Introduction

The challenge of the glocal

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A spectre is haunting the world –the spectre of globalization. All the powers of old academia have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this spectre: social scientists (especially economists) worry about whether markets and deregulation produce greater wealth at the price of increased inequality. Political scientists worry that their field might vanish along with their favourite object, the nation-state, if globalization truly creates a 'world without borders'. Cultural theorists, especially Marxists, worry that in spite of its conformity with everything they already knew about capital, there may be some embarrassing new opportunities for equity hidden in its workings. Historians, ever worried about the problem of the new, realize that globalization may not be a member of the familiar archive of large-scale historical shifts. And everyone in academia is anxious to avoid seeming to be a mere publicist of the gigantic corporate machineries that celebrate globalization.

The above travesty of the first sentences of *The Communist Manifesto*, combined with the opening reflections on 'anxieties of the global' in Indian anthropologist Arjun Appadurai's introduction to the anthology *Globalization* (2001), gives a fair view of our current predicament, not only or even primarily in the academic world. Whether we like it or not, we are bound to relate to the phenomenon demonized –and exorcized– as globalization. First introduced in the field of cultural sociology to analyse changes in global cultural flows (Robertson, 1992), it has increasingly attained a purely economic definition, as the on-going reorgani-

zation and consolidation of global capitalism since the fall of the Soviet empire and the end of communism as a global competitor to Western liberal democracy. But defined so narrowly, globalization is but *one* aspect –albeit a fundamental one– of the more general transformational process which Catalan sociologist Manuel Castells has described and analysed as "the rise of the Network Society" (Castells, 1996, 1997, 1998).

According to Castells we are truly witnessing something new and never before experienced. The network society has evolved, not by historical determinism as an orthodox Marxist analysis would have it, but rather by coincidence, through the synergy of a couple of circumstances that happened to coincide:

- » the new Information and Communication Technology (ICT), and the integration of the world into global computer networks;
- » the shrinking costs of communications in a more material sense (transports), making global migration feasible;
- » the fall of the Berlin wall and the restructuring of global capitalism;
- » the new social movements –women's rights, the environment, human rights, etc.– that have evolved since the 1960s.

Whether we share Castells' notion of a 'qualitative leap' or regard globalization as merely the culmination of a process which has been under way for at least 150 years, we can all agree that the rapid global changes in the last few decades, illustrated by the two symbolic landmarks of the crumbling Berlin wall and the tumbling Twin Towers of the World Trade Center, face practically all sectors of human society with new challenges, not least the field of communication in a development context.

This field is currently undergoing a series of changes and innovations. New information and communication technologies (ICTs) are setting a new scene for access, content, formats and interactivity. Economic globalization is producing wealth in former less-developed areas and providing potentially powerful means for poverty alleviation, while at the same time leading to increased social and economic marginalization. HIV/AIDS is posing one of the biggest communication challenges in the history of communication for development, while important new areas such as conflict resolution are emerging and demanding attention. Altogether, this situation is articulating the required move towards not only increasingly thinking of and advocating social change objectives when practising strategic communication, but also rethinking and redefining some of the fundamental assumptions.

Reconstructing development

'Development', to start with, has been under scrutiny for some time. The grand paradigms of the 1960s (modernization) and '70s (dependency) were followed in the '80s and '90s by a multiplicity of generally less assuming approaches, some of which radically questioned the very concept of development. As Dutch sociologist

Jan Nederveen Pieterse (2001) has pointed out, there is an unholy alliance
between the strong neoliberal perspective, associated with economic globaliza-
tion and structural adjustment, and the radical post-development perspective,
proposing local de-linking and resistance to globalization, in their common repu-
diation of 'development' as discourse and politics. But following the deconstruc-
tion of development, we can now witness its gradually emerging reconstruction
as *world development*. Development is no longer a process reserved for 'develop-
ing countries'; all societies are developing as part of a global process, making the
dichotomy of 'first' and 'third' worlds obsolete –at least in the geopolitical sense.
The entire world is 'in transition' and development must therefore be rethought
as a regional, transnational, global project (Pieterse, 2001: 45).

   The paradigms of communication for development have to some
extent been corollaries to the paradigms of development theory and politics, with
a move from top-down diffusion to empowering participation –the latter corre-
sponding to what Jan Servaes has called "the multiplicity paradigm" (chapter 5).
But the relation between development thinking and the theory and practice of
development communication calls for new reflection in the light of Nederveen
Pietserse's suggested *critical globalist* perspective.

Informatization for social change?

The Internet is the backbone of the network society and globalization is intrinsi-
cally involved in the parallel processes of virtualization and *informatization* (as
corresponding to industrialization). Yet, the so-called digital revolution has mainly
been portrayed as an exclusive concern of the wealthy nations. The booming lit-
erature on cyberspace and the new techno-culture in the '90s showed little, if
any, interest in the developing countries. ICT has, however, quickly established its
own niche within development cooperation. Two diametrically opposing and
equally justified opinions can be identified where the implications of ICT for
development are concerned:

  » it strengthens and further widens the divide between developed and
   developing countries;

  » it is a shortcut to prosperity without the need for polluting industrial-
   ization or resource-consuming investments in heavy infrastructure.

In Castells' analysis, ICT has a privileged position, also in a development context:

> The fundamental digital divide is not measured by the number of connec-
> tions to the Internet, but by the consequences of both connection and lack
> of connection. Because the Internet is not just a technology. It is the tech-
> nological tool and organizational form that distributes information power,
> knowledge generation, and networking capacity in all realms of activity.
> Thus, developing countries are caught in a tangled web. On the one hand,
> being disconnected, or superficially connected, to the Internet is tanta-
> mount to marginalization in the global, networked system. Development

without the Internet would be the equivalent of industrialization without electricity in the industrial era. That is why the often-heard statement concerning the need to start with 'the real problems of the Third World' –meaning health, education, water, electricity, and the like– before coming to the Internet reveals a profound misunderstanding of the current issues in development. Because, without an Internet-based economy and management system, there is little chance for any country to generate the resources necessary to cover its developmental needs, on a sustainable ground –meaning economically sustainable, socially sustainable, and environmentally sustainable (Castells, 2001: 269).

India's 'communication revolution' (Singhal and Rogers, 2001) is an interesting example of *informatization* as a development strategy. What has always been regarded as India's major set-back –its huge population– has suddenly become its great comparative advantage. Some 100,000 qualified computer engineers graduate every year, and have turned India into the world's 'outsourcing centre'. India's advantage over the other giant, China, is of course the language –English being a national language and lingua franca. India's change since the mid 1990s has been dramatic. Yet it remains at the bottom of the Human Development Index (HDI) list, with one of the highest illiteracy rates in the world. And it is precisely the combination of low HDI and high ICT capacity that makes India a pilot case in efforts to open new frontiers for informatization as a tool for economic *and* social change.

The cultural turn

'Transnationalism', as defined by Kevin Robins and Asu Aksoy (chapter 2), is another fundamental challenge to development communication strategies, which are still to a large extent formulated and implemented within the framework of the nation-state, or the (culturally) bounded local community. Global migration and TV satellites have resulted in big, new, globally scattered diasporic cultures linked in transnational public spheres, which are undermining the 'imagined communities' of the national media.

Among the main potential new agents of social change in a global context, as part of what Appadurai calls 'grassroots globalization' or 'globalization from below' (1996, 2001), are the *transnational advocacy networks*, or TANs, which form an increasingly important part of the NGO world that in turn plays an increasingly crucial role in international development cooperation.

Transnationalization may reinforce cultural (and national) identities, but *transcultural* processes are also a central feature of reflexive global modernity, expressed as 'creolization' or 'cultural hybridity' and analysed by post-colonial theorists such as Appadurai and Homi K Bhabha. 'Culture' is, however, a problematic concept in a development context.

