

38. This refers to journalistic limitations. Most agree that there should be no limitations on the political, economic, or social consequences of investigative journalism, but clearly there are legal limitations. These include the laws related to libel, slander, defamation, obscenity, and so forth that do constrain what is printed or aired. For example, in 2004 US Federal officials used the Intelligence Identities Protection Act of 1982 to charge journalists from major media outlets with illegal activities.
39. Another forum of nations is the International Network for Cultural Diversity (INCD), which began with a meeting in Canada in 1998, followed by meetings in Mexico, Greece, Switzerland, South Africa, and Croatia, plus a growing number of regional meetings. These meetings focus on cultural identity, cultural policy, and the impact of cultural globalization. A growing concern of the member nations is the treatment of cultural industries, particularly television, film, and magazines by the World Trade Organization (WTO). The INCD group, which does not include the United States, views the WTO's policies as favoring the one-way flow of Hollywood and New York products around the globe to the detriment of local cultures. One policy option being floated at INCD meetings is the removal of cultural goods and services from WTO agreements. This initiative has major implications

concerning global trade for the major stakeholders detailed in later chapters.

Finally, Canada is providing leadership for the INCD group for the obvious reason that it is on the cutting edge of becoming an electronic colony of the United States to a very large extent. It has become a branch plant of US media empires. The foreign content of Canada's mass media is staggering: 98 percent of theater revenues are for foreign, mainly Hollywood, films; 83 percent of magazines sold are foreign, for example *Time*, *People*, and *Sports Illustrated*; 80 percent of music sales in all formats are foreign; and more than 60 percent of television programming on the three national networks comes from other nations, despite decades of electronic media content regulations, along with handsome financial subsidies, from the Canadian federal government.

40. Chris Taylor, "Anonymous Hacks US Government Site, Threatens Supreme 'Warheads,'" *Mashable* (January 26, 2013), at <http://mashable.com/2013/01/26/anonymous-hack-government-website-declares-war/>, accessed August 7, 2013.
41. *The World in 2011 – ICT Facts and Figures*, Geneva: ICT Data and Statistics Division, 2011, at <http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/facts/2011/material/ICTFactsFigures2011.pdf>, accessed August 7, 2013.

2

Development Research Traditions and Global Communication

Introduction

This chapter looks at the changing area of development communication. This area has focused on peripheral nations, the problems they face, and how modernization has essentially failed to deliver change in these regions. Illiteracy, the lack of a telephone service and of connectivity to the Internet, the general failure to produce indigenous content, and the few indigenous media successes all come into play. After six decades of development, the peripheral nations still lack access to modern telecommunications and mass media. This chapter addresses the history and major approaches to and theories of development communication, the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the competition for scarce resources, the "CNN effect," and the paradigm shift now underway. This shift will be the focus of the chapter. The key aspect is that for decades the old paradigm of modernization had an economic focus or lens, whereas the new focus is on policy matters with a social and cultural lens. One of the emerging roles in the new paradigm is how media and telecom systems are promoting democracy as well as a broader quality of life and environmental issues. Part of the change is a bottom-up grassroots approach rather than the top-down bureaucratic practices that have dominated the field since the end of World War II. Much of the early emphasis, projects, and funding was motivated by a desire to thwart the growth of communism around the globe, particularly in underdeveloped nations.¹

Over the past decade some objections to globalization have emerged. Not all see the same benefits, if they see any at all. Nor are the benefits of globalization equally shared by all. Compounding this criticism is the post-Cold War fear of the United States becoming a hegemonic power and defining aid and international policies to suit its own goals, rather than the receiving nation's needs and goals. Family planning and the role of women are a particularly sensitive area. There has been a significant increase in feminist scholarship dealing with the media within a development context during this time. Other factors include what is now being referred to as coercive democracy where the United States is combining its post-Cold War

military power with its hegemonic economic power to set conditions on foreign aid or international treaties that cripple weaker nations or regions. The bulk of the benefits from aid and treaties tend to go to Western nations, while those in peripheral regions see little improvement.

During the 1980s, several factors came together to further the movement questioning Western aid, globalization, free market values, liberalization, and the impact of foreign media. Among them was the failure and subsequent rejection of the theory of modernization promulgated by major industrialized core nations and aid agencies, along with a cadre of academics since the end of World War II. Implementation of that model had failed to produce positive economic results in the eyes of peripheral nations as well as a growing body of critics. In reality, after decades of core-based modernization attempts, some peripheral nations are now worse off while others have made little progress. Within the overall theoretical framework, the mass communication system was a substantial component in the mix of factors that should have moved peripheral nations to at least semiperipheral status and then to industrialization and modernization. Herein lies the connection between modernization theory and development communication. In theory, development communication should work in concert with other growth factors to lead poorer nations to modernization or, at least, to move them from the peripheral zone to the semiperipheral zone. In practice, those peripheral nations that did invest in media infrastructures realized too late that these systems were bringing in more foreign, not local, content. For example, where cable or satellite media were introduced, affluent locals watched CNN, the BBC, or MTV rather than domestic broadcasts.²

In retrospect, just as educational television in the West failed to bring about the projected revolution in the classroom, the prediction that broadcasting was the means by which poor nations could rapidly transform into industrialized nations was similarly misguided. Indeed, during the last decade, some peripheral nations moved in the opposite direction with regard to housing, the environment, currency, literacy, and health care, particularly in relation to the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Some poor nations, for example, assumed that the introduction of color television would be the appropriate medium to foster economic and cultural development. But color television is expensive and has limited uses and applications. In peripheral nations where color television broadcasting is available, few households even have access to black-and-white television sets. Digital television, which is now the standard in core nations, raises a new issue and barrier. This new technology will render existing analog broadcasting systems and their receivers obsolete. In their eagerness to "measure up," many peripheral nations are likely to aspire toward the digital format and related new technology, but its costly introduction is likely to set back, rather than promote, development. New core-manufactured hardware will consume vast sums of money.

