

Communication and Third World development: A dead end?

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Purpose

The three decades that followed the end of World War II witnessed a massive campaign by the industrialized world to promote development in the Third World. The United States of America, which emerged from the war as the most powerful nation, played a leading role in these endeavors. Although the development campaign was carried out on several fronts – economic, political, and social – communication (more precisely telecommunication) was accorded a place of eminence, no doubt because of the recognized power of the media to influence the minds of men.

During the last decade, however, global interest in Third World development and in the place of communication in this phenomenon, has rapidly dwindled. Today only a few scholars and policy makers outside the Third World devote time, energy and resources to the battle against underdevelopment. This is unfortunate, because the circumstances that led to an international focus on underdevelopment after World War II have in no way dissipated. In fact, with the growing phenomenon of transnationalization of business enterprises and of our understanding of how they perpetuate underdevelopment, the moral consequences of trade and political relations among nations can no longer be ignored. Nor can we ignore the contribution of communication to the various problems of understanding – and misunderstanding – among nations. It is, therefore, my hope, through this article, to revive an interest in communication and development among internationally-minded scholars, especially those in the Third World.

I shall review the various paradigms that have emerged in the study of communication and development, and close with my ideas of what needs to be done to put into practice what we now know about the role of communication in the promotion of development in the less industrialized nations.

The rise of the dominant paradigm

The inception of the debate on the contribution of communication to development, especially in the newly independent nations, can be dated back to 1958 when Daniel Lerner published *The Passing of Traditional Society*. Even the title of Lerner's book was indicative of the optimistic mood of the period. In every discipline there was the conviction that the 'old folkways' of tradition would *inevitably* give way to the 'liberating' lifestyles of modern society.

Industrialization was expected to serve as the decisive instrument for improving the quality of life in, and bringing modernization into, the Third World. Since Europe and America already had a highly successful technology, the problem of developing the less industrialized countries was seen as mainly a problem of how best to *transfer* to these countries the existing technology.¹

In this task of magically transforming the Third World, communication was accorded a place of honor. According to Lerner, communication, more precisely the mass media, was required to spread 'among a large public, vivid images of its New Ways.'² In a similar vein, Schramm maintained that only 'adequate and effective communication' could speed up and smoothen 'the terrible ascent of the developing nations of the world toward social and economic modernity.'³ Furthermore,

Countries in a hurry cannot afford the luxury of ... an inert mass. They require the active and informed cooperation of their village people as well as their city people. Their human resources are indispensable. Therefore, they are going to have to speed the flow of information, offer education where it has never been offered before, teach literacy and technical skills very widely. This is the only way they can rouse and

prepare their populace to climb the economic mountains. *And the only way they can do it and keep the timetable they have in mind is to make full use of modern communication.*⁴ (emphasis mine)

In more specific terms, the mass media were expected to assist in development through, among other things, teaching the populace basic productive skills, complementing formal education, especially for adult literacy and by generally providing 'surveillance of the cultural environment.' This is a political function involving serving as 'a watchdog' of the people's interests against the excesses of government or any 'cultural invasion' from without.

Lerner's 'model' of modernization, which was embraced and expanded by Schramm (1964), Pye (1964), Rao (1966), and Rogers (1962), among others, a good illustration of the dominant paradigm of development through modernization.⁵ The key variables in Lerner's model were empathy, literacy, media participation, urbanization, and modernization. Empathy was defined as 'the capacity to see oneself in the other fellow's situation.'⁶ Lerner conceived empathy in terms of 'the mobile personality,' denoting a 'high capacity for identification with new aspects of (one's) environment.'⁷ The mobile personality, Lerner maintained, was a feature of urban, rather than rural settings, 'an indispensable skill for people moving out of traditional settings.' Lerner related the variables in the following manner:

The secular evolution of a participant (modern) society appears to involve a regular sequence of three phases. Urbanization comes first, for cities alone have developed the complex of skills and resources which characterize the modern industrial economy. Within this urban matrix develop both of the attributes which distinguish the next two phases: literacy and media growth.

There is a close reciprocal relationship between these for the literate develop the media which in turn spread literacy ... The capacity to read, at first acquired by relatively few people, equips them to perform the varied tasks required in the modernizing society. Not until the third phase, when the elaborate

technology of industrial development is fairly well advanced does a society begin to produce newspapers, radio networks, and motion pictures on a massive scale. This in turn accelerates literacy. Out of this develop those institutions of participation (e.g., voting) which we find in all advanced modern societies ...⁸

From the above quotation and other statements in *The Passing of Traditional Society*, we could express the relationship between Lerner's key variables in the following manner:

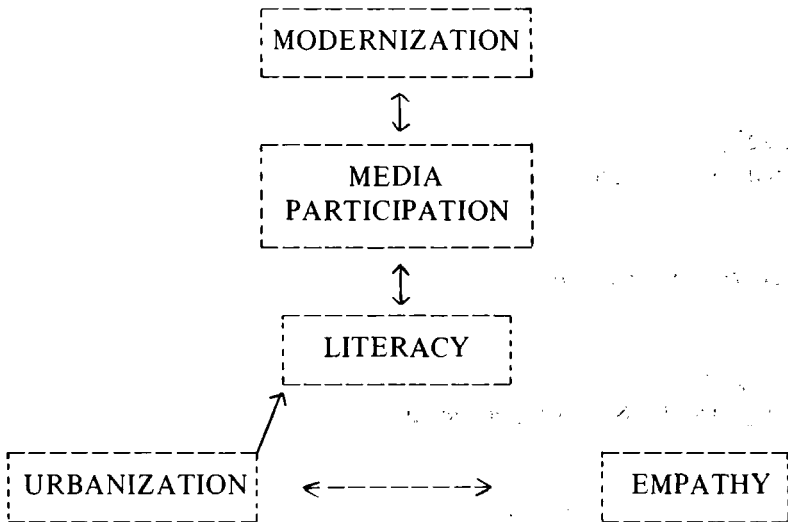


Figure 1. Lerner's modernization model

A number of conclusions followed from Lerner's model. Firstly, it emphasized urbanization as the start-off point in modernization. Secondly, the model conveyed a Western orientation. Lerner in fact categorically stated that he was using the term 'Modernization' in place of 'Westernization' only because the latter was a politically controversial label in the Middle East about which he wrote *The Passing of Traditional Society*. Western society, he as-

serted, 'still provides the most developed model of societal attributes – power, wealth, skill, rationality ... Middle Eastern modernizers will do well to study the historical sequence of Western growth.'⁹

The implications of accepting a Western model of development are numerous. Among these are an emphasis on heavy industrialization, capital-intensive (rather than labor-intensive) production strategies, high-skill management, and a *laissez-faire* or free-market economy closely linked to Western economic centers.

Thirdly, Lerner's model contained a tacit promise: if you increase urbanization, literacy, and the opportunity for media participation in an underdeveloped country, what would result would be improved modernization and political/economic development. During the three decades since that 'promise' was made, Third World countries made massive efforts to raise their levels of literacy, urbanization, and mass media opportunities. International organs such as UNESCO, and several industrially-advanced Western countries, principally the United States of America, provided billions of dollars during this period to promote development-related projects in the Third World. Based on its own sponsored research, UNESCO set minimum levels of exposure opportunities for the various mass media – radio, newspaper, television, cinema – and funded projects in Third World countries to increase their levels of media participation and training of media personnel.

At the quantitative level of evaluation, one could say a lot of progress was made. Urbanization did increase in all Third World countries during the two decades in which the "development as modernization" paradigm reigned supreme. Western approach to health-care delivery became the standard in even the most rural communities. Literacy programs were vigorously pursued in many countries and mass media organizations increased in leaps and bounds. Table 1, for instance, shows the growth in the number of radio and television receivers in different parts of the world between 1965 and 1983. Although the overall number of radio and television sets in the developed world was considerably larger than the figures for the developing world, the gains over the two decades within the developing world were far more impressive. The developed world just about doubled its figures for radio sets over the two decades. By comparison, the developing

Table 1. Radio and television receivers in the world, 1965 to 1983

Continents	Radio receivers (in millions)			Television receivers (in millions)		
	1965	1975	1983	1965	1975	1983
World total	535	961	1,390	186	394	613
Africa	10	28	60	0.6	2.5	9.8
America	285	505	625	84	160	241
Asia	53	138	301	24	57	107
Europe (incl. USSR)	184	277	380	75	169	247
Developed countries	460	770	996	175	353	521
Developing countries	75	191	394	11	41	92

Source: UNESCO Statistical Yearbook, 1986.

world showed a more than five-fold increase in number of radio sets within this period. The same trend was obvious with television which was a relatively new medium in the 1960s: The number of television sets in the developed countries increased three-fold between 1965 and 1983, in comparison to a more than eight-fold increase within the developing countries. The rise in number of television sets was particularly remarkable for the African continent – an increase more than 16-fold! No factor other than the promotional effort of the modernization theorists could explain this phenomenal rise in mass media availability and use in developing countries between the 1960s and the 1980s.

The fall of the dominant paradigm

A qualitative evaluation of the modernization drive, however, raised doubts about its positive contribution to the improvement of the *quality of life* of the people on the underdeveloped countries. In the first place, the increased emphasis on urbanization

made the towns more attractive than the villages and small traditional communities, resulting in rural-urban population drift. The modest infrastructure in the cities could not adjust fast enough to cater adequately for the rapidly growing urban population turning most big towns and cities into veritable slums within one generation.

Agriculture – the mainstay of Third World economy – felt into disrepute because the rural-urban migrants were almost entirely the young and the able-bodied who would otherwise had kept to the farm. By the late 1970s most Third World countries had turned from exporters of agricultural products into importers of food items on a massive scale. Nigeria, for instance, spent about the equivalence of U.S.\$ 1 billion on the importation of grains – mostly wheat and rice – between 1979 and 1983 alone. The bulk of this food import of course came from the major industrialized countries in the West thereby worsening the country's dependency status.

