



UNIVERSITY OF OSLO
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

NEWS IN A GLOBAL SOCIETY

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MEDIA AND GLOBALIZATION

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News

Boyd-Barrett & Rantanen (1998: 1) *The Globalization of News*:

“We regard the development of the concept “news” as a process that lies at the heart of modern capitalism and which also illuminates processes of globalization which modern capitalism has helped to generate. “News” represented the reformulation of “information” as a commodity gathered and distributed for the three purposes of political communication, trade, and pleasure, and directed in its generic form by technology (for example the telegraph), scientism (for example the belief in the value of “facts”), and the development of mass media markets”



News media and macro-social change

News media as agents of globalization

Technological aspects

Institutional aspects

Economic aspects

Social aspects (mobility, time-space compression, deterritorialization)

Cultural aspects (identity)



The history of the news agency

The 19th century pioneers:

Bureau Havas (Charles Havas, 1835)

Reuters (Julius Reuter, 1851)

Associated Press (1848)

Wolff (1849)



Move to modern journalism

1850 - 1945:

Acceleration and spread of global networks under control of European powers

Global political and military relations expanded

International trade, investment migration

The significance of the telegraph

The emergence and consolidation of news agencies

Scheme of territorial division of agencies



Move towards globalization - the advent of television

After the Second World War:

Change in balance of power

News agencies going on the conquest of new markets

Dominance of “Big Four” - AFP, AP, UPI, Reuters

Other significant regional players - DPA (Germany), EFE (Spain) TASS (Soviet Union), Xinhua (China)

The growth television news agencies (Reuters Television, WTN, APTV)

Eurovision, Asiavision - news exchanges organized by public service broadcasters



Move towards globalization

Division of labor between news agencies and news channels disrupted

The appearance of channels of continuous information

- CNN, BBC, France 24 etc.

Challenge to Western dominance?

- CNN vs. Al Jazeera



Challenges posed by Internet

- Pressure on major actors to adapt
 - News agencies addressing their news directly to the public - e.g. [Reuters](#)
 - Newspapers, TV news networks going online - live online feeds - e.g. [France 24](#)
 - Online portals providing news - e.g. [Google news](#), [Yahoo news](#)
- Global reach strengthened
- Differentiation through language rather than distribution network
- New modes of interactivity
 - [CNN iReport](#), [Bloggingheads](#) etc.
- Integration of distinct journalistic genres



Changes in international news industry

Hjarvard (2001) *News in a Globalized Society*:

- The rise of transnational actors
- Vertical integration
- Horizontal integration
- Commercialization
- Diversification of output
- Regionalization
- Abundance of supply



Theorizing global news - global public sphere

Hyperglobalizers:

Habermas (1996: 514):

“through the electronic media, these events were brought instantaneously before a ubiquitous public sphere. In the context of the French Revolution, Kant made reference to the reactions of a participatory public. At that time, he identified the phenomenon of a world public sphere, which today is becoming political reality for the first time in a cosmopolitan matrix of communication

Volkmer (1999: 119) argues:

“ it can be argued that because of global communication, the public and its opinion is no longer a substantial element of the political system of a society but has turned into a more or less autonomous global public sphere which can only be considered not as a space between “public” and the state but between the state and an extra-societal, global community”

Skeptics:

Schiller (1993: 47):

“I do not believe that globalization of the media industries sector has resulted in the formation of an international civil society as such. Rather, this process has resulted in an international order organized by transnational economic interests that are largely unaccountable to the nation-states in which they operate”

Sparks (1998: 122):

“If we need to abandon the term “global public sphere” as manifestly inadequate to designate what we have been analyzing, then a better one is needed. The one that fits the evidence best is “imperialist, private sphere”. If this is unfashionable, so be it. At least it is accurate”



Dependency theory

[Dependency is]...an historical condition which shapes a certain structure of the world economy such that it favors some countries to the detriment of others and limits the development possibilities of the subordinate economics...a situation in which the economy of a certain group of countries is conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy, to which their own is subjected. (Theotonio Dos Santos, