Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) to help formulate communication policies for the socialist transition.[11] This work made a key contribution to the configuration of Mattelart's intellectual profile and the redefinition of his theoretical positions.

While the invitation came about through different channels, it is undeniable that the Chilean experience—once again—opened doors for him. Mattelart was invited to Mozambique through Jacques d'Arthuys, France's culture attaché at the time in Maputo, who had met him on a visit to Santiago de Chile during the UP years and who had contacted him anew on account of *La Spirale.* It is possible that, in certain cultural and government sectors of Mozambique, there was awareness of the Portuguese translation of *Mass media, idéologies et movement révolutionnaire*, published in Lisbon in 1977 in the context of the so-called "Carnation Revolution," and that this sparked the interest of some FRELIMO leaders in knowing more about the details of the Chilean process that Mattelart described and analyzed in his book. The Mozambique Ministry of Information extended the invitation to Mattelart to provide training at the Centro de Estudos de Comunicação of the Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, in April 1978 (Mattelart, 1981c: 57; interview with the author, 2011). To be precise, the invitation was not simply a personal matter, but part of a series of geopolitical, institutional and cultural relations that France cultivated with the newly decolonized Mozambique. Concretely, the cooperation service of France's Ministry of Foreign Affairs had signed a cooperation agreement with the African country's brand-new Film Institute, for the purpose of supporting the installation of technical infrastructure for using Super 8. Television was practically unknown in Mozambique, and the development of its communication networks was still nascent. This explains in part why among the French personalities who offered their solidarity to the newly independent country were leading

[11] In 1975 Mozambique obtained its independence from Portugal after several years of civil war, under the direction of FRELIMO on the insurgent side. The end of the conflict occurred in the context of the fall of António Salazar's dictatorship, in 1974. In 1977, the FRELIMO, which had formed the government, declared itself Marxist-Leninist. While at first socialist forms of social organization were undertaken, as the years passed a certain institutionalization of the change process became cemented in place.

filmmakers, including Jean-Luc Godard. It was in this context that Mattelart was officially invited to support the project for installing Super 8, under the aegis of the Institute for Ethnographic Film of the Université de Nanterre de Paris, coordinated by the documentary filmmaker Jean Rouch. The training at the university included some attempts at inserting Super 8 into popular development initiatives, along the lines of the Medvedkine mobile film experiments in the Soviet Union (Mattelart, 1981c: 61–62).

In observations written right after his return to France in August 1978, Mattelart presented his "journey to Mozambique" with certain ethnographic touches, mentioning a kind of anthropological estrangement from his own world that contact with the local culture produced in him. Using the first person singular, he recounted in the text his presence in different work spaces, which afforded him, in his words, the possibility to have "numerous conversations" "in many different circles," "in newsrooms, at the university, in the new farmers' production units" (Mattelart, 1981c: 27, 45, 60–61). [12] This experience of work and political exchange allowed Mattelart to see some of the issues he had been working on with new eyes, at the same time that it posed new problems. The experience served, once again, to decenter his gaze. Formulated as a general question, the issue could be expressed in the same terms as in the Chilean case: How to formulate a communication policy for the transition to socialism that considers Mozambique's particular situation and possibilities? How to assimilate at the same time new experiences and inherited theoretical traditions deployed at different times and in different places? To begin with, the challenge called for a historical gaze that would provide insights into the concrete reality of a *mode of producing communication* that operated in Mozambique and that was different from that of France, but also different from the one developed in Chile up to the 1970s. Mattelart took his first analytical steps in this direction. In a summarized version: In Mozambique, he wrote, the absence of a mass media network was due not only to the low level of development of technical media (where the railway structure reflected the development of means of communication that served a colonial-era structure of production and extraction), but also to a type of colonial domination that, unlike in the Chilean case, had not

[12] The notes eventually became an article: "Mozambique: communication et transition au socialisme" ["Mozambique: Communication and Transition to Socialism"] published in the journal *Tiers-Monde*, no. 79, 1979. The text appeared in different versions: It was a chapter of *De l'usage des médias en temps de crise* [*Media Usage in Times of Crisis*] and also the introduction to an anthology in Spanish that Mattelart himself edited: *Comunicación y transición al socialismo. El caso Mozambique*] (1981c). Here we quote this last version.

