
Led by a Franco-Brazilian team of scholars in the humanities, social sciences, arts and literatures, this joint research project is developing a digital platform for Transatlantic Cultural History to be published in four languages. In a series of essays exploring cultural relations between Europe, Africa, and the Americas, it presents a connected history of the Atlantic space since the 18th century, highlighting the cultural dynamics of the Atlantic region and its crucial role in the contemporary process of globalization.

Cinema

[Eduardo Morettin](#) - Universidade de São Paulo

- Africa - Europe - Caribbean - South America - North America - South Atlantic - North Atlantic
- The Atlantic Space Within Globalization - The Consolidation of Mass Cultures

The section approaches the historical and cultural practices that involve cinema in the transatlantic space, analyzing and mapping its different mediation vectors: the circulation of films, texts and theories; institutional exchanges; the agents involved; spaces for sociability and consumption; and the representations produced by the cinema.

The section approaches the historical and cultural practices that involve cinema in the transatlantic space, analyzing and mapping its different mediation vectors: the circulation of films, texts and theories; institutional exchanges; the agents involved; spaces for sociability and consumption; and the produced representations.

Throughout the history of cinema, there have been several moments of connection between transatlantic spaces, which are indicative of a secular circulation that can be attested in many ways. Firstly, due to the formation of an exhibition market that had radiating centers in France and United States since the beginning of the 20th century, bringing, along with the films, modes of behavior, such as the case of French cinema in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in the 1910s: the reference for the elegant, for the regarded as civilized and modern, was influenced by the images coming from Paris, inspiration for how to dress and behave.

With the consolidation of a circuit of exhibition halls increasingly spread out, the cinema became a means of mass communication, participating directly in the cultural formation of many societies. This fact became more evident just after the Great War (1914-1918), when the United States, one of the winners, started to dominate the world cinematographic market.

This domain was not only economical, but also aesthetic, attested by the control of a refined method of narration and by the very idea of cinema-spectacle that mobilized technical and superiority-affirming resources, constituting the work of director David Griffith, in particular the films *Birth of a Nation* (1915) and *Intolerance* (1916), a good lesson to be followed. Thus, the two dimensions converged in films that sought to represent the United States as an example to be followed. It is not by chance that, in the 1920s and 1930s, with the arrival of sound cinema, the world was deemed as americanized by many, an americanization that had cinema as one of its most solid pillars. One example was the star system, formulated in the 1910s by means of the marketing departments of the great North American producers; it was also an important axis in the constitution of the imaginary that crossed the 20th century. Movies and cinema magazines aimed at fans, such as *Photoplay*, suggested to viewers and readers how they should behave, dress and, fundamentally, consume, given that the American way of life was also sold with images and texts.

On the other hand, parallel to this movement of homogenization and cultural and economic standardization, we also had numerous forms of resistance that took shape in the transatlantic space over the past century. The first one can be found in the circulation of theories about cinema and in the dialogues established with cinematographic making. The importance of the concepts formulated by the so-called historical avant-garde trends in the 1910s and 1920s in Europe is well known, starting in 1911 with the *Manifesto of the Seven Arts*, written by Ricciotto Canudo in Paris,

which is fundamental in affirming artistic uniqueness and modernity of cinema, a gesture that will have innumerable consequences in the following decades. Among such, we can mention the movement of film clubs, spaces intended for the appreciation of films as works of art, leaving aside the commercial aspect inherent to the activity and valuing all authorial initiatives. It is the origin of cinephilia, which was cultivated in France and also found repercussions in several countries. The generation of *Cahiers du Cinéma* in the 1950s, led by André Bazin, continued this tradition, important in the formation of many directors concerned with rethinking cinema in the 1960s, articulating politics and aesthetics in an engaged perspective, concerned not only with change in the direction of his artistic work, but in society in general.

The new cinemas that emerged during this period, as Ignácio Del Valle Dávila writes in an entry written for this section, represent "a cultural phenomenon from which emerges, in an evident way, a dynamic of exchanges, transfers and circulations of cultural property and theoretical debates that transcends national borders," exchanges that take place in the transatlantic space. This new generation of directors "will adopt an increasingly explicit and militant political discourse," militancy stimulated by the Cuban Revolution (1959) and by the process of independence of African countries and, at the same time, confronted by the establishment of authoritarian regimes in many countries in that period, in a context marked by the Cold War. Filmmakers such as Glauber Rocha, Santiago Álvarez, [Chris Marker](#), [Ruy Guerra](#), Orson Welles, [Sarah Maldoror](#), Paulin Soumanou Vieyra acted as true passeurs culturels, seeking to invert the logic of consumption given by large corporations based on: film production about reality to be modified, with the constant displacement of filmmakers through this boiling transatlantic space, such as the films of the French Maldoror and the Cuban Álvarez in Africa indicate, as well as Glauber's transit through Cuba, the United States, France, Italy and Kenya; theoretical elaboration of projects that involved the conception of a cinema that crossed these realities, such as the proposal of Glauber's "tricontinental cinema" or the reading that in the 1960s the director made of Frantz Fanon, incorporating violence as a creative act in synthesized poetics in the manifest that became known as "aesthetics of hunger"; creation of networks of solidarity among those who faced the brutal dictatorships of the Southern cone of America in the 1960s and 1970s, and Marker's cinema could also be thought of in this key.