Commercial agriculture through the system of plantations destroyed the well-established traditional system of subsistence farming but proved inadequate in coping with the problems in the economy, forcing many countries into monocultural economic situations. For example, de Castro noted that with regard to Latin America,

What helped in definitely ruining the native populations was the one-track exploitation to which almost every region was dedicated: some were given to mining, others to coffee planting, some to tobacco, and others to cocoa. This specialization brought on the deformed economy which is still found in such countries as El Salvador, which produces practically nothing but coffee, and Honduras, which exports nothing but bananas.¹⁰

Professor de Castro cited Brazil as an example of a country in which 'the one-crop culture,' manifested in the establishment and expansion of plantations, have brought about the systematic pauperization and threats to the lives of large parts of the native population:

The one-crop culture of cane sugar in the Brazilian northeast is a good example. The area once had one of the few really fertile tropical soils. It had a climate favorable to agriculture, and it was originally covered with a forest growth extremely rich in fruit trees. Today, the all-absorbing, self-destructive sugar industry has stripped all the available land and covered it completely with sugar cane; as a result this is one of the starvation areas of the continent. The failure to grow fruits, greens and vegetables, or to raise cattle in the region, has created an extremely difficult food problem in an area where diversified farming could produce an infinite variety of foods.¹¹

Similar situations abounded in Asia and Africa, as for instance in Gambia in West Africa 'where the culture of food crops for local consumption has been completely abandoned in order to concentrate on the production of peanuts,' and in Egypt where 'a large part of the irrigated land was reserved to produce cash export crops ... which further aggravated the nutritional poverty of the fellah.'¹² To de Castro's list, one could add the case of Nigeria which as late as 1985 depended on a simple export commodity, crude oil, for more than 90 percent of her foreign exchange earnings.

Apart from introducing 'nutritional poverty' into Third World countries, economic monoculturalism also had one serious consequence: it left the economy of a country at the mercy of the performance of its single product on the world market. The nature of the problem that could arise from this was shown by the case of Nigeria which in 1986 had to adjust her national budget downwards half-way through the year because, within a matter of days in March, the price of crude oil in the world market plummeted from about US\$ 28 per barrel to less than US\$ 10 per barrel.

Also as a part of the unexpected consequences of modernization, improved medical facilities, achieved in many countries, reduced infant mortality and kept more people alive longer than before thus contributing to soaring population problems. Widespread literacy turned more and more young men and young women, including university graduates, out on to the unemployment line.

At the technological level, the emphasis on heavy industrializa-

tion drained national treasuries and promoted dependency since these industries required both material and human resources from elsewhere to function. Increased political participation did occur, but, contrary to the hope that this would lead to democracy, it was of the type that bred distrust and bitter rivalry, usually between competing tribal or national groups. In African countries, political rancour degenerated into *coups d'état* and ushered in the reign of the 'military presidents.'

The mass media played a questionable role in all of these by disseminating information that was often in consonance with, and promoting, Western capitalist ideals and values. In many Third World countries, the media, through advertisements and imported entertainment programs, raised hopes and aspirations far beyond what the state could satisfy, resulting ultimately in what Lerner later described as 'a revolution of rising frustrations.'¹³

The above negative consequences of modernization were further compounded by the growth during this period of the phenomenon of transnationalization. Schiller described transnational corporations as 'the global organizers of the world economy ... the basic economic organizational unit in the modern world capitalist economy ...'¹⁴ Transnationalization was, and still is, the ultimate in the exercise of economic power under the capitalist system. Although with home offices in the industrialized countries – principally the United States of America – the TNC's dominate the global economy and operate in many Third World countries on a self-determined mandate that respects only profit. In the words of Schiller:

These aggressive business empires organize the world market as best they can ... In furthering their goals of securing worldwide markets and unimpeded profitability, (the TNC's) influence, and if possible, dominate every cultural and informational space that separates them from total control of their global/national environment. This is not a short-run necessity; it is a permanent condition that arises out of a market system and the way that system establishes its priorities and consequently its reward and sanctions.¹⁵

Table 2. Transnational corporations involved in the global electronics industry

Rank	Corporation	Sales (in million \$)	Employees
1	IBM (USA)	14,436	288,647
2	General Electric (USA)	13,339	375,000
3	IT&T (USA)	11,367	376,000
4	Philips (Netherlands)	10,746	397,000
5	Siemens (Fed. Rep. of Germany)	7,759	296,000
6	Western Electric (USA)	6,590	152,677
7	GTE (USA)	5,948	187,170
8	Westinghouse (USA)	5,862	166,048
9	AEG – Telefunken (Fed. Rep. of Germany)	5,187	162,100
10	North American Rockwell (USA)	4,943	122,789
11	RCA (USA)	4,789	113,000
12	Matsushita (Japan)	4,677	82,869
13	LTV (USA)	4,312	60,400
14	Xerox (USA)	4,094	93,532
15	CGE (France)	4,072	131,000

Source: Cees Hamelink, *The Corporate Village*, Rome: IDOC, Europe Dossier 4, 1977.

Table 2 shows the fifteen leading transnational corporations engaged in the manufacturing and worldwide marketing of equipment for radio and television transmission and reception at the close of the 1970s. The fifteen transnational corporations that controlled the better part of operations in international communication in the 1970s, and who have since expanded into the field of informatics – satellites, computers and related high technologies – are located in five countries. Ten of the fifteen are based in the United States of America. The transnationals also control the lion's share of the world market in book publishing (USA, Britain and France), world news and features (USA, Britain, France and Russia), radio and television programs, films, recorded sound and video cassettes (USA, Britain and France).

With regard to advertising, U.S. transnationals, by the early 1980s, controlled more than half of the estimated global annual expenditure of \$64 billion. Mass media advertising proved to be

one of the thorny issues in Third World development. As noted by the MacBride Report, advertising, while desirable in promoting social aims, in supplying useful information to consumers, and in providing mass media revenue also 'tends to promote attitudes and life-styles that extol acquisition and consumption at the expense of other values.'¹⁶

Advertising poses a special problem for small countries and particularly the developing ones, for it is vested to a large extent in a few large agencies, of which four (three American and one Japanese) spend more than \$1,000 million a year each. They are transnational corporations that produce advertising either directly or through subsidiaries for newspapers, radio and television around the world. Some developing countries depend for the financing and indeed the very existence of their broadcasting system on imported advertising. In such situations codes of conduct become more difficult to enforce. Consequently many developing countries see advertising as a threat to their cultural identity, since it brings in its wake alien ethical values and may deviate consumer demand to non-priority areas.¹⁷

To the above concern one could add the fact that the companies with enough financial clout to patronize the transnational advertising agencies are, for the most part, themselves transnational corporations whose threats to withdraw advertising are often enough to force the hands of mass media organizations into towing particular lines.

UNESCO believes that the huge size and virtual independence of transnational corporations have become 'a qualitatively new phenomenon in communication' over the past twenty years. 'While the outright ownership of the media in the developing countries by transnational corporations is declining, these companies are now exerting influence through program sales, technology, marketing patterns and professional models with the result that these issues have superseded that of outright ownership. The growing number of joint ventures between international capital and local capital, both private and public, has made foreign influence at the same time more forcefully and more acceptable.'¹⁸

But by far the most biting criticism of the modernization paradigm was that it created glaring inequalities between social groups in the less developed countries. The wealth of nations became concentrated in the hands of minute minorities while the huge majorities, mostly but not exclusively in the rural areas, languished in poverty. The 'trickle-down theory' which envisaged that the benefits of urban development would trickle down to the less advantaged majority within each country has remained a pipe dream. In fact, on the contrary, 'development of the type experienced by the majority of Third World countries in the last quarter century has meant, for very large numbers of people, increased impoverishment.'¹⁹ According to Keith Griffin and Azizur Rahman Khan, studies of seven Third World countries in Asia – Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Sri-Lanka – conducted the late 1970s, showed that 'the incomes of the very poor have been falling *absolutely*, or the proportion of the rural population living below a designated "poverty line" has been increasing, or both. Similar things almost certainly have been happening elsewhere, in Africa and parts of Latin America, for the mechanisms which generate poverty in Asia are present in greater or lesser degree in much of the rest of the underdeveloped world ... there is no evidence that growth as such has succeeded in reducing the incidence of poverty.'²⁰

Griffin and Khan found no support for the argument that poverty in the Third World was due to the inability of food production to keep up with the rapidly expanding population; only in one of the seven countries studied – Bangladesh – was population found to be expanding faster than domestic food production. The one factor that best explained increasing poverty was 'a high degree of (economic) inequality':

The answer to why poverty has increased has more to do with the *structure* of the economy than its rate of growth ... In the economy as a whole, the richest 20 percent of households typically receive about half the income, whereas the poorest 40 percent receive between 12 percent and 18 percent of total income. The bottom 20 percent fare even worse ... receiving about 7 percent of the income in the least inequali-

tarian country (Bagladesh) and merely 3.8 percent in one of the most inegalitarian countries (*Philippines*).²¹

Inequalities and the selfish wishes of a small minority of 'local elites' to control the wealths of their nations have also facilitated what Tanzania's former president, Julius Nyerere, referred to as 'the Second Scramble for Africa.'²² The subjugation of the economies of Third World countries has been accomplished through the collusion of the local elite with the transnational economic powers.

To summarize, the 'modernization' of the Third World since the 1950s was achieved at great costs to the peoples of the Third World. Modernization has not led to *development* in the accepted sense of an increase in the capability of a people for dealing with their environment.²³ It skyrocketed the newly emerging nations into the 20th century but in so doing severely disrupted the established values and ways of life of the peoples in these countries. Modernization worsened social inequalities, increasing the gap between the haves and have nots. It emphasized the interests of the urban areas (which in many countries contain less than 20 percent of the population) resulting in neglect of the rural communities, and consequent massive reduction in the agricultural work force. Commercial agriculture proved inadequate to either feed the people or produce significant export crops. Heavy industries fared badly because they were too sophisticated to be properly managed by the indigenous work force; where they were financed and managed by so-called foreign partners or foreign investors they have often functioned as instruments of economic subversion and dependency usually involving transnational business organizations. All in all, the modernization approach has not encouraged or made possible 'independent development' by Third World countries.

It was therefore not surprising that the 'development as modernization' paradigm came under heavy criticism during the 60s and by the early 70s had lost its influence as the 'dominant paradigm.' Ironically, the most definitive requiem of the modernization paradigm was written by one of the Western scholars who had spawned and nurtured it, Everett Rogers. Professor Rogers, in an article aptly titled 'The Rise and Fall of the Dominant Paradigm,' traced the historico-political developments on the inter-

national scene which had led to the questioning of the main assumptions of the modernization approach.²⁴ He then advocated an alternative approach to development which would involve 'a widely participatory process ... intended to bring about both social and material advancement (including greater equality, freedom, and other valued qualities) for the majority of the people through their gaining greater control over their environment.'²⁵

The dependency paradigm

The demise of the modernization paradigm paralleled the rise in the fortunes of another paradigm of development, that of DEPENDENCY THEORY. Although the foundations for the dependency approach was laid far back in the 1950s it was not until the close of the 60s, and as attention shifted from the modernizers, that the voice of the DEPENDISTAS (as they were called in Latin America from where the paradigm originated) gained worldwide attention. The best known of the exponents of the dependency paradigm included Paul Baran, André Gunday Frank, and in communication: Armand Mattelart, Tapio Varis, Cees Hame-link, and Herbert Schiller.²⁶

Dependency theory saw development and underdevelopment as interrelated processes. The *dependistas* maintained that the most serious impediments to development were not the shortages of capital and management, as the modernization theorists contended, but the present international system which had polarized the world into CENTER and PERIPHERY, with the center comprising the industrialized countries while Third World countries made up the periphery. In the operation of the international system 'the development in the center determines and maintains the underdevelopment in the periphery.'²⁷ The *dependistas* believed that under this state of economic and political affairs, successful accumulation of capital in the peripheral countries was impossible, thus reducing, if not ruling out, the chances of their achieving self-directed growth.

Dependency in the Third World was not confined to politics and economics but was believed to pervade all spheres of life. For example, the inherited, post-colonial educational system in

many Third World countries was seen as 'a form of cultural imperialism ... part of the process whereby peripheral countries are maintained in that position, part of the "development of underdevelopment."'28 Furthermore, the activities of the transnational corporations in publishing and other areas of the media ensured 'a "servitude of mind" among students in developing societies, through the perpetuation of the Western content, structure, and forms in their educational systems.'29

Third World development, according to the *dependistas*, must involve adjustments in the international economic structure along, for example, the lines demanded in the New International Economic Order. Such adjustments will lay premium on the *mutuality* of interests in all spheres, help promote 'inner-directed' approach to development while condoning a shift of emphasis to regional, more horizontal economic relations in the Third World.

Somewhat allied with the position of the *dependistas* were the pro-Marxist writers such as Walter Rodney and Franz Fanon, who also saw a close relationship between the 'good fortunes' of the industrially developed countries and the 'misfortunes' of the less developed countries, principally those in Africa.³⁰ For the Marxist thinkers, however, salvation for the Third World was seen as possible only after a radical break with the present Western capitalist system.

It would appear that the main contribution of the dependency perspective to the development debate was the creation of an atmosphere in which researchers and policy makers in both sides of the industrial divide were able to take stock. It forced a reappraisal of the assumptions of modernization and in doing so brought home to all the enormity of the problems subsumed under the label 'underdevelopment.' However, unlike with modernization 'theory' it wasn't often clear what the variables were that had to be 'manipulated' in the development exercise.

The culturalists

In more recent times a new voice has been added to the debate on the proper role of communication in development. It has come mainly from researchers in African countries. This school of

thought, (which we shall label as the culturalists) believe that the key to development in the Third World lies in the traditional cultures of various countries, and hence advocate a deliberate integration of the traditional and the modern communication modes to ensure greater success for development messages.

Among the best known of the culturalists are Frank Ugboajah, Onuora Nwuneli, both of the University of Lagos, and Kwame Bofo of the University of Ghana.³¹ The culturalist paradigm derived strength from persuasion and attitude change research concerning internalized change. Social change stands the best chance of becoming permanent if it is in consonance with the accepted ways and values of a people. Furthermore, general participation in the process of effecting change enhances its internalization which in turn ensures permanence.