This chapter traces the various streams of the major theories of communication, both American and European, as well as major research trends that underpin the knowledge base for students of international communication. Beginning with development theory, the review highlights major contributions to the theoretical and applied international media research literature. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the application and implications of the theories of electronic colonialism and world system theory.

Development Journalism/Communication

Development journalism and communication are attempts to counterbalance the thrust toward electronic colonialism. They acknowledge that the demands of an infant press differ from those of a mature press. To impose the legal, economic, or regulatory models of one

on the other results in a failure to appreciate the underlying fundamental differences that are a result of a combination of historical and cultural factors. Development journalism is the concept that attempts to deal with the needs, strengths, and aspirations of journalistic endeavors in the emerging developing nation-states.³ It is a media theory that encourages an engineered press – a press committed to government-set priorities and objectives. It assumes that everyone, including the local media, needs to work in unison to support national goals. Totalitarian and military regimes in a substantial number of peripheral nations follow and enforce this media theory and approach.

Consequently, development journalism serves essentially to promote the needs of developing countries. It encourages indigenous media and discourages reproduction of Western media models, which debase, challenge, or marginalize local and traditional cultures. Most peripheral media systems are underdeveloped, with few newspapers, some radio outlets, and usually one television system at most. Access to the Internet is very limited. Under these conditions, administrators, editors, and reporters in peripheral regions find little relevance in Western media values and systems which do not serve the needs of peripheral nations or highlight their interests or concerns. Except for the occasional political coups, civil wars, pirating, or natural disaster, all of which focus on bad news, few of their stories are told in the mainstream media, or from the peripheral nations' own perspective. In fact, research indicates that the vast majority of international media offerings emanate from a few core nations as sources. Consider the following:

- 1 Major Western news agencies such as the Associated Press, Bloomberg, Reuters, Getty Images, and Agence France Presse provide about 90 percent of the entire world's wire service information. They are all based in core nations.
- 2 Major Western newspapers, magazines, and journals are virtually all published in the United States or Europe. In Europe, most of these are located in the countries of foreign colonial powers and still enjoy significant sales in current or former colonies.
- 3 International radio programming such as Voice of America (United States), the BBC (United Kingdom), Deutsche Welle (Germany), and other Western short-wave services transmit programming specifically designed for international audiences. The perspective is invariably that of the Western core industrial nations, but the majority of the global audience are located in non-core nations.
- 4 Global television news, newsreels, photos supplied by firms such as CNN, BBC, AP, Getty, and Reuters have established worldwide markets for their products using material produced or designed for initial use in the United States, Europe, or other Western media and communication systems.
- 5 Television programming and feature films are almost exclusively the province of Western nations. Over two-thirds of available global video programming comes from the United States alone, and its share of the international market is growing.
- 6 All major global advertising agencies are based in the United States, Europe, or Japan. If there is any physical presence of agencies at all in semiperipheral or peripheral nations, it is only in the form of small branch offices of the leading global agencies.
- 7 Getty Images, which moved the fragmented stock photography industry into the digital age, is now another major provider of photographs and imagery, along with the wire services, so visual imagery worldwide has a clear Western bias.

Although the seeds of a theory of development journalism were sown shortly after World War II, it was decades before the debate about the role of the mass media reached the West. Originally, the dominant paradigm for development communication reflected a mainstream consensus of opinion among all stakeholders that encouraged both

economic and industrial growth. It was assumed that as the gross domestic product (GDP) increased so too would communication activities of all types, including the development of telecommunication as well as mass media systems. This economic-based "growth is good" model or mantra was the underpinning for modernization theory. It ignored the fact that enormous capital investment was required to finance sustainable communication development. Without adequate domestic professional and fiscal resources, peripheral nations found themselves even more dependent on external foreign aid, which invariably had strings attached. Also, many of the aid projects came with associated cultural baggage, such as the abandoning of certain cultural traditions, but this was ignored or downplayed as the price of "progress."

Over time, piecemeal programs evolved to encourage development. However, it soon became clear that foreign aid turned out to be little more than a weapon on the Cold War battlefield. The Soviet Union supported communist-oriented nations and regions, while the United States assisted fledgling democracies ostensibly committed to free enterprise and free press models. Moreover, uncounted sums of this aid were skimmed off by corrupt regimes or military officials, or were wasted by inept, untrained bureaucrats with family connections but little experience of working on large-scale development projects. This blatant failure to improve the conditions in developing countries led to a rethinking of development communication.

The immediate result of such rethinking was manifest in sensitivity to the structural and cultural constraints on the impact of communication, in addition to a conscious awareness that the mass media were just a part of the total communication infrastructure. It became evident that successful and effective use of communication in any community requires adequate knowledge of the availability, accessibility, relations between, and utilization of communication infrastructure and software in that community.¹

The problems were not limited to the lack of communication progress in developing nations. Some critics found fault with Western researchers who ignored indigenous media and failed to stress the importance of sustaining local cultures. African scholar Kwasi Ansu-Kyeremeh observes that "the paltry literature regarding various interpretations of indigenous communication systems elsewhere and in Africa"² is a problem in itself. And this lack of relevant models is only part of the problem in peripheral nations. Ank Linden points out that "Governmental authorities in Third World countries often seem to be more interested in maintaining the status quo than in strengthening the communication capacity of the people."³ Many peripheral leaders did not want external help, which could jeopardize their control of the people along with the opportunity for them to skim off much of the foreign aid. When this happened, American and other officials were willing to look the other way as long as the regimes were anti-communist. Concern about the sociology and culture of communication, whether in the form of orally transmitted folklore or of color television transmitted live via satellite, heightened the need for a revised vision of cultural development and the role of communication in it. Whereas the Western media valued freedom of the press, free speech, and the free flow of information, most peripheral nations began to reject these and related values as luxuries they could not afford. They had no multitude of competing views and media systems. Most of these countries were fortunate to have a single electronic medium, usually radio. Finally, of course, virtually all peripheral regions lack the necessary telecommunications infrastructure required for modern media systems, including mobile phones and access to the Internet.

Moreover, the position of peripheral nations on the role of government control conflicted with that of the core and democratic nations. In some cases, development media initiatives sought the support of local governments, and in others, the governments imposed rigid

controls. In both situations, the media had little choice but to accept and repeat the messages those in control wished to disseminate. The result was two diametrically opposed journalistic philosophies about the relationship between the media and government. Western journalists favored a free press, and journalists in less-developed countries followed a development journalism approach.

Development journalism/communication is a pivotal concept in this new environment. Its proponents are newly emerging nations, all in the periphery, primarily in Africa, Latin America, and Asia, with low income, high illiteracy rates, and virtually no modern media systems except for the ruling elites and the military. The infrastructure and finances to support a broad-based advanced telecommunications system simply do not exist. Where they do exist, they are controlled by the ruling elites or by foreign corporations, such as Walmart. As the poor countries see it, in order to rapidly improve the economic and social position of peripheral nations, a concerted effort by both government and media is required. The luxury of competing and critical views on government policies and programs within the national media is viewed as detrimental to the colossal task of "catching up."

In order to correct the imbalances and mistaken impressions created by the Western press, peripheral nations continue to promote their media theory of development journalism. At a practical level, they reject neutrality and objectivity in favor of active roles as promoters of government objectives. They engage in advocacy journalism. Their reporting reflects the stated objectives of their governments, and they see no conflict between this and their journalistic objectives. In some instances, countries may attempt to limit any positive reporting of Western activities. In some cases only negative stories of the West are disseminated in order to reinforce the view of it as the "Great Satan." Unfortunately, by acting in this way, development journalism commits the same grievous crime it so readily attributes to the Western press.

Finally, many media corporations based in Europe and North America have reduced their numbers of reporters in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, in particular, for three significant reasons:

- 1 the cost of stationing full-time reporters in foreign bureaus;
- 2 the perception of a lack of interest among editors and management in routine events in distant lands;
- 3 the ease of air travel and the relative portability of equipment.

The cost of stationing full-time reporters in foreign bureaus has increased dramatically. These media corporations are profit-driven and are always seeking ways to reduce costs, so they close foreign bureaus. Second, with the end of Cold War tension, there is at least a perception of a lack of interest on the part of editors and management in events in distant lands. Less space and time are allotted to foreign news. Third, core-based editors realize that when a usually negative major news story breaks somewhere in a peripheral nation, they can dispatch a crew and reporters to the location in a relatively short period of time owing to the ease of airline travel and the portability of equipment. This is known as "parachute journalism." This phenomenon further fuels the criticism and antagonizes the critics of Western media because it contributes to the largely negative coverage of peripheral nations and regions. A tsunami, coup, earthquake, kidnapping, or riots where Americans are involved is what get covered.

Historically, the notion of development and progress was intertwined with economic issues and measurements; so now we turn to a consideration of economic models of growth and modernization.

The Economic Growth Model

Perhaps the best-known categorization of stages of development is the one advanced in 1960 by US economist Walter Rostow in *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*. This was one of the central early works which set modernization theory on an economic trajectory. Others were *The Passing of Traditional Society* by Daniel Lerner, *Diffusion of Innovations* by Everett Rogers, and *Mass Media and National Development* by Wilbur Schramm.

Walter Rostow asserted that the development process can be divided into five clearly defined stages, as shown in Table 2.1. In most versions of this scheme, traditional and modern societies are placed at opposite ends of an evolutionary economic scale. Development is viewed as evolution beyond or out of traditional structures and ways that supposedly cannot accommodate rapid social change or produce sufficient economic growth. The new attitudes, values, and social relationships that support social change and industrialization are frequently conveyed through mass media as well as educational systems.

The economic growth model assumes development to be irreversible, like biological evolution. Modernization occurred when the necessary conditions for change were established, and the process continued inexorably. Societies absorbed the stress and change as they adapted themselves and their institutions to the new order and ways of doing things in order to prosper. In reality, however, this dominant paradigm of development following a modernization track did not produce the success stories that governments, foundations, universities, and aid agencies had promised. The complex processes and depth of traditional customs and behaviors rendered most development efforts futile. Corrupt regimes did little to help the situation as well. Criticism of the model mounted and continues today.

To understand the role that mass media were thought to play in development under the dominant paradigm, it is important to note that one of its most prominent features was the assumption that development could be equated with economic growth, the type of rapid growth that core nations experienced through capital-intensive, technology-driven industrialization. As Everett Rogers points out, "economists were firmly in the driver's seat of development programs. They defined the problem of underdevelopment largely in economic terms, and in turn this perception of the problem as predominantly economic in nature helped to put and to keep economists in charge."⁷ Despite criticisms, theorists and aid practitioners continued to be preoccupied with the economic determinism of Western models of modernization, in large part because they produced measurable phenomena. Non-economic factors, such as culture, language, customs, and the role of women, were largely ignored.

Yet, as nations struggled to move from the peripheral to the semiperipheral zone and finally to elite core status, the nations and their citizens needed to adopt the trappings and values of a modernized state. Embedded in the modernization process is the ever pervasive and influential role of mass media and communication technologies. Anthony Giddens states:

Table 2.1 Rostow's stages of economic growth (from Walter Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1960 © Cambridge University Press 1960, 1971, 1990)

1	Traditional society
2	Establishment of preconditions to take off
3	Take-off into sustained growth
4	Drive to maturity
5	The age of high mass consumption

The media, printed and electronic, obviously play a central role in this respect. Mediated experience, since the first experience of writing, has long influenced both self-identity and the basic organization of social relations. With the development of mass communication, particularly electronic communication, the interpenetration of self-development and social systems up to and including global systems becomes even more pronounced.⁸

To some extent, Giddens is speculating that modernization will ultimately lead to Marshall McLuhan's "global village," where communication systems are capable of importing images, data, and sounds from around the corner or around the globe, with similar technologies and similar effects. One of the most profound effects will be that the language of the "global village" will be English.⁹

In summary, development has been viewed as "a type of social change in which new ideas are introduced into a social system in order to produce higher per capita incomes and levels of living through modern product methods and improved social organization."¹⁰ But after decades, a growing chorus of critics began to make themselves heard.

The Inadequacy of the Economic Growth Model

For the most part, attempts at direct social and economic change in peripheral regions never materialized, and the effort of core nations to engineer social change in poorer regions of the world have been largely unsuccessful. In fact, a *World Development Report* for 1998–9 published by the World Bank¹¹ points out that developing countries are still relatively worse off, vis-à-vis the core nations, in terms of growth. One only has to look at the relative penetration of information technologies or at Internet access per capita to see how far behind peripheral nations are in the information revolution and global economy. Some critics go so far as to claim that the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have been counterproductive in terms of global development.¹² Critics, such as those opposing trade agreements, point out that the economies of developing nations simply have not improved through World Bank intervention and that local private enterprises are frequently squeezed out by large IMF projects or multinational conglomerates entering peripheral regions in cooperation with the IMF or other aid agencies.¹³

Another major problem is illiteracy. Along with economic stagnation, many peripheral nations have growing illiteracy rates. Poor regions are defined in part by their high illiteracy rates. Illiteracy makes access to the consumption of certain mass media such as newspapers, magazines, books, and much of the content on the Internet irrelevant to a large proportion of the population in peripheral areas. Nations with high birth rates see themselves moving downward in terms of both literacy and overall economic status.

Many peripheral-based critics began questioning the entire functional school of media theory. In general, the functional theorists uncritically accepted the position of media elites and the reinforcement of the status quo as legitimate and rational behavior for the media systems. But today, the relevant questions about constructing communication systems in peripheral nations are: What is their purpose and for whom are they being developed?

Imported economic practices, technologies, and media often create confusion because traditional systems are unable to support the required change. In turn, some analysts have shifted to non-economic explanations of development, identifying variables such as

mass media exposure; telecommunications, political, and social structural changes; social mobility; population control; along with individual psychology and commitment as preconditions for positive development and eventual modernization.

The development of mass communication was portrayed under the dominant paradigm as part of a universal, inevitable sequence of changes that traditional societies undergo in the transition to modernity. Mass communication was thought to function best in the service of centralized government development agencies when it was geared toward raising the public's aspirations and facilitating the acceptance of new ideas, values, and inventions for the purpose of overall growth and higher gross national product (GNP). Critical questions about the impact on traditions, tastes, values, language, history, role models, or cultures inherent in foreign mass media were simply not addressed. As Ilan Kapoor states, "the field of international development struggles harder and harder to escape its reputation as a Trojan horse."¹⁴

The Research Traditions

When communication researchers turned their attention to development and modernity, they had a dual heritage. First, they were influenced strongly by the body of theory on the development process that had been built up in other fields, particularly economics, political science, and sociology. But equally strong influences on development communication research were the well-established traditions and orientation of social science research in the communication field. The following sections briefly review the major research traditions in the discipline of communication: functionalism, structuralism, and professionalism. Almost the entire body of literature dealing with international communication since World War II has been guided and influenced by these schools of thought. (Critical theory, which looked at power and other variables, and which had its roots in the Frankfurt School, did not seriously challenge the dominant paradigms.)

Functionalism

The traditions of functionalism began to take shape with the commercially oriented, early mass communication research of the 1930s and 1940s in the United States. Functionalism reflected the marketing concerns of a consumer society. Lazarsfeld, one of the pioneers of mass communication research, described this type of work as "administrative research."¹⁵

Historically, US mass communication research isolated specific media purposes, messages, or effects from the overall social process. It did not attempt to relate communication to the social, ideological, political, cultural, and economic systems in which it operated. Explanations about the specific communication data were seldom discussed in terms of the larger communication system, or from a macro theoretical perspective. A linear, one-time analysis was typical of the early stages of research and still afflicts the discipline today.

US mass communication researchers concentrated on collecting and classifying data in order to illuminate new forms of social control, persuasion, or attitude change. They did not see it as their function to interpret these facts or to build grand theories about structural and systemic determinants of the communication process. This early trend continues, with a focus on quantitative, empirical, behavioral science methods as opposed to highly conceptual, qualitative, speculative, theoretical, semiotic, or philosophically discursive

approaches to mass communication research. European academics favored this type of approach, though there were a few noticeable exceptions.¹⁶

This emphasis on quantitative, empirical methodology at the micro level is not surprising considering that most early mass communication research studies were commissioned by broadcast networks, government agencies, foundations, or large advertising organizations. Their aim was to deal primarily with specifically defined concerns about message effectiveness. These sponsors or agencies wanted to know what kind of political propaganda or persuasion technique would produce the desired effect. They were interested in the influence of such things as votes, purchases, attitudes, or behavior change of individuals. In terms of studies in less-developed regions of the world, the subjects were mostly male farmers. Sponsoring organizations wanted hard data about the impact of particular messages. They had no interest in how these findings fit into a greater social, ideological, or cultural scheme. Melvin Defleur and Sandra Ball-Rokeach note that as a result, the study of audiences to discover effects almost monopolized mass communication research.¹⁷ Following the functionalism approach, US researchers have tended to accept the system as a given and to implicitly endorse it by failing to examine how their understanding of communication could be enriched by questioning other basic characteristics of the system, such as ownership, power, or the role of women.