The social engineers of the modernization model regarded it as at best a colourful yet insignificant vestige of the past which would eventually fade away,

like religion. At worst, and not without reason, (cultural) tradition was seen as a major obstacle to social and economic development. Culture was not a major concern of the opposing dependency school either –except as an expression of political resistance to (cultural) imperialism. Cultural differences, which could have explained why a group of East Asian economies in the decades that followed were apparently to refute the dependency theory, were still not considered to be of any significance.

But in the '90s –proclaimed by the UN as the Decade of Culture– the tables were turned and culture suddenly became the key word in development discourse. In 1995, the World Commission on Culture and Development presented its report *Our Creative Diversity*, introducing the notion of 'cultural freedom' as "the right of a group of people to follow a way of life of its choice". The World Commission was followed by an *Action Plan on Cultural Policies for Development* (1998) and the UNESCO declaration on *Cultural Diversity* (2001), intended to be a supplement to the better-known Agenda 21.

The cultural turn in development discourse coincides with a general trend in the social sciences. Moreover, it happens at a time when 'culture', as a consequence of globalization, tends to become synonymous with 'identity' –national, religious or ethnic. Cultural policies are increasingly taking the form of identity politics that are often militant, as discussed in depth by Thomas Hylland Eriksen in chapter 1. The 'right to culture' has thus tended to create an antagonism between (individual human) rights and culture, understood as a bounded group identity. Cultural freedom as opposed to individual freedom seems to reflect the classical opposition between relativism and universalism.

In his constructive critique of *Our Creative Diversity,* Eriksen (2001) even suggests that we should abandon the word culture in a development context:

> There is no need for a concept of culture in order to respect local conditions in development work: it is sufficient to be sensitive to the fact that local realities are always locally constructed, whether one works in inner-city Chicago or in the Kenyan countryside. One cannot meaningfully rank one locality as more authentic than another. What is at stake in development work is not cultural authenticity or purity, but people's ability to gain control over their own lives[1].

Yet insistence on respect for local circumstances remains fundamental, and support for local arts and the preservation of historical environments are becoming increasingly important features of international development cooperation. Whether we like the term 'cultural heritage' or not, it is one of the emerging areas within the field of communication for development.

1 The full text is available on Eriksen's webpage, <http://folk.uio.no/geirthe/UNESCO.html>.

Media and communication in development cooperation

'Coherence' is becoming a buzz-word in the jargon of development policy-makers, indicating a growing awareness of the inter-relatedness of different, often opposing policies. For example, the sum of development aid from North to South is minuscule compared with subsidies to agricultural production in the donor countries, and exports from the South are effectively hindered by trade barriers and import restrictions in the North. The divide between rhetoric and reality seems abysmal. Nevertheless, the very formulation of the UN Millennium Goals, with poverty alleviation as their prime objective, and the adoption of 'coherent' policies for international development cooperation –such as Sweden's recently ratified 'policy for global development'– may be important steps towards a truly globalist development perspective.

However, the fundamental role of media and communication in promoting global change is remarkably absent in almost all the declarations. In spite of the focus on democracy and human rights, the seemingly obvious means to achieve these goals –plural media and functional public spheres– still occupy a peripheral position in bilateral as well as multilateral programmes. Moreover, there is often a sharp divide within the development agencies, between 'media support' on the one hand and 'strategic communication' on the other, as if media and communication were opposed and even conflicting entities.

Media support, mostly in the form of training in journalism and financial aid to 'free' media, represents an insignificant proportion of development budgets, and strategic communication even less –if indeed it is even defined as a separate objective. Few development agencies have yet bothered to formulate a communication policy.