The culturalists maintain that the failure of modern mass media to mobilize the masses in Third World countries for development purposes could be explained to a large extent by the elitism of modern media, their ambivalence to participation, and their separation from traditional communication media. The culturalists believe that too much attention had been given to the mass media, especially by the modernization exponents, while the far more influential means of *interpersonal* communication had been entirely ignored. Of more serious consequence, the use of the mass media as indicators of development, had often relied on growth in the number of media hardware while paying little attention to the more important dimension (from a development perspective) of content.

Professor Frank Ugboajah, as an example of the culturalists, sees the town crier, the village market square, folk drama, and village festivals as aspects of traditional communication that hold promise for the blending of traditional modes and modern communication techniques. He observes, however, that the interests of citizens and their ways of life tend to vary at the national, provincial and local levels. The use of communication must recognize this diversity and communication technology must be tailored to the interests and goals at each level.

In a way, the culturalists were the product of the dialectics of the modernization and dependency approaches to development. The position of the culturalists is in line with the basic

tenets of a new emerging perspective which we shall here refer to as the paradigm of alternative development.

Alternative development: An emerging paradigm

The current thinking on alternative approaches to development has the following as its basic features:

- (a) There may in fact be no universal model of development. Because countries differ in their cultural diversity, size of national wealth, etc., each country may have to pursue a path to development that best suits its particular circumstances.
- (b) Change may not always lead to positive results. In spite of the good intentions of the change agent, some changes may lead to more problems than they alleviate. The proper role of policy for development must be to monitor the consequences of change and try to minimize its harmful aspects while maximizing its positive aspects.
- (c) Development is multi-faceted, implying that all the facets of life – economic, social, political, cultural, etc. – must be considered together in planning for change. It may be necessary to pursue central planning by the state rather than rely on the laissez-faire, decentralized system favored by the industrialized countries of the West.
- (d) Every country needs to interact with others at various levels. This must however take the form of ‘interdependency’ rather than ‘dependency.’ Third World nations must pursue programs that reduce their dependency on other nations. They must promote self-effort and inner-directed strategies for economic and political development.
- (e) The overriding principle in the evolution and execution of plans for development must be the basic needs of the majority within a country. The best plans would be those that relied on widely diverse input and general participation by the citizens and which are founded on already accepted standards. Above all, a country must not compare itself with other, more developed, examples for its development policy but must tap the strength that comes from within to move its citizens in the direction it deems appropriate.

Two concepts that have featured prominently in this new paradigm are 'intermediate technology' and 'appropriate technology.' The notion of intermediate technology is most often associated with the late British economist, E.F. Schumacher. In his landmark book *Small is beautiful: economics as if people mattered*, Schumacher rejected the Adam Smith and Keynesian emphasis on size and limitless pursuit of growth and suggested instead a more humane economics. He used the term 'intermediate technology' to describe 'a technology of production by the masses, making use of the best of modern knowledge and experience, conducive to decentralization, compatible with the laws of ecology, gentle in its use of scarce resources, and designed to serve the human person instead of making him the servant of machines.'³² Such a technology, according to Schumacher, would be 'vastly superior to the primitive technology of bygone ages but at the same time much simpler, cheaper, and freer than the super-technologies of the rich ... a technology to which everyone can gain admittance and which is not reserved to those already rich and powerful.'³³ Although Dr. Schumacher was addressing himself to his colleagues in Britain and the Western world who in the 60s were experiencing gradual disillusionment with the failing concept of unlimited economic growth, his message proved to be even more relevant to the later experiences of the Third World.

Appropriate technology has commanded much wider interest and many industrialized countries established in the 60s and the 70s organizations that investigated its application to their own societal needs.³⁴ Again the notion of appropriate technology proved to be as relevant for the Third World – if not more so – as it was for the industrialized world.

A technology can be considered appropriate if it satisfies the criterion of PARETO OPTIMALITY: That which is 'best' makes everyone maximally better off and no one worse off.³⁵ While this does not imply that 'big' cannot be 'best,' appropriate technologies, especially in the context of the Third World, have tended to be those low in capital cost and which in addition share one or more of the following characteristics:³⁶

1. they use *local* materials whenever possible;
2. they create jobs, employing *local* skills and labor;

3. they are labor-intensive, rather than capital-intensive;
4. they are small enough to be affordable by a small group of farmers or urban-based cooperatives;
5. they can be understood, controlled, and maintained by the indigenous people wherever possible without a high level of Western-type education;
6. they may involve small metal-working shops which may be sited in the rural areas;
7. their central motive is not profit but the opportunity to work *collectively* to bring improvement to the communities and to satisfy individual and communal needs;
8. they use easily renewable resources, wherever possible, such as wind power, solar energy, water power, animal power, and pedal power (such as bicycle-like contraptions);
9. the technologies are simple enough to be understandable to the people who are using them thus enabling the promotion of further innovations;
10. the technologies are flexible so that they can be adapted to fit changing circumstances;
11. the technologies do not involve patents, royalties, consulting fees, import duties, shipping charges, 'financial wizardry' or any of the other strategies of modern technology that keep it out of the reach of the masses.