A final note: Much of the data gathering was undertaken by disparate groups of graduate students under the supervision of major American academics, but once the field data were collected the teams of researchers would return to their universities, leaving subjects across the peripheral regions with almost nothing.

Structuralism

Some critics, such as Herbert Schiller, Dan Schiller, Dallas Smythe, Bob McChesney, and Howard Frederick, probed more deeply into the question of who communicates with whom and for what purposes. They found that the real shaper of peripheral nations' communication systems and the messages they produce is media from core nations. Most peripheral regimes do not have the expertise or resources to establish domestic communication systems that genuinely reflect their history, needs, concerns, values, and culture. Consequently, they rely on the transfer (usually through foreign aid programs or United Nations agencies) of core nation communication technology and software. Imported TV series, sitcoms, feature films, and wire service copy are far cheaper to acquire than the equivalent domestically produced media programs.

In addition, it is important to note that most of the international communication industry is owned and controlled by giant core nations, mainly in the form of European, US, or Japanese transnational communication conglomerates. Good examples are Time Warner, Disney, Viacom, Comcast (NBC), News Corporation (which owns Fox and the *Wall Street Journal*), Apple, Google, Amazon, Microsoft, Sony, and Bertelsmann. These corporations are tied closely into a subtle and invisible network of core-based political, ideological, and economic elites, and they use the communication industry to perpetuate certain "needs," tastes, values, and attitudes so as to increase profits. Sales and market share are the defining matrices. When a peripheral nation imports, either through purchase, loan, or donation, communication technologies (from simple short-wave radio equipment, to printing presses, to ground stations for color television by means of satellite or the Internet), together with their software, it imports an alternative way of life. Herbert Schiller and others

on the left described this as cultural imperialism, while advocates claim that it is becoming steadily more important in the exercise of global power:

The marketing system developed to sell industry's outpouring of (largely inauthentic) consumer goods is now applied as well to globally selling ideas, tastes, preferences, and beliefs. In fact, in advanced capitalism's present stage, the production and dissemination of what it likes to term "information" become major and indispensable activities, by any measure, in the overall system. Made-in-America messages, imagery, lifestyles, and information techniques are being internationally circulated and, equally important, globally imitated. Multinational media corporations are major players in the world economy. Information and communications are vital components in the system of administration and control. Communication, it needs to be said, includes much more than messages and the recognizable circuits through which the messages flow. It defines social reality and thus influences the organization of work, the character of technology, the curriculum of the educational system, formal and informal, and the use of "free" time – actually, the basic social arrangements of living.¹⁸

A substantial body of literature deals with the central concept of cultural imperialism,¹⁹ which usually applies either to specific peripheral nations or to specific communication industries such as filmmaking, advertising, television sitcoms, or mass circulation magazines. The central finding of the research is that exporting corporations establish ground rules in such a way that the peripheral nations are at a structural disadvantage from the start. Yet this is considered a crucial process in world system theory. Somehow, this imbalance is supposed to exist in order for core nations to grow and succeed even more.

A good example of this process is reflected in the activities of the US retailer Blockbuster, which rents and sells videos, DVDs, and video games. In addition to its US stores, Blockbuster has more than 1,295 stores in 23 other countries. Many of these are in semiperipheral and peripheral nations. One can easily imagine what happens to a small, local family-owned and family-operated video store in peripheral nations such as Thailand, Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, or Chile when a Blockbuster store opens in the same community. Finally, as it and others seek to become the leading global player in the rental market, Blockbuster also brings with it a vast library of Hollywood feature films, American music, and US marketing and advertising expertise, with little room or interest for low-quantity video or DVD rentals of foreign indigenous productions.

Another example is Walmart, which has over 6,000 stores internationally, 1,200 in Mexico alone. In 2012 these foreign venues greeted 200 million customers per week and produced close to \$125 billion in annual revenue. The stores have over two million associates and a home entertainment section which sells consumers electronics of all types, DVDs, video games, and e-books. Walmart is one of the largest sellers of video and music in the world. The company has come out strongly in support of the United Nation's eight Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The MDGs have both direct and indirect applications to development communication.

Professionalism

An integral but seldom discussed instrument of cultural imperialism is the technocratic baggage – including technicians, engineers, producers, directors, behind-the-scenes personnel, and writers – that is required for the technical maintenance and operation of an imported communication infrastructure. These technocrats and engineers, along with

their manuals, are usually on loan from the industrialized nations or are trained and educated in core nations. They bring to peripheral countries value systems and attitudes associated with Western professionalism about how communication systems should be "properly" run and how they should work. This socialization frequently adds another layer to the software that itself portrays a foreign culture. Moreover, technological personnel are frequently in the employ of various core-nation aid agencies – governmental, educational, or religious organizations – that are also heavily value-laden enterprises with a proselytizing agenda.

These realities may help to explain why the introduction of mass media in many peripheral nations has failed to produce substantial results. Although there were some efforts to promote cultural sovereignty and indigenous productions, in the final analysis, these efforts produced little of substance on a national level. A noted authority in the field, Robert Stevenson, states: "Development journalism – very much a part of the New World Information Order debate at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in the 1970s – now has a record, and it is not impressive."²⁰

Given its preoccupation with audience research, US communication studies has not investigated the ties that bind media institutions to other sources and structures of power, whether domestic or international. In essence, communication experts have taken for granted that more modern technology, including communication hardware and software, will be beneficial and will promote more economic growth. In fact, the policies they support do not necessarily advance development, or improve their quality of life, but tend to foster a neocolonial-like dependence on organizations from core nations. Increasing amounts of media and information technologies often contribute to the already unbalanced distribution of benefits by concentrating additional communication power in the hands of ruling elites. These elites may be political, religious, or military in nature. This creates tension and frustration in peripheral regions by promoting inappropriate and inaccessible consumer products and values, further expanding the economic gap between core and peripheral nations.