This situation is slowly but steadily changing. Primarily this is due to the imminent challenge of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and the evident need for coordinated health communication measures. Secondly it is a consequence of the new patterns of global and local conflicts and the no less urgent need for conflict prevention and resolution. Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia are but two examples of the media's disastrous ability to instigate violence and even genocide. Bosnia after the Dayton agreement provides a single example of failed media efforts with a peace-building pretext, but there are other, albeit few and less well-known, cases which demonstrate the media's peace-breaking potential.

There may, however, be a conflict of interest here, between liberal ideals of freedom and plurality, on the one hand, and the prevention of incitement to violence and ethnic strife and the protection of vulnerable groups, on the other. This emerging conflict bears some resemblance to the once divisive controversy over the 'New World Information and Communication Order', which may appear distant and long since refuted today, yet is well worth re-examining in the light of current tendencies in the global media landscape.

The holistic approach

One of the common conclusions found throughout this inventory of the field is the call for a holistic approach. Health communication will surely remain the single most important area within the field of communication for social change, with conflict resolution as the runner-up. But these are of course intimately linked vis-à-vis the overall goal of poverty alleviation and the equally emphasized objectives of democracy and human rights. The environment, including the man-made environment and heritage, is another area of increasing importance. Sustainable development does not only concern the natural environment and the rural poor, but also the cultural heritage in urban environments. The socio-cultural dimension of sustainability is fundamental from a development communication perspective, with the potential to promote social inclusion and participatory democratic citizenship.

The successful use of narrative and fiction is perhaps the most striking feature when it comes to actually mediating social change. *Edutainment* (Entertainment-Education) has become the favoured medium for HIV/AIDS communication, with success stories such as HIP Femina in Tanzania, Puntos de Encuentro in Nicaragua and the often evoked Soul City of South Africa. Not only culture in general, but art –*the arts*– is becoming a particularly important player in the field, with equally interesting implications for artistic imagination and investigation.

The current ComDev debate

The debate about communication for social change is currently being articulated by a range of major international initiatives within the development business.

» Since 1997 the Rockefeller Foundation has hosted a range of meetings and seminars seeking to articulate a global dialogue upon key challenges in the field, and calling for a stronger social change agenda in many development challenges (Rockefeller Foundation, 1991 and 1999). This has raised substantial debate on the fundamental question of how to define social change. From 2004 the Communication for Social Change Consortium has continued this series of meetings and seminars. Recent meetings in this forum have debated the key competencies required and drafted what may become a generic Master programme in communication for social change <www.communicationforsocialchange.org>.

» Based on global consultations in 1998-2000 with practitioners and scholars, UNAIDS came up with an HIV/AIDS communication framework (Makinwa, B., Airhihenbuwa, C., and Obregon R., 1999). This sparked a lot of debate but had some difficulty in linking up with practice. The WHO and especially PAHO have, with USAID support, pursued some of the ideas and are working on curricular design in the Latin American region in particular.

» The International Roundtables on Communication for Development, having met regularly since 1988, had their eighth roundtable in Managua, Nicaragua, in November 2001, discussing these issues along three lines of debate: behaviour change communication, advocacy communication and communication for social change (Roundtable Declaration, November 26th 2001).

A lot of debate is thus taking place on the issue of communication for social change, but having participated in some of the debates outlined above, we the editors of this book have realized that there is a tremendous need for more systematic reflection upon where the field is heading. There is also an outspoken need for a clearer understanding of the key components in such a field of research and practice, for discussion of the epistemologies, the theories, the methods and the successful cases, all in an integrated manner. And such an integrated discussion should be set in the context of globalization in all the aspects –economic, political and not least cultural– which are setting the agendas. With the field of communication and development booming, there is also a clear need for greater professionalism amongst media and communication practitioners in the development business.

Moreover, recent theoretical and methodological developments in the broad field of communication research –and not least audience research– have still been incorporated on only a very limited scale into current practices in communication for development. This missing link must be challenged. There also exists a wide range of successful practices that deserve attention for feeding back into academic reflection in the field.

