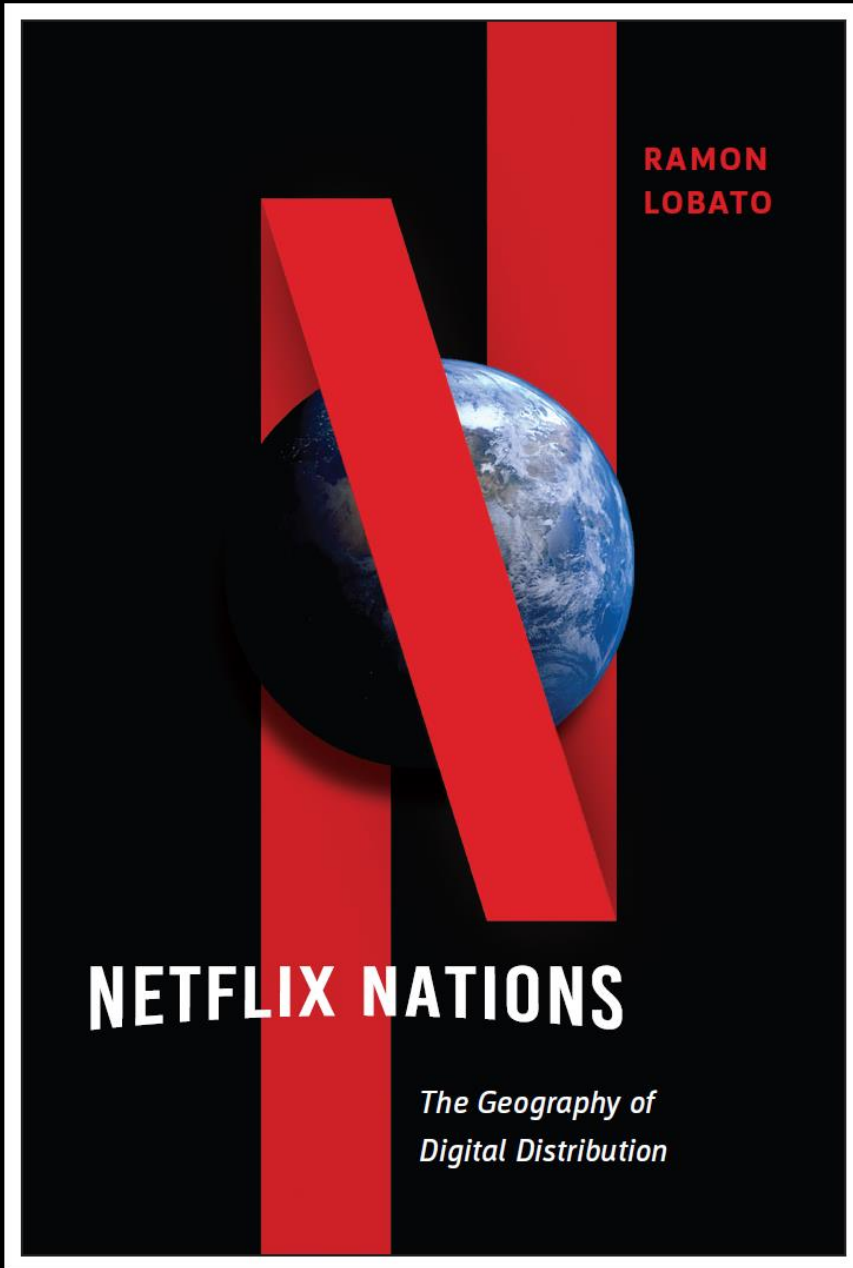


# Global Netflix

New and old questions for  
media globalization debates



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- how Netflix has changed international television distribution

- theories and concepts needed to make sense of these changes

Open access version:

<http://opensquare.nyupress.org>

**Two tricky questions:**

Is Netflix a platform?

How do we evaluate Netflix's  
diversity/homogeneity?

# 1. Is Netflix a platform?

Ways to define 'platform':

1. a reprogrammable system (*software definition*)
2. a multisided marketplace (*economic definition*)
3. an algorithmically curated interface (*user experience definition*)
4. stand-in for "tech company"
5. that which calls itself a platform
6. bad object

The Netflix logo is displayed in a bold, red, sans-serif font, positioned in the upper right corner of the slide.