required the emergence of a mass culture to regulate conflict and incorporate the subaltern classes into a hegemonic dynamic.[13]

As for the problem of communication in the transition to socialism, the case of Mozambique possibly had a certain continuity with the Chilean experience and could be approached on the basis of Chile's lessons. At different meetings and conferences organized by FRELIMO, before and after they took power, efforts were made to understand the tensions that permeated the project to establish popular information networks. These tensions, wrote Mattelart (2011 [1983]) some years later, "come from the class character of the accepted journalistic models, from the difficulty of forming a concrete alliance between information professionals and the people, and from the contradictions that can arise between the requirements of party organization and the needs of a press with a certain degree of autonomy and spontaneity" (61). But the Mozambique experience also lent itself to reflection about an element that was absent in the Chilean debate: the role of new technologies in a process involving the transformation of culture and communication. The analysis of the experiences with Super 8 and other lightweight media led Mattelart to object to the optimism underlying a technological determinism that forgot to situate "these attempts to create new communication media in the concrete conditions of production." Taking as a counter-example the semi-failure of other audiovisual experiences—such as those of other African nations that tried to get the population to participate in the elaboration of their own messages, only to find that the organizers were so busy with the technical experiment that they turned these experiences into "an enclave"—Mattelart (1981c) called for integrating the analysis of the uses of new technologies into "a national moment […], the only way to evaluate their contribution and their originality, and to outline, on the basis of these experiences, lines of behavior for other realities" (60). We will come back to the meaning of this integration of the technological factor into the "national moment" when we examine the notion of *class analysis of communication* that Mattelart was working on at the time. For now we can say that Mozambique prompted Mattelart to review questions of communication in line with certain reconsiderations that were occurring at the time in the Marxist

[13] In this way Mattelart (1981c) articulated what was then still a genealogical research project: "Take into account the genesis of the communication networks, look into the way the colonial domination projects and the reality of this domination were received, look at how this historical background impacts the way modern technological media are received and resisted today: these would seem to us to be the fundamental aims of a study that seeks to restore the originality of the processes for forming communication apparatuses in Africa" (11).

debate (the question of the national dimension in the socialist transition, the status of the subject of change, and their relationship with the state and party-based forms of organization, etc.), and Mattelart was trying out a way of thinking about popular communication based on cross-pollination between traditions of critical thought, the analysis of particular national situations (situated in their historicity and their international dimension) and the memory of experiences carried out at different times and in different regions. Before announcing any particularity or exceptional circumstance for thinking about that "national moment," the idea was to try out possible transpositions or general conclusions taken from theoretical traditions and historical experiences of the past, to deploy them in a particular situation and problematize them, at the same time, on the basis of the questions that the new situation generated.[14] In a certain sense, this was the theoretical program that Mattelart defined, together with his "fellow traveler" Héctor Schmucler, in the editorial that appeared in *Comunicación y Cultura* no. 7 (1982a) that we have analyzed and can also trace out in the editorial project of *Communication and Class Struggle*.

We could say that when it comes to the shaping of his intellectual perspective, the Mozambique experience played a role that was analogous—perhaps at a smaller scale—to that of the *Chilean laboratory*.[15] Mattelart integrated the experience into his research and his intellectual project: In addition to publishing several articles about Mozambique in different journals, he used his stays in the African country as a source to draw upon for his editorial and "translation" projects: he devoted a chapter of *De l'usage des médias en temps de crise* (1979) to Mozambique and compiled *Comunicación y transición al socialismo. El caso Mozambique* (1981c) for Ediciones Era, of Mexico. In this book he included a long introduction that he wrote himself and ten documents written by Mozambican intellectuals and political leaders that discussed issues of culture, communication, and information in the context of a revolutionary war and the construction of a socialist society in the particular conditions of the country. The compilation, published only in

[14] The Mozambique case gave Mattelart occasion to draw attention to the ethnocentrism of a certain Marxist tradition that avoided—he wrote—"integrating contributions as essential as those of Amílcar Cabral in Africa and of the Peruvian José Carlos Mariátegui in Latin America." Mattelart (1981c) emphasized how in Mozambique—the same thing had occurred in Chile—heterodox combinations were made of theoretical or ideological traditions "that are never found together in socialist contexts" (26, 27).