The dual concepts of intermediate technology and appropriate technology are in fact closely related for Third World countries. As observed by Donald Evans, the correct choice of technology must be one that not only increases productivity and wealth but also increases the general well-being of a people, improving the quality of their lives while preserving the environment as much as possible. According to Evans, 'the most appropriate technologies in the prevailing circumstances of developing countries are more often likely to be a range of intermediate technologies which are more productive than the ... traditional technologies on the one hand, but, on the other, are less costly and more manageable than the large scale, labor-saving, and capital-intensive technologies of highly industrialized societies ... Schumacher's intermediate technology may be considered a subset or particular type of appropriate technology.'³⁷

The role of communication under this new paradigm is easy to comprehend. Communication must not just teach 'modernizing skills,' it must promote those skills that will enhance self-reliance and faith in a people's ability to solve their own problems. Moreover, this task must no longer be left to the mass media alone; the more personal traditional media must also be employed to motivate the non-urban citizens to be involved in the development drive.

Essentially then, communication must join hands with the other institutions in society to work towards reversing dependency. In a way this will involve making each country more 'self-centered' and less 'outward-looking' than presently. The media are no longer expected to play the role of trying to turn Third World countries into 'mini-United States of America.' Rather, they are to disseminate information that will help the people take practical steps to make their lives better.

This new role for communication is essentially a demand for more democratization of media use. The media should serve as the forum for people to discuss and exchange ideas rather than as the instrument to *talk down* at the people. To realize this goal of democratic communication several steps, including the following, must be taken:

1. Media practitioners in developing countries must reorient themselves away from the established definition of 'news' which they have imbibed through their training in the West. News, under the new paradigm would be defined more in terms of how a piece of information helps towards realizing the positive goals of society than in terms of 'timeliness,' or of the status of the principal characters. For example, the editor of a Nigerian newspaper would then give greater prominence to a story about a bumper harvest by a farmer in a rural community who had, for the first time, tried a particular corn hybrid, than to a story about the coronation of a British monarch or even about the latest killings by the police in South Africa. While the latter two stories would not be ignored, they would receive less prominence than the first. Furthermore, the story on the bumper harvest would contain enough details to optimize its demonstration effect, serving as a model for other farmers to follow.

2. The use of radio and newspapers by and for small communities in developing countries should be encouraged. While it is true that the mass media can be useful for unifying a people, media with 'national' orientations have often ignored the diversified interests of small communities and especially of non-urban, traditional groups.
3. Third World countries should formulate comprehensive communication policies that take into account their social, cultural, economic, and political goals. The communication policy must define the nation's expectations from the mass media in the struggle for national emancipation and development.
4. The satisfaction of basic communication needs within each country must be vigorously pursued. This must include the expansion of communication facilities such as telephone services, postal services, and telecommunication systems. Transportation links within and between geographically-close countries should also be promoted.
5. In as much as Third World countries still require the services of international news agencies, the administrators of such agencies in the industrialized world should promote a conscious retraining of their personnel on the need for accuracy, truth, and balance in reporting events in the Third World. Correspondents sent to foreign countries should be made to study the history, culture, and dominant languages of the areas to which they are assigned.
6. Above all else, and in all things, Third World countries should promote only those means of industrialization that would minimize their dependence on industrialized countries. In this regard, small and intermediate level technology may more adequately as the rule for Third World countries at their present shape of industrial development.

In closing, it is important to emphasize that communication is only one of the institutions within society; its ability to contribute positively to development will be moderated to a large extent by the other institutions such as those tied to politics, education, and law enforcement. This suggests again that the best strategies for pursuing development in the Third World would be those that utilize central planning and monitoring of development programs, in communication and other areas.

Notes

1. For a fuller discussion of the prevailing mood during this period see Duller, H.J., (1982) *Development Technology*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, p. 3. See also Kahn, H., Brown, W., and Martel, L., (1976) *The next 2000 years: A scenario for America and the world*; Rostow, W.W., (1960) *The stages of economic growth*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; and Roxborough, I., (1979) *Theories of Underdevelopment*. London: Macmillan, especially ch. 2.
2. Lerner, D., (1958) *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East*. New York: The Free Press, p. 45.
3. Chamm, W., (1964) *Mass Media and National Development: The Role of Information in the Developing Countries*. Stanford University Press/ UNESCO, Paris, p. viii.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
5. The term 'dominant paradigm' was used by Everett Rogers in the 1970s to describe this school of thought to which he and the other scholars cited subscribed, and which dominated research and policy thinking in the area of communication for development up to the early 70s. See Schramm, (1964) *op.cit.*; Pye, L.W., (1963) *Communication and Political Development*, Princeton University Press; Rao, Y.V. (1966) *Communication and Development: A Study of Two Indian Villages*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press; Rogers, E., (1962) *Diffusion of Innovations*, New York: The Free Press.
6. Lerner, D., (1958) *op.cit.*, p. 50.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 60.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 46, 47.
10. De Castro, Josue, *The Geography of Hunger*, Boston: Little Brown, 1952, p. 105. For a demonstration of how industrialization and modernization affect the values and daily lives of peoples in developing countries, see also Textor, R.B., *From peasant to pedicab driver*, (end ed.), New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961.
11. De Castro, *op.cit.*, p. 97.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 215, 221.
13. Lerner, D., preface to fourth printing, 1967, of *The Passing of Traditional Society*, *op.cit.*, p. vii.
14. Schiller, H.I., *Communication and Cultural Domination* New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1976, pp. 3, 7.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
16. UNESCO, *Many Voices, One World* (the MacBride Report, Abridged Version), Paris, 1984, p. 102.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 102–103.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 103.
19. Griffin, K., and Khan, A.R., 'Poverty in the Third World: Ugly facts and