Netflix is

not reprogrammable

not a multisided marketplace

not open-upload (c.f. YouTube)

*but ...*

typifies (has helped to define?) modes of interactivity now associated with platforms – *especially algorithmic recommendation*

is bound up with some (but not all) of the same policy debates as Facebook, YouTube, etc

## One platform or many?

Vectors of difference in a multi-territory SVOD:

- Catalog (size)
- Catalog (composition)
- Availability of original productions
- Licensing norms
- Investment in local production
- Local advertising
- Commitment to local market

*Netflix: singular global platform, or collection of national media services?*

## **Question 2.**

**How do we evaluate Netflix's diversity/homogeneity?**

# Irreconcilable truths? Insights from SVOD catalog research

The average Netflix  
catalog in EU contains  
content from **more than  
60 different countries...**

Source: European Audiovisual  
Observatory



# Irreconcilable truths?

## Insights from SVOD catalog research

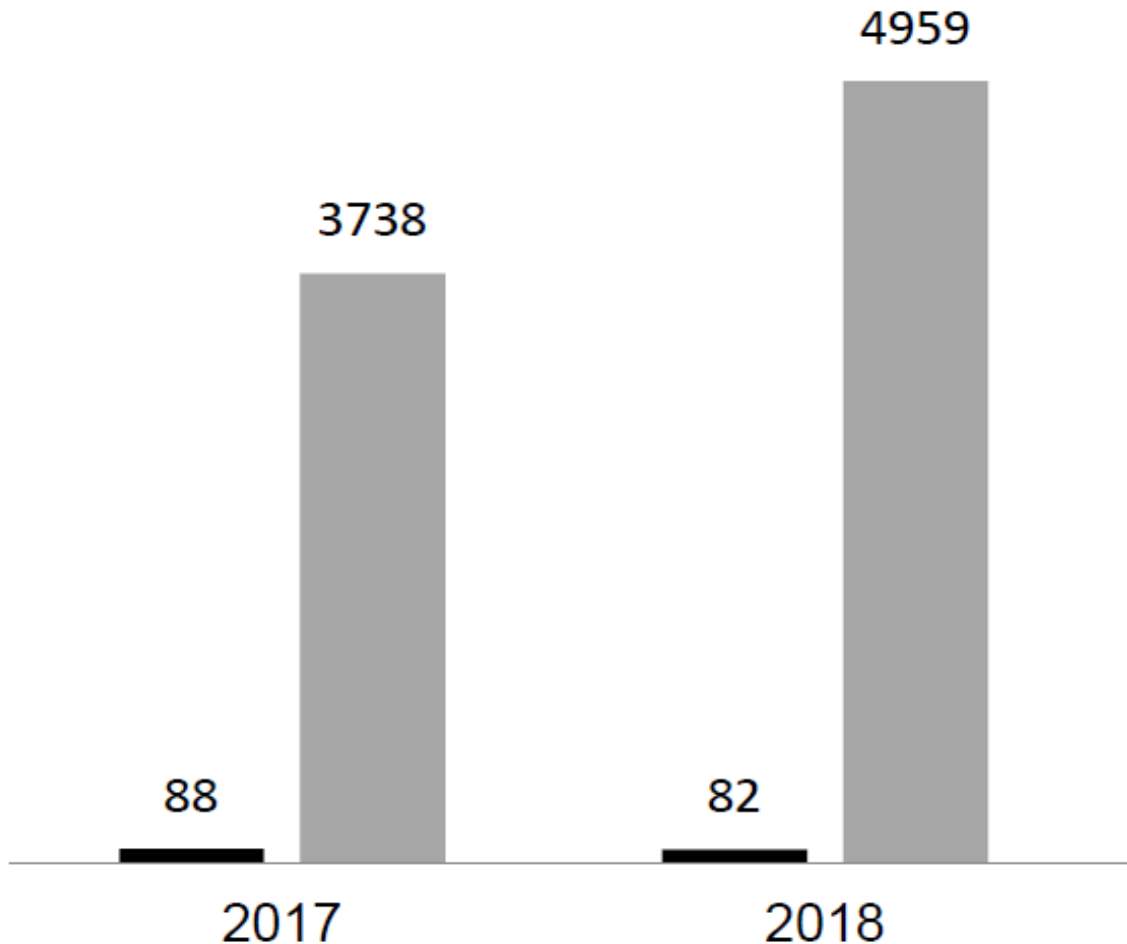
The average Netflix catalog in EU contains content from **more than 60 different countries...**

Source: European Audiovisual Observatory

...but half this content is from the United States.

Source: European Audiovisual Observatory

## Local content within Netflix catalogs



**NETFLIX** [AU]

Lobato and Scarlata. 2018. "Australian content in SVOD catalogs: availability and discoverability."

## More catalog research:

**EU28** – *European Audiovisual Observatory 2016, 2017, 2018*

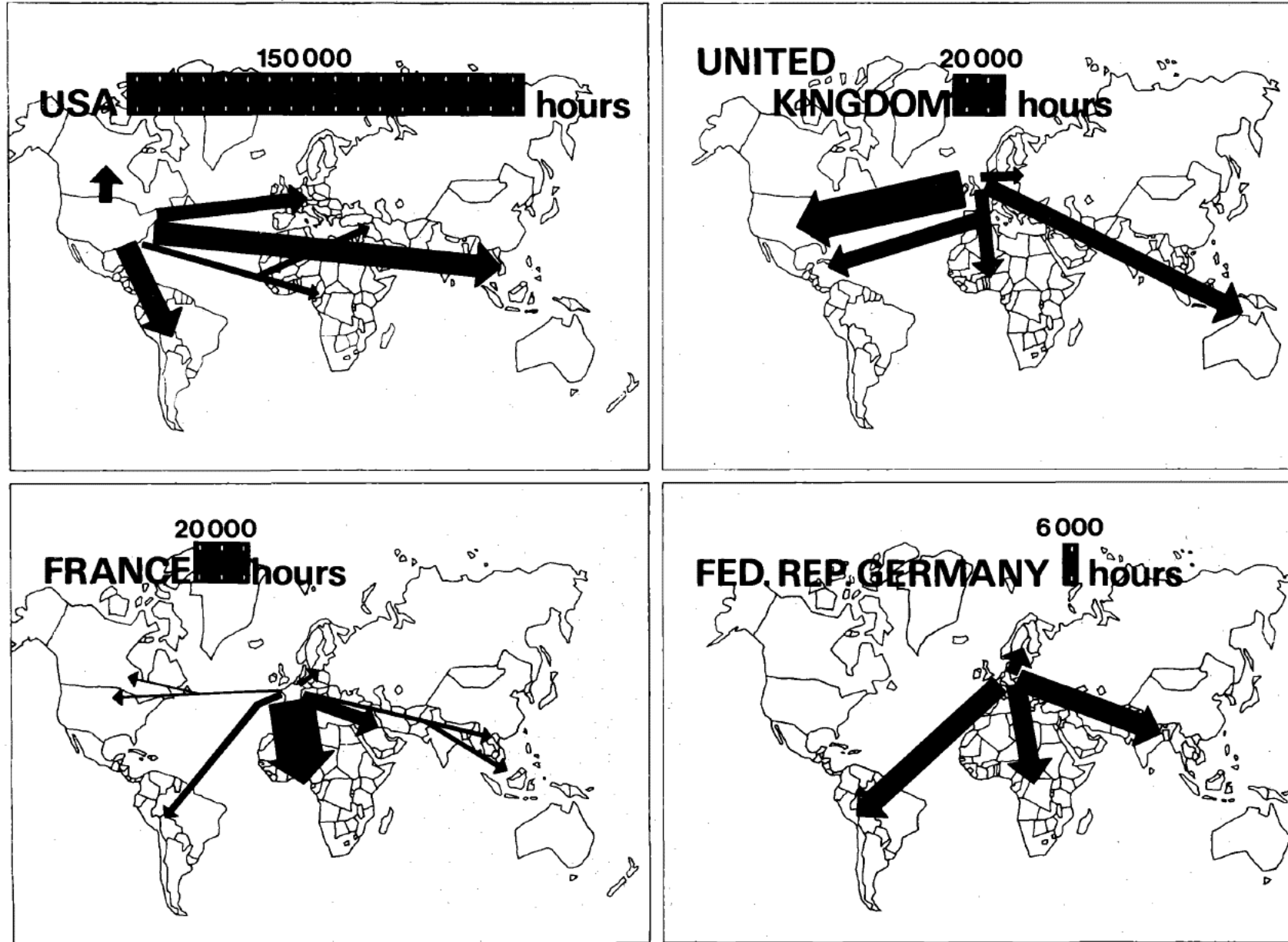
**FR** – *Richy et al 2018*

**ES** – *Albornoz & García 2018*

**US** – *Lozano 2019*

**Global** – *Aguilar & Waldfogel 2018*

30  
Figure 2. THE DISTRIBUTION PATTERNS OF THE MAJOR PROGRAMME EXPORTING COUNTRIES IN THE EARLY 1970's.  
(For each country an estimation of the total annual exports, indicated in the Figure, has been given a standard 'volume index' of 100% ; the width of the arrows is proportionate to the share of the total export flow.)



Source: Kaarle Nordenstreng & Tapio Varis, *Television Traffic – A One-Way Street?* (UNESCO, 1977)

# Irreconcilable truths?

16% of Netflix EU catalogs is auteur cinema.

Source: Joelle Farchy et al, *En compétition* (Presse des Mines, 2018)

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30,869,863 accounts watched Murder Mystery in its first 3 days - the biggest opening weekend ever for a Netflix Film. 13,374,914 accounts in the US and Canada, and 17,494,949 more worldwide.

11:01 AM - 18 Jun 2019

2,459 Retweets 20,469 Likes



Source: Netflix tweet, Jun 18 2019.

# Which metric matters?

Presence in catalog (content diversity 1)

vs. proportion of catalog (content diversity 2)

vs. consumption (exposure diversity)

Other diversity metrics: visibility / discoverability, origin of original productions, genre, language, etc...

# Conclusion: research possibilities

Catalog research

*established*

Visibility research

*nascent*

Consumption research

*black box problem*

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Catalog research

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Many thanks to Amanda Lotz and the Global Internet Television Consortium members

<https://global-internet-tv.com/>

*Netflix Nations* open-access <http://opensquare.nyupress.org>