[15] Mattelart saw it in those terms in his own retrospective view (1981a: 80), and he placed both experiences on the same level when he presented the "Leçons du monde périférique à l'usage des pays européens" ["Lessons from the Peripheral World to the European Countries"] in *De l'usage des médias en temps de crise* (1979).

Spanish, included documents from the National Conference of FRELIMO's Information and Propaganda Department, held in 1975, and from the papers, preliminary documents, and conclusions of the First National Information Seminar, held in Maputo in September 1977. With this compilation, Mattelart amplified the voices of the key players and political leaders of the Mozambican process: Samora Michel (President), Jorge Robelo (Information Minister), and José Luis Cabaço, among others. In this same tenor, he also published documents about Mozambique in the second volume of *Communication and Class Struggle* (1983), in the section about "post-colonial transition," where he included three texts from the 1975 conference (two were party resolutions) that, according to the editors, were being presented to the public for the first time in English (Siegelaub and Mattelart, 1983: 309–314).

If Mattelart's writings about Mozambique were thrust into the middle of the debate about communication in France in the late 1970s, as we have seen, the reading that one sector of Latin American communicology made of *Comunicación y transición al socialismo* shows how the author connected issues common to both sides of the Atlantic, and also triggered a series of theoretical-political shifts that affected the way a group of Argentinian intellectuals exiled in Mexico thought about communication. Thus, Nicolás Casullo wrote a review for the Mexican journal *Unomásuno* ("Mattelart en Mozambique" ["Mattelart in Mozambique"] 1982) in which he read Mattelart's book in terms of certain limits that could be seen in the journal *Comunicación y Cultura*—Casullo sat on the editorial board—with respect to the debate about the New World Information and Communication Order. Casullo pointed out what he considered to be the relevance of Mattelart's anthology, arguing that "it forces us to grapple with a problem of the Third World that few have analyzed or even recognize: the complex and untransferable national realities" in which communicative activity takes place. Taking exception to certain sweeping, abstract notions like "Third World" and "cultural imperialism," Casullo (1981) highlighted Mattelart's contribution in calling out "the impossibility of continuing to synthesize—mythically—issues that differ profoundly: those of certain African regions, for example, with those of Latin America" (21). In the same tenor, a short time later in the pages of *Comunicación y Cultura* ("La comunicación entre el Estado colonial y el socialismo" ["Communication between the Colonial State and Socialism"], no. 7, 1982), Casullo elaborated broadly on Mattelart's book as a pretext for problematizing certain dimensions of the Latin American left's thinking in general and its analyses of communication in particular. The concrete analysis of a national situation that Mattelart undertook, he

wrote, opened the way to revise and add complexity to what he called the "economistic" and "denunciative" analyses of the relation between communication, economics, and society in Latin American communicology. In contrast, Casullo concluded, "the moment of the political" and of culture was now being revalorized as "*organizer and articulator of the social*" (italics in the original).

But while he drew attention to these elements of the anthology that he considered productive, when it came to the theoretical-political redefinitions, Casullo went beyond Mattelart's positions. In this sense it is interesting to observe how the Mozambican leaders' documents that Mattelart had included were read by Casullo to question what he regarded as the "authoritarian" character underlying the Leninist model of party and state (present somehow in the Africans' positions) and its impact on different experiences of organizing communication. Along these lines, although from a different theoretical-political perspective, Máximo Simpson Grinberg (1982: 46–48) referred to *Comunicación y transición al socialismo* in an article in the *Revista de la Universidad de México* and later systematized his critiques of the Leninist fingerprint on communicational thinking in an anthology that he compiled about alternative communication. There he positioned Mattelart in a "leftist authoritarian" tradition and accused him, based on his activity in Chile, of being a standard-bearer for "Leninist-style functionalism and behaviorism" (Simpson Grinberg, 1986: 27, 51).[16]