- fancy models,' in Alavi, H., and Shanin, T., (eds.), *Introduction to the Sociology of the Developing Societies*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1982, p. 236.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 236.
 21. *Ibid.*, p. 243.
 22. Julius, Nyerere, *The Second Scramble*, Das-es-Salaam: Tanganyika Standard Limited (n.d.) pp. 1–6.
 23. This interpretation of development takes after Walter Rodney (*How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, West African edition, Ikenga Publishers, Nigeria, 1982, chapter 1, p. 10). This capacity for dealing with the environment, according to Rodney, is dependent on the extent to which a people understand the laws of nature (science), on the extent to which they put this understanding into practice by devising tools (technology), and on the manner in which work is organized (management). Viewed in this manner what progress was made by the Third World during the period in question could not be regarded as true *development*.
 24. Rogers, E.M., 'The rise and fall of the dominant paradigm,' *Journal of Communication* vol. 28, no. 1, 1978, pp. 64–69.
 25. *Ibid.*, p. 68. Compare this with how Rogers visualized development in the 60s: 'Development is 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 more modern production methods and improved social organization.' (*Modernization among peasants: The impact of communication*, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969).
 26. See, for instance, Baran, P., *The Political Economy of Growth*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1957; Frank, A.G., *Latin America: Underdevelopment or Revolution?*, New York: Monthly Review Press; Mattelart, A., *Multinationales et systemes de communication*, Paris: Anthropos, 1976; Dorman, A., and Mattelart, A., *How to Read Donald Duck: Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comic*, New York: International General, 1975; Varis, T., and Nordenstreng, K., *Television traffic: a one-way street?* Paris: UNESCO, 1973; Hamelink, C., *Cultural autonomy in global communication*, New York: Longmans, 1983, and Schiller, H.I., *Communication and cultural domination*, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1976.
 27. Servaes, J., 'Development theory and communication policy: power to the people,' *European Journal of Communication*, vol. 1, 1986, p. 207. See also Rodney, W., *How Europe underdeveloped Africa*, Dar-es-Salaam: Tanzania Publishing House, 1972.
 28. Dale, R., 'Learning to be what? Shaping education in developing societies,' in Alavi, H., and Shanin, E., *Introduction to the Sociology of Developing Societies*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1982, p. 412.
 29. *Ibid.*, p. 412.
 30. Rodney, W., *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, Dar-es-Salaam:

- Tanzania Publishing House, 1972 (West Africa edition by Ikenga Publishers, Nigeria, 1982); Fanon, F., *The wretched of the earth*, New York: Grove Press, 1967.
31. See for instance, Ugboajah, F.O., *Communication policies in Nigeria*, Paris: UNESCO, 1980; Nwuneli, O.E., 'Strategy for an integrated mass media system for rural development,' *African Communication Review*, vol. 1/2, 1984; and, Bofofo, S.T.K., 'Communication technology, development and Sub-Saharan Africa,' paper to XVth conference of the IAMCR, New Delhi, India, August 1986.
 32. Schumacher, E.F., *Small is beautiful: economics as if people mattered*, New York: Harper and Row, 1973, p. 145.
 33. Ibid.
 34. For a listing of such organizations, see Congdon, R.J. (ed.), *Introduction to Appropriate Technology: Towards a Simpler Life-Style*, Emmaus, Pennsylvania.: Rodale Press, 1977.
 35. The principle of pareto optimality is named after the Italian economist, Vilfredo Pareto (1848–1923) who popularized the notion.
 36. These features of appropriate technology are discussed in the introductory section (pp. xii–xviii) of Congdon (1977), op.cit.
 37. Evans, D.D., 'Appropriate technology and its role in development,' in Ghosh, P.K., (ed.), *Appropriate Technology in Third World Development*, Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1984, p. 40. See also, Riedijk, W., 'Appropriate technology for developing countries: Toward a general theory of appropriate technology,' chapter in *Appropriate Technology for Developing Countries*, Delft University Press, The Netherlands, 1982, pp. 3–20.