Geographies of Communication Policies

- The analysis derives from critical geography to understand communication policy developments in the MERCOSUR.
- Critical geography scholars contemplate "topology", the study of power and its relations to space.
- Institutions and processes of the state, government political organizations are geographically constructed (Painter, 1995, Painter 2008; Adams and Jansson, 2012).

Departing assumptions:

- Ideas and Principles underlying communication policies integrated into local contexts might reflect patterns of long-grown power geographies
- Policy documents, as artefacts of the policy process might manifest these patterns, for example through intertext to documents, ideas, principles, authorities from outside the region (Fairclough, 1993; Dixon, 2013; Streeter 2013)
- The reconstruction of these patterns might help us to learn about the convergence of space and place and (dis)connections in the policy-making process

Continuing the Quest for a New World Information and Communication Order?

- The imbalance of the opportunities regarding the production and distribution of contents between different world regions lead to an international debate in the 70s/80s
- Development Aid Programs engage into Media and Communication Policies
- Europe Aid supports two programs within the MERCOSUR:
  - Audiovisual MERCOSUR Program (AMP):
    - To increase competitiveness of regional films, to promote culture and to strengthen the film industry in the region
    - Negotiated since 2006 with the Special Reunion of the Authorities on Cinema and Audiovisuals from the MERCOSUR (RECAM)
  - Digital MERCOSUR Program (DMP):
    - To promote the Information Society in the MERCOSUR by the establishment of common strategies
    - Negotiated since 2004 with the RECyT (Specialized Reunion of Science and Technology) and the Sub-working Group Nr. 13 which belong to the auspices of the Group of the Common Market (GMC) in the MERCOSUR
- Today, the DMP is implemented via national agencies,

Table 1: Scheme for the topological analysis of documents:

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Name of the document)</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Geographical Information</th>
<th>Time Dimension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Page/Line</td>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Symbolic Place (Geographical Location)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authors (who produce documents)</td>
<td>1988 October 2</td>
<td>European Audiovisual Aid</td>
<td>Regional Reach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authorities (who are invited by the authors in their documents)</td>
<td>2006 December 1</td>
<td>Commission of the Director of the National MERCOSUR Programme</td>
<td>Regional Reach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiences (who read and implement them)</td>
<td>2007 December 11</td>
<td>National Human Rights Defender</td>
<td>National Reach</td>
</tr>
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Table 2: Caption Figures 1-6

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<table>
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<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Geographical Information (Horizontal Dimension)</th>
<th>Vertical Dimension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Place</td>
<td>Author</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regional Reach</td>
<td>Authorities</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>International Reach</td>
<td>Audiences</td>
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<td></td>
<td>National Reach</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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References


The documents reflect in both cases the differing windows of opportunity for the development of communicative spaces in different world regions
- Bigger scale of authors and authorities from outside the region become manifest
- EU and the US as "hot spots" of communication policies, new spots emerge in the MERCOSUR
- Authorities from outside the region serve as control instances or models in both programs
- Authorities and their ideas from outside the "Western" sphere are not considered within the documents
- The Audiences dimension shows that the AMP has a bigger scale beyond the MERCOSUR, but the DMP is better integrated into programs from the Latin American context and into informal networks and national programs
- Both programs combined deepen the imbalances criticized in the NWICO process as the call for modernization and the breaching of the digital gap is not accompanied by an equally scaled call for structures of local content production and distribution within the regional context