What is paradoxical is that this vision of Leninism does not necessarily align with Mattelart's position or with the revision of socialist experiences and the Leninist tradition he was making at the time and with which Casullo and Simpson were "settling scores." Although we cannot look deeply at this question here, it is important to point out that, far from essentializing Lenin's thinking and reducing it to a single matrix, Mattelart included a brief historical overview in his introduction to the second volume of *Communication and Class Struggle*—which he was writing at the time—in which he differentiated among the disparate positions that the Bolshevik leader took with respect to the press, situating them in the different contexts in which they emerged. Mattelart (2011 [1983]) clearly distinguished considerations about the character and function of a newspaper that Lenin formulated in 1905, when the party was operating underground, from his proposals for a press at the moment of the revolutionary wave in 1917, as well as from

[16] For more about the shifting fortunes of the Argentinian intelligentsia exiled in Mexico and the "conceptual revolution of the left," see an abridged overview in Burgos (2004: 231–300).

his observations about the status of a mass press in writings from the early 1920s, when the revolution was being consolidated.

Finally, Mattelart was invited back to Mozambique in 1980 by the Ministry of Health (in coordination with UNICEF) to explore the possibilities and limits of using the "small" technologies of television in community development projects (Mattelart, 2010: 151). Parts of the conclusions he drew on that occasion were once again "translated" in the seventh issue of *Comunicación y Cultura* (1982), which published an article where he problematized the question of new communication technologies and their potential for fostering democracy. Summarizing these reflections: In response to the myths that swirled around the expansion of lightweight technologies (that they automatically promoted democracy and decentralization), the work done in Mozambique to introduce Super 8 into community structures and institutional and educational projects gave Mattelart (1982e) occasion to dispute these media-centered visions and conclude that "[w]hat creates decentralized communication" was not the technical medium itself but "the network of decentralized social organization into which it was inserted" (110). In short, communication needed to be examined as part of the culture and the material dynamics in which hegemony is articulated and negotiated. The issue—and this is what gives relevance and meaning to the "translation" that *Comunicación y Cultura* made—spoke to communicology on a continent with a long tradition of alternative and popular communication.

Mattelart's stay in Nicaragua within the frame of the democratic turn of the Sandinista revolution was one of his last great *activist journeys*. The activity he undertook there and after his stay (especially his writing and his work as editor) serves to reinforce our hypothesis about the central role he played in that diffuse space of intellectual sociability that we have called the *Popular International of Communication*. The invitation once again ties back to the Chilean experience as a guiding thread: It came from Nicaragua's Ministry of Culture and Education, and financing from UNESCO made it happen, basically thanks to the good offices of the Venezuelan Antonio Pasquali, who worked at the time in the agency. But the request and the contact, Mattelart remembered later, had come from the "Chilean diaspora" in Nicaragua, specifically from several exiles who worked at the University of Managua (interview with the author, 2011). His visit took place in February and March of 1985. The invitation, once again, was embedded in collective experiences:[17] Sandinista-led Nicaragua had given rise to a wave

[17] In November 1984, presidential elections were held in Nicaragua. The Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN, in its Spanish acronym), which had taken power by force

of international solidarity, which manifested itself in the arrival of dozens of foreign contingents to the Central American country, from a wide variety of background and with diverse motivations: Cubans sent by their government in brigades, exiled intellectuals or guerrillas from Latin America, young North Americans taking part in a range of cultural activism experiences, all with the aim of providing different kinds of support for the revolution. The Nicaraguan model, based on a mixed economy and political pluralism, was clearly different from the UP's process in Chile (first and foremost, the Sandinistas had taken political power by force of arms), but there were also points of convergence. For one thing, the call for elections made by the FSLN and the model of a plurality of parties had few precedents in socialist processes, carrying the struggle to the terrain of a dispute over political consensus. Moreover, the development of a communication policy and the construction of popular power in the realm of culture entailed—in spite of the existence of a significant network of popular and alternative radio stations—the daunting task of resignifying a mass culture that had already developed under strong US influence and become the default, everyday culture for many Nicaraguans. "The classics of revolutionary propaganda always ended exactly at the point where popular tastes began," wrote Mattelart (1986: 324), underscoring the theoretical vacuum that, once again, existed in leftist thinking. The 1984 elections and the new developments that were unfolding for the revolutionary process triggered a series of questions that, strictly speaking, had arisen earlier: When it came to issues of culture and communication, the Sandinistas had very few references to look to for guidance. Mattelart (1986: 324) drew attention to the thread that connected the Nicaraguans to the Chilean experience of 1970–1973.