Part of this process was also configured based on the existence of spaces that could gather and show these films and allow the circulation of cultural agents, converging and propagating the cinematographic initiatives committed to this perspective of transformation. In this sense, film festivals, which emerged in the 1930s as places for exercising cultural diplomacy and affirming the superiority of cinematography as an expression of the domination intended by a country, such as the case with the Venice Film Festival and then Cannes in the 1960s and 1970s, became the locus of political articulation for this new cinema, such as the Viña del Mar Festival (1967, 1969) and the Panafrican Film and Television Festival in Ouagadougou (created in 1969).

The institutions also played an important role in the formation of transatlantic spaces specific to cinema. The Fédération Internationale des Archives des Films (FIAF, International Federation of Film Archives), founded in Paris in 1938, for example, brings together all cinematographies dedicated to the preservation of audiovisual memory, playing an important role, in a relationship historically marked by tensions, with the film archives of the so-called "third world". The [Instituto Cubano del Arte e Indústria Cinematográficos](#) (ICAIC, Cuban Institute of Art and Cinematographic Industry), object of study on this platform by Mariana Villaça, created by the government of Fidel Castro in 1959, has become a place for meetings and exchanges between foreign filmmakers, an incubation space for different projects. Besides Glauber, many directors and persons linked to the world of cinema were at the institution, such as Cesare Zavattini, Joris Ivens, Chris Marker, Agnès Varda, Jean-Luc Godard, formulating projects and articulating partnerships aimed at making films that portrayed the fight for the liberation of African countries from their former metropolises, as we see in the support given by ICAIC to the production of films in Mozambique. Co-productions also represent moments in which the transatlantic dimension is mobilized, as is the case with the initiatives of the Comunidade de Países de Língua Portuguesa (CPLP, Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries), created in 1996 to finance cinematographic projects involving Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa, America and Europe.

Another space for exchanges and transatlantic encounters was the film schools, such as Institut des hautes études cinématographiques (IDHEC) in Paris and the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia in Rome, "a place of training, circulation and exchange for some relevant filmmakers of what was then known as the Third World ", as pointed

out by Ignacio Del Valle Dávila, in "Los nuevos cines en el espacio atlántico".

Finally, the Universal Exhibitions also opened their doors to cinema. Since the end of the 19th century, several films have circulated in the exhibition spaces to perpetuate a certain historical memory through the cinematographic image, with cinema being used more and more as a "showcase", in which the nation projects the national virtues to be celebrated in a scenario marked by imperialism, a topic discussed by Eduardo Morettin.

Among the countless paths and possibilities for exchanges and encounters, the reader will have contact with historical moments, cultural agents, institutions and films that have built, in their own way, a history of cinema from a transatlantic perspective.

Bibliography

[See on Zotero](#)

[Andrew, Dudley, and Hervé Joubert-Laurencin. *Opening Bazin: Postwar Film Theory and Its Afterlife*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.](#)

Cunha, Paulo. "Co-Produções Em Português: Um Breve Balanço," 21-27. Rio de Janeiro: Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, 2012.

Souza, José Inácio de Melo. *Imagens do passado: São Paulo e Rio de Janeiro nos primórdios do cinema*. São Paulo: Senac, 2004.

Xavier, Ismail. *O olhar e a cena: melodrama, Hollywood, cinema nova, Nelson Rodrigues*. São Paulo: Cosac & Naify, 2003.

Xavier, Ismail. *Sétima arte, um culto moderno*. São Paulo: Perspectiva, 1978.

Author

- [Eduardo Morettin](#) - Universidade de São Paulo

Pós-doutor pela Université Paris I (2012). Professor de História do Audiovisual na Escola de Comunicações e Artes da Universidade de São Paulo. Um dos fundadores da Asociación de Estudios sobre Precine y Cine Silente Latinoamericano (PRECILA). Presidente da Associação Nacional dos Programas de Pós-Graduação em Comunicação (Compós) entre 2013-2015 foi membro da diretoria da Associação Nacional de História/Núcleo São Paulo entre 2000 e 2004 e da Associação Nacional de História entre 2007 e 2009.

Postdoctoral degree from Université Paris I (2012). He is currently a Professor of Audiovisual History at the School of Communications and Arts at USP. He is one of the founding members of Asociación de Estudios sobre Precine y Cine Silente Latinoamericano (PRECILA). He was president of the Associação Nacional dos Programas de Pós-Graduação em Comunicação (Compós) in the 2013-2015 biennium and was a member of ANPUH / SP's board of directors between 2000 and 2004 and ANPUH between 2007 and 2009.