Professionalism, as a body of research, did not have a parallel counterpart in European communication studies. The European tradition differs in two dramatic ways. First, many of the studies undertaken by European communication scholars deal with either critical theory emerging from the Frankfurt School of the 1930s, or with cultural studies which examine issues from a very different perspective from the North American traditions. Furthermore, practicing media professionals in Europe have distinctly different training than their US counterparts. Whereas most US professionals are required to have a university degree, preferably from one of the leading schools of journalism, European media outlets prefer to train their personnel through apprenticeships at regional media outlets, particularly provincial newspapers. Thus, European media professionals learn their craft by doing rather than by studying.

Despite the substantial difference between European and US socialization of media professionals and technicians, it is important to note that the critical school frequently examines ownership by media elites or economic aspects of the industry. These European researchers often reach conclusions similar to those of US scholars. Basically they have found dysfunctional elements in the exportation of considerable amounts of communication hardware, software, and related cultural products.

Western Research Failings

More exhaustive approaches focusing on structural, contextual, and procedural determinants of communication have been low-priority research concerns in the United States. US students of communication have never sought a conceptual inventory that would provide a

complete basis for explaining communication in the context of an overall social system. This failure to recognize communication as inextricably tied to social structure and power has hampered the field. Even the diffusion of innovation research tradition has flawed assumptions. Luis Beltran writes:

One basic assumption of the diffusion approach is that communication by itself can generate development, regardless of socioeconomic and political conditions. Another assumption is that increased production and consumption of goods and services constitute the essence of development, and that a fair distribution of income and opportunities will necessarily derive in due time. A third assumption is that the key to increased productivity is technological innovation, regardless of whom it may benefit and whom it may harm.²¹

The dominant research tools of diffusion studies – interview, sample survey, and content analysis – are another obstacle to the exploration of social structure as a key factor in the communication process. A preoccupation with methodological precision and small samples has taken precedence over macro theoretical formulations.

This brings us to another feature of communication research that militates against the adoption of a macro social approach that encompasses the roles of structural and organizational variables. Most theoretical models of development tend to locate internal sources of problems in developing countries and seldom look at external agencies or practices, such as the World Bank or World Trade Organization, or at the foreign ownership of media, advertising agencies, and telecommunication systems. Many of the peripheral nations have simply been glad to be the recipients of foreign aid or to have a global corporation build a plant or office in their country and create new employment opportunities.

It was suggested earlier that the lack of an adequate focus on structure in development communication research in particular, and US communication studies in general, is related to researchers' acceptance of the premise that the system is in sync. Basically, researchers did not question the system since they viewed it as working for everyone's benefit. This acceptance makes it difficult for researchers to question the structure and organization of that system, instead encouraging them to concentrate their attention on how mass communication could act on audiences in a way that promotes conformity, purchases, and adjustment to a larger consumption-driven social order.

One could argue that the lack of a structural focus stems also from the empirical, quantitative slant of US communication research and a corresponding reluctance to theorize at the macro level, as Marshall McLuhan did. The influences of communication on ideological and value systems, patterns of social organization, or subtle, difficult-to-measure matrices of power and social interaction are much harder to handle with empirical precision. These variables are less subject to rigorous measurements than the effects of specific messages on specific audiences. Study of those influences necessarily involves some theorizing, hypothesizing, and a speculative thinking not always firmly rooted in hard data. But such modes of understanding run against the grain of the exactness of the behavioral science tradition of US communication research as promoted and reinforced at universities.

A decade ago, the claim of scientific neutrality and objectivity was being challenged by a growing number of critics in the communication and journalism fields. Some comparative research is also appearing. In his Foreword to *Images of the US around the World: A Multicultural Perspective*, Majid Tehranian makes the following point concerning the image of the United States in a global context:

The image of the United States thus gradually deteriorated from a friend to a foe. In the meantime, however, the flow of American soft power in the spread of its cultural influence around the world through its cultural exports (English language, books, films, music, radio and TV programs, blue jeans, Coca-Cola, Madonna, and Michael Jackson) has seduced the younger generation nearly everywhere into emulating the American ways. The repugnance against Americanization has led some critics of US cultural influences to call it westoxification. Just like intoxication, the afflicted not only fall victim to its influence but revel in it.²²

New Departures

Current students of the discipline have found development communication theory and research methodology wanting in several respects, and they are undergoing a re-examination. To overcome these limitations, efforts are underway to find more sophisticated tools for measuring the influence of social structure; for example, the non-economic variables of social life and culture, at both macro and micro levels.

In addition, Marxist theories of communication and development gained attention during the 1960s and 1970s. In these models, the causes of underdevelopment are traced back to international imbalances caused by the dominance of capitalist systems and the imperialist control they exercise over peripheral regions, first through colonization and now by commercialization. There is a growing consciousness of the role that multinationals play in perpetuating colonial dependence both culturally and ideologically through their economic and political control of the international communication industry. This understanding is reflected in many new models that consider the influence of global political and economic power structures on development in their attempts to describe the causes of and solutions to underdevelopment. But in the early 1990s, with the demise of communism and its champion, the Soviet Union, much of the interest in and research with a Marxist underpinning quickly lost advocates and viability. Marxist communication literature lost its credibility. Still, the predominately European-based critical school of cultural studies is gaining broader attention. Although it offers a significant alternative, the problems of operationalizing its premises make large-scale research projects difficult and very costly.