Later, Mattelart wrote about his experience in Nicaragua in several articles published in Spanish, French, and English. In this last language he also edited a compilation with International General and the IMMRC: *Communicating in Popular Nicaragua* (Mattelart, 1986), where he brought together texts by authors from different backgrounds: Sandinista intellectuals; FSLN leaders (such as Tomás Borge); communication activists; Argentinian, Nicaraguan, English and US academics such as Julianne Burton, Fernando Cardenal, José Luis Coraggio, and David Kunzle, among others. [18] The need to promote

of arms in 1979, prevailed over its opponents by a wide margin. The electoral victory constituted a turning-point in the revolutionary process, because it expanded the list of questions about the future development of a socialist transition, now in democracy, that from the start had defined its own paths and questions.

[18] Mattelart's introduction to the volume was translated into French under the title "La communication au Nicaragua. Entre la guerre et la démocratie" ["Communication in

written documentation and the memory of the experiences as a resource for critical research, but also for activist education and work, which Mattelart articulated in his introduction to *Communicating in Popular Nicaragua* (in 1986b: 326), can be read as a continuation of the stated objectives of *Communication and Class Struggle.* The reference he made here to "discovery through dialogue with the main players" reflects an experience and a way of working (Mattelart presented his texts as "resulting from interviews, discussions and debates with journalists, content creators, researchers and decision-makers from different mass media outlets, and also with readers, listeners and viewers," 308), but also a mode of expression that in this introduction more than any of his other texts appealed to the first person singular to foreground the author's presence in the situation or, to put it another way, the contingency of his own work of thinking in its becoming. The dialogue that he explicitly mentions thus alludes to a way of constructing knowledge, to a conception of work where researchers would attempt to articulate heterogeneous spaces and diverse voices, putting historical experiences and their own memory of past communication research into dialogue.[19] But the use of the first person and the staging of the dialogues that sometimes showed a certain level of disagreement with his interlocutors can be read as Mattelart's way of registering certain reservations or misgivings toward the alternatives that communication policy, and more generally the socialist process, could take in Nicaragua, where he felt a delicate balance had to be struck between "the logic of war" and "the logic of democracy" and popular participation. Mattelart took seriously the possibility of conceiving a new type of socialist project, such as the one Nicaragua was undertaking, but he was careful to reserve a space for possible dissident voices. In this delicate balance, he did not hesitate to stake out a clear position of support for Nicaragua: He asked, in outright debate with one sector of European intellectuals critical

Nicaragua: Between War and Democracy"], and published in the journal *Communication et Information*, vol. 8, no. 1, Spring 1986 (Mattelart, 1986a). There is also a version in Spanish (the one we quote from here) in a compilation made by José Luis Coraggio and Carmen Diana Deere (Mattelart, 1986b).

[19] Several passages of the text are told in the first person, making the author's presence explicit in the dialogue with the people in charge of designing communication policy. "Honest *answer* from the young lieutenant in charge of the Media Office" (Mattelart, 1986b: 318); "Tomás Borge, Interior Affairs Minister, to whom *I posed the same question* that I asked of the person in charge of the Media Office, *told me…*" (319); "Nicaraguans *to their credit pay attention* when they are given explanations of this kind of reflection inspired in the *history of so-called real socialisms*. And this is no small thing" (319); "I told them I was baffled, and we discussed it for over two hours. They expressed the same concerns that I had and, I must admit, tried to address them the best they could" (331) (italics mine in all cases).

of Sandinismo and any other socialist undertaking, whether "restricting oneself to the East-West front when trying to understand the world and gain insight into its conflict did not imply negating the appearance of new historical subjects on the international scene" (308).[20] For Mattelart, opposing this polarization meant opening himself to the possibility of acknowledging the identity of the "other," i.e., "opting for moving away from old certainties and venturing down the road of hypotheses" (308). This experimental quality of his intellectual project can be read in his work on the ground and in the way he expresses himself in the article we are citing, but also in the project of *Communicating in Popular Nicaragua* itself. There, in his introduction and editorial work, he took upon himself the work of mediating, articulating, translating, and disseminating experiences that in his view broke with east-west polarization. In this last gasp of the battle of ideas unleashed by the Cold War, Mattelart was trying to put new questions on the agenda and make people entertain the possibility that new subjects and practices could emerge.

On the Borders of the Popular International

The notion of a *popular international public sphere* entails a number of tensions and difficulties that call for reflection. How to demonstrate the actual existence of a space consisting of material networks and emerging symbolic productions that was also tied up with established institutions and cultural materials? How to objectivize this kaleidoscopic, ever-shifting space that gave rise to a productive, historically situated link between cultural formations from the popular classes and a certain category of intellectuals that sometimes emerged organically from those popular ranks but more often from the petite and middle-class bourgeoisie? How to read these international cultural formations, recognizing their subordinate positions, while at the

[20] Mattelart's intellectual intervention must be situated in a context of profound transformations in the ideological universe of the French left, as we will see in the next chapter, pulled between the liberal transformation of the Socialist Party then in power and the irreversible crossroads of the so-called "real socialisms." Since the late 1970s, broad swaths of intellectuals had been advocating a conceptual revolution that subsumed the word "socialism"—in any of its variants—under totalitarianism. In March 1985 (the moment was no coincidence: The Sandinista consolidation in a multi-party model defied the opposition's classifications and arguments), a group of intellectuals in France created "the International of Resistance" and published a request in *Le Monde* demanding that the US Congress lend "aid to the Nicaraguan resistance in a spirit of democratic solidarity" (March 21). In Mattelart's opinion (1986b: 397), it was the first time that such a level of reaction had arisen in the history of intellectuals in France: The request in essence called for a crime to be committed in the name of freedom and democracy.

same time signaling the places where they have prefigured and also participated in the constitution of a space of power? And finally, how to indicate the asymmetries in the international circulation of ideas and among emergent cultural formations from different social formations? These are questions that have barely been formulated theoretically and will require further refinement and research. In the meantime, for the purpose of completing and drawing out complexity in the sweep of the intellectual trajectory, we must mention, at least in passing, Mattelart's work in a series of spaces that were more institutional and less linked to emergent movements, which will to some extent help us address these incipient questions. For one thing, this work also contributed to the configuration of his theoretical perspective, his intellectual profile, and his eminent place in communication and culture studies; and for another, highlighting Mattelart's ability to inhabit diverse social worlds simultaneously reminds us of the reciprocal cross-pollination and borrowing that takes place between cultural formations—where rising social subjects make themselves known—and more institutionalized spaces where social phenomena are monitored and knowledge is produced. Or to put it another way, reconstructing this aspect of his journey can help shed light on the complex weave of conflicting articulations between the dominant and the subaltern—made up of oppositions but also of appropriations in both directions—from which this *popular international public sphere* was interknit and where we situate his trajectory, and that his very biography helps us to draw together and problematize.

We will point to a few of these spaces. In 1978 Mattelart was invited by the Audiovisual Service of the Ministry of the French Community of Belgium, together with Jean-Marie Piemme, a researcher from the National Higher Institute of the Performing Arts in Brussels, to conduct a study of the conditions for an alternative communication policy, particularly in the audiovisual realm. As the authors observed presenting their results (published under the provocative title of *Télévision: enjeux sans frontières. Industries culturelles et politique de la communication* [*Television: Borderless Issues: Cultural Industries and Communication Policy*]), Belgium served as an illustrative case study of how the division of labor and the globalization of local economies impacted the field of cultural production (Mattelart and Piemme, 1980).[21] In 1981

[21] They then proposed a painstaking genealogical analysis of this specific case in an attempt to challenge—in their words—an abstract and universal view of the media and their impact on humanity, with a concrete history of a political and industrial apparatus. This history, they wrote, "is the best way to grasp the simultaneously general and specific nature of communication apparatuses, the best route for moving from the local to the global" (8–9).

Mattelart was also enlisted by other international institutions. The United Nations' Center for Studies of Transnational Corporations hired him to write up a report on the "sociocultural impact of transnational corporations on developing countries." Some of his conclusions circulated in different languages [22] and, since the center did not publish the report, Mattelart published it later in English, as *Transnationals and the Third World: The Struggle for Culture* (1983). We will say more about his critical approach and his conclusions in a later chapter. That same year, Mattelart worked with Héctor Schmucler on a study aiming to describe and analyze the most important aspects of the process of introducing new information and communication technologies in Latin America. The study was financed by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), headquartered in Ottawa, Canada, and directed at the time by Elizabeth Fox. Their final report was published in Spanish as *América Latina en la encrucijada telemática* [*Latin America at the Telematic Crossroads*] (Schmucler and Mattelart, 1983), under the auspices of the Latin American Institute of Transnational Studies (ILET, in its Spanish acronym), headquartered in Mexico City. [23] The book was also published that same year in French, by the François Maspero publishing house. Finally, it is worth noting that Mattelart contributed to the journal *Amérique latine*, an initiative launched in early 1980 by the association Amérique Latine Tiers Monde of the Centre de Recherche sur l'Amérique Latine et le Tiers Monde (CETRAL), chaired at the time by Claude Julien and directed by the Chilean exile Gonzalo Arroyo (who had worked at CEREN). [24] Mattelart sat on the editorial board of the journal—which, across its issues, included renowned French and Latin American social scientists among its collaborators—and was

[22] In a dossier prepared by the French journal *Amérique latine* ("Aide-memoire pour l'analyse de l'impact culturel des firmes multinationales" ["Reference Guide for Analyzing the Cultural Impact of Multinationals"], 1982b) and in the Mexican journal *Unomásuno* ("Transnacionales y mercadería cultural" ["Transnationals and Cultural Merchandise"], July 5–9, 1981).

[23] At the time Schmucler was a researcher at ILET. The activities undertaken at ILET in organizing, researching, and promoting the edition were part of the network of connection and intellectual exchange made up of critical Latin American researchers. The authors' own assessment of the Institute can be found in Schmucler and Mattelart (1983: 4); for an outsider's perspective, see Fuentes Navarro (1992: 166).

[24] Upon presenting the first edition of *Amérique latine*, Guy Petitdemange stated that Latin America was not an exotic or unique place, but a region where universal issues were being disputed. Materials about the continent, however, were mostly dispersed or buried in the activist press; consequently, the stated objective of the journal was to provide scientific information and to compile and circulate documents (Petitdemange, 1980: 3). Among those who collaborated or wrote for the journal were Jacques Chonchol, Ignacio Ramonet, Alain Touraine, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, José Serra, Ruy Mauro Marini, Gonzalo Arroyo, and Armand and Michèle Mattelart.

in charge of preparing the central dossier of the ninth issue, called "Médias-culture-société," for which he selected a number of texts by Latin American authors. Mattelart (1982d: 30) wrote a brief introduction for the dossier, titled "Ouvertures" ["Openings"] in which he emphasized that it aimed to provide a sample of the "contribution from Latin American countries to the creation of a critical theory of communication and culture."[25] The existence of *Amérique latine* spotlights the existence of networks of cooperation among French and Latin American intellectuals, in which Mattelart played a key mediating role. In this case, in a reversal of his contributions to *Comunicación y Cultura* in the 1980s, his intervention introduced a Francophone public to Latin American contributions to thinking about communication.

Once again, taken as a whole, these experiences contributed to the forging of his intellectual and theoretical perspective.

[25] For the dossier Mattelart selected a text of his own (excerpts from *Transnationals and the Third World*) and, among others, one by Jesús Martín-Barbero (which had been published in *Comunicación y Cultura* and that would prove to be a watershed for communication studies in Latin America: "Retos a la investigación sobre la comunicación en América Latina" ["Challenges for Research on Communication in Latin America"]).