Lastly, but most crucially: there is a need to link all these issues to provide efficient responses to the burning societal challenges, for example that of HIV/AIDS. This book therefore wishes to integrate reflection on epistemology, theory, methodology and successful case studies in order to move the field towards a new phase, enabling media and communication practitioners to respond better to the realities of a *glocalized* world. We have chosen the term 'glocal' –derived from American sociologist Roland Robertson's notion of 'glocalization'– to stress the dual character of the globalization process, as being 'globalization' and 'localization' simultaneously. Glocal change means social change in a global *and* local context. It implies rethinking the discourses of both 'development' and 'communication' in the light of a third discourse which provides the general frame: that is, globalization.

Our ambition is thus to try to delineate the characteristics of what might be understood as an emerging interdisciplinary communication discipline, committed to development and to social change, and for that purpose seeking to bridge the best of traditionally separate communication paradigms, and drawing on successful experience.

Previous and parallel publications

The general subject of media and globalization has seen a number of publications in the last decade, such as the reader *Media in Global Context* (1997) and the more recent anthologies *News in a Globalized Society* (2001) and *Global Encounters: Media and Cultural Transformation* (2002). An attempt at globalizing the field of media studies is made in *De-Westernizing Media Studies* (2000) and media case studies form a significant part of *Culture and Global Change* (1999), both anthologies published by Routledge, which has also issued a series of working papers on *Transnationalism*, with a degree of focus on media and communications, at the website Transnational Communities[2]. *Globalization* (2001), with Arjun Appadurai's explicit call for new forms of pedagogy and collaborative research on (grassroots) globalization, could also easily be enlisted for our purposes here.

The closest more recent material in the specific field of Communication for Development is the anthology *Approaches to Development Communication*, edited by Jan Servaes and published by UNESCO in 2002. Servaes' previous work (1999; Servaes, Jacobson and White, eds., 1996) provides examples of related material. However, these publications focus more specifically on participatory communication, as in White (ed., 1999), for example. A two-volume anthology is in the pipeline (Gumucio Dagron and Tufte, eds., forthcoming), and will be published by the Communication for Social Change Consortium. However, this publication's focus is on gathering key classics –texts that have played a key role over the history of the field, especially in conceptual development of its thinking and practice.

In the field of entertainment-education a major publication has just been published (Singhal et al, 2004). However, as with the work of Servaes or White, it only deals with one specific aspect of communication for development.

New publications are being issued in each thematic area mentioned in this book, but many have a very specialized focus (such as those mentioned above, or also Downing, 2001 or Bouman, 1999) or remain on the practitioner's level (which includes many UN publications on radio, video or on the use of specific methodologies and tools). A sound contribution to the field was McKee et al, (2000), which dealt with all relevant aspects of designing, implementing and monitoring social sector programmes and using communication in that respect. However, this focuses on methodologies, has no in-depth presentation of cases, and does not offer the overall societal framework that we suggest. Substantial case presentations are found in Gumucio-Dagron's report *Making Waves* (2000), but they remain case presentations.

What has been lacking to date is a comprehensive contemporary presentation of the whole field of communication for development, broadening the perspective, bridging the existing paradigms, providing the development context,

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2 <www.transcomm.ox.ac.uk>.

and offering an introduction to what is increasingly becoming a new field of research and communication practice. The ambition of this anthology, gathering leading contemporary theorists and practitioners in the present field and adding important authors from closely connected areas of research and practice, is therefore to present an integral reflection upon where the still-emerging field of communication for development is coming from and, particularly, where we believe it should be heading.

The book is organized in three parts, with the first part setting and redefining the general framework (epistemology, theory and methodology), the second mapping the new field, and the third providing some exemplary case studies linked to the chosen sub-areas of the field.

Editing an anthology like this is always a hazardous and somewhat random task. We are aware that some areas have received more attention than others and that important new subjects within this dynamic field may be missing altogether. But this anthology should of course be regarded as our contribution to an ongoing process.