For decades, communication scholars such as Schiller and Rogers pointed out the centrality of communication in the development process, but their research and scholarship had little impact outside the discipline of communication. Most of the aid agencies, foundations, and government organizations responsible for implementing development policies are controlled and dominated by economists or political scientists, and these academics failed to understand the crucial role of communication in the development cycle. They bring a silo mentality to the tasks at hand. If they had incorporated the role of communication, they might have been more successful, and the voices of criticism might have been fewer and less vociferous.

The good news is that there is evidence of a growing movement for change. The World Bank provides a good example. Long focused on the more easily measured economic indices of development such as miles of asphalt or tons of concrete, the World Bank is reconsidering its focus. It has discovered the centrality of communication within the overall development process. Each year the World Bank publishes its *World Development Report*, which identifies factors that promote sustainable development. It also reflects the thinking of the bank's senior staff. Historically, the reports have focused on large-scale projects, some

of which relate to transportation and agrarian infrastructures. The 1998 report, however, marks a dramatic shift by regarding communication as central to future development. The report suggests three lessons that are particularly important to the welfare of the billions of people in developing countries:

- 1 Developing countries must institute policies that enable them to narrow the knowledge gaps separating poor countries from rich.
- 2 Developing country governments, multilateral institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector must work together to strengthen the institutions needed to address the information problems that cause markets and governments to fail.
- 3 No matter how effective these endeavors are, problems with knowledge will persist. But recognizing that knowledge is at the core of all development efforts will allow us to discover unexpected solutions to seemingly intractable problems.²³

In the face of its critics, the World Bank is attempting to reposition itself as an institution that understands and fosters the central role of information, knowledge, and communication in its expanding global mandate.

Finally, a new movement under the umbrella of participatory communication has emerged. It seeks to use communication as a tool at the grassroots level. A goal is to bring about social change by using non-formal education methods. NGOs, in particular, attempt to work with local people in peripheral regions to share efforts and goals. This approach seeks to promote ownership at the community level. Participatory communication is not top-down but aims at being sensitive to local traditions, culture, and language by engaging locals at every stage of both planning and implementation²⁴; it seeks to be a bottom-up process. The regions of Africa, Latin America, and Asia have attempted with varying degrees of success to implement social change along the lines of participatory communication strategies.

Yet even participatory development (PD) or communication approaches have critics. Ilan Kapoor writes: "The argument, in other words, is that complicity and desire are written into PD, making it prone to an exclusionary, Western-centric and egalitarian politics ... Critics point out that, far from being inclusive and bottom-up, it reconfigures power and value systems which may end up being exclusionary, if not tyrannical."²⁵

Postscript

As noted earlier, the criticisms identified here created widespread cause for concern among academics, professionals, and policymakers. Some are calling for a new definition of development journalism/communication in light of the failure of dominant models.²⁶ The many nations in the peripheral zone are still stuck in that most marginal, least desirable zone, with little if any power. In Chapter 3, we will examine the role of UNESCO in bringing communication concerns to the forefront of the international arena. UNESCO represents some practical and theoretical alternatives for media flows, indigenous practices, and cultural sovereignty. These issues deserve the attention of students of development and the media, as well as professionals actively involved in the collection, observation, and reporting of foreign news, cultures, projects, and viewpoints.

When UNESCO championed the cause for a re-examination of international communication flows, the debates about media flows took on a life of their own. By introducing communication issues into global political discourse, UNESCO simultaneously

found both supporters and detractors. Whereas some nations recognized the validity of the arguments and concerns, others interpreted them in terms of Cold War rhetoric and divisions. More is said about the significance of the UNESCO in Chapter 3.

Communication research with an international focus is changing, complex, and in some cases controversial. Previous theories and approaches appear limited, which is why the application of world system theory, as well as the theory of electronic colonialism, to global communication trends is a welcome addition to the discipline. Electronic colonialism theory examines the cultural forces influencing individuals' attitudes and behavior in foreign countries, whereas world system theory attempts to explain and separate the different nations or regions of the world into a three-stage platform or construct emphasizing economic variables or conditions.

We now turn to major global stakeholders, including US and foreign multimedia conglomerates. An important point to keep in mind is that new digital technologies are blurring the old boundaries between software and hardware, between broadcasting and telecommunication. Old divisions and distinctions are becoming meaningless as giant communication firms morph into digital providers of a broad array of products and services to end users – customers – around the globe without regard for national boundaries. The convergence of delivery systems in a broadband or wireless environment is forcing regulators and multimedia conglomerates to rethink their global strategies. Convergence, involving the interlocking of digital technologies, computing, telephony, and global networks, is rapidly changing the commercial environments, with new stakeholders entering the arena on an almost daily basis. Think Apple, Google, Twitter, Facebook, or YouTube and the pace of change involved becomes obvious.

Notes

1. A landmark speech which established the framework, concerns, vision, and mandate for what would become the extensive involvement of the United States in both development communication projects and a plethora of anti-communism activities was President Harry Truman's inaugural address of January 20, 1949. The address expressed a mix of concern for the less fortunate of the world, particularly following World War II, and an early fear of the potential spread of communism which would eventually lead to the Cold War. Truman called for a new program aimed at spreading the economic and scientific benefits of the United States to underdeveloped countries. This would soon translate into a massive amount of talent and monetary aid for projects with a modernization focus, several of which had a communication- or media-related dimension. For a more detailed discussion, see Thomas McPhail, *Development Communication: Reframing the Role of the Media*, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.
2. Normandy Madden, "Cable, Satellite Media Lure Influential Viewers," *Advertising Age International* (October 1999), 36.
3. The history of development journalism may be traced to the Department of Development Communication at the College of Agriculture, University of the Philippines. It was established in 1973 for the purpose of training students to assist in the communication process of transmitting, by way of the media, the government's policies on agricultural development.
4. Andrew Moemeka, "Development Communication: A Historical and Conceptual Overview," in Andrew Moemeka (ed.), *Communication for Development*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994, p. 7.
5. Kwasi Ansu-Kyeremeh, "Indigenous Communication in Africa: A Conceptual Framework," in Kwasi Ansu-Kyeremeh (ed.), *Perspective on Indigenous Communication in Africa*, Legon, Ghana: School of Communication Studies Printing Press, 1998, p. 1.
6. Ank Linden, "Overt Intentions and Covert Agendas," *Gazette* 61(2) (1999), 153.
7. Everett Rogers, "Communication and Development: The Passing of the Dominant Paradigm," *Communication Research* 3 (1976), 215. Rogers wrote the "Introduction" to the first edition of *Electronic Colonialism*.
8. Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991, p. 4.
9. David Crystal, *English as a Global Language*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

10. Everett Rogers, *Modernization among Peasants: The Impact of Communication*, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969, pp. 8–9.
11. *World Development Report 1998–99: Knowledge for Development*, New York: World Bank and Oxford University Press, 1998.
12. Kevin Danaher, *10 Reasons to Abolish the IMF and World Bank*. New York: Seven Stories Press, 2001.
13. See, e.g., Doug Badow and Ian Vasques (eds.), *Perpetuating Poverty: The World Bank, the IMF, and the Developing World*, Washington, DC: Cato Institute, 1994, which dissects the role of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in promoting the politicization of economic life, inhibiting private enterprise, and delaying the emergence from poverty. The contributors argue that because of the nature of their structure, the World Bank and the IMF cannot change pro-market policies (p. 362). See also Danaher, *10 Reasons to Abolish the IMF and World Bank*.
14. Ilan Kapoor, "Participatory Development, Complicity and Desire," *Third World Quarterly* 26 (2005), 1203. Kapoor also expands on his criticism in *The Postcolonial Politics of Development*, New York: Routledge, 2008.
15. Paul Lazarsfeld, "Remarks on Administrative and Critical Communication Research," *Studies in Philosophy and Social Science* 9 (1941), 2–16.
16. Two of the most notable exceptions are Kyungmo Kim and George Barnett, "The Determinants of International News Flows: A Network Analysis," *Communication Research* 23(3) (June 1996), 323–52, and Jianguo Zhu, "Comparing the Effects of Mass Media and Telecommunications on Economic Development: A Pooling Time Series Analysis," *Gazette* 57 (1996), 17–28.
17. Melvin Defleur and Sandra Ball-Rokeach, *Theories of Mass Communication*, New York: Longman, 1975.
18. Herbert Schiller, *Communication and Cultural Domination*, White Plains, NY: International Arts and Sciences Press, 1976, p. 3.
19. Some scholars see this substantial body of literature as being overly representative of the body of knowledge in international communication. One critic refers to this aspect in the following way: "The root of the problem is that the research paradigm of the field of international communication is dominantly critical" (Michael G. Elasmr, "Opportunities and Challenges of Using Meta-Analysis in the Field of International Communication," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 16(3) (September 1999), 382). After applying a meta-analysis, the author claimed that the majority of writers used polemics rather than empirical evidence to support their conclusions. Many of the pieces are authored by academics in the semiperipheral and peripheral regions. In the same article, Elasmr also called for the utilization of more meta-analysis in order to move the field of international communication to a higher plane.
20. Robert Stevenson, *Global Communication in the Twenty-First Century*, New York: Longman, 1994, p. 13.
21. Luis Beltran, "Alien Premises, Objects and Methods in Latin American Communication Research," *Communication Research* 3 (1976), 107–34.
22. Majid Tehranian, "Foreword," in Y. Kamalipour (ed.), *Images of the US around the World: A Multicultural Perspective*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999, pp. xvi–xvii.
23. *World Development Report 1998–99*, p. 1.
24. Hermant Shah, "Modernization, Marginalization, and Emancipation: Toward a Normative Model of Journalism and National Development," *Communication Theory* 6(2) (May 1998), 143–67.
25. Kapoor, "Participatory Development, Complicity and Desire," pp. 1203–4.
26. For further details see J. Servaes, T. Jacobson, and S. White (eds.), *Participatory Communication for Social Change*, London: Sage, 1996, and T. Jacobson and J. Servaes (eds.), *Theoretical Approaches to Participatory Communication*, Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 1999.

3

The Message

The Role of International Organizations

Introduction

Historically, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has tried to avoid controversy. Yet its role, profile, and focus in the international information and communication debate are unmistakable. UNESCO, a specialized agency of the United Nations based in Paris, sponsored crucial international conferences that focused on the global communication debate and also directed its research program toward promoting new policy initiatives, such as the New World International and Communication Order (NWICO). Initially UNESCO invested much, backstage as well as publicly, in NWICO. This eventually led to major problems for the agency, the greatest of which was the withdrawal during the 1980s of the United States and the United Kingdom from UNESCO membership. When they left, they also took their crucial financial support, which had been about one-third of UNESCO's total annual budget. UNESCO put its efforts and credibility into supporting a call for NWICO, but with the demise of the Cold War, UNESCO was found wanting. It had made a strategic mistake in relying extensively on strong Soviet support for NWICO.

Before describing the critical historical meetings and stakeholders in the global debate, it is important to note that the global media have two rather distinct origins. In the United States, their origins are strongly rooted in commercial media systems in which advertising and market forces play crucial roles. Initially with newspapers, radio, and now with television, telecommunications, and the Internet, the US model is one of corporate influence with private ownership and control. The US model treats media and culture as economic commodities. By contrast, in Europe and in most countries of the world, the historical model is one of government ownership or government control of the mass media. The BBC is a good example of a non-commercial radio and television network subsidized by both the government and listeners or viewers, who pay an annual license fee. In most of the world (in particular former colonies of European countries), radio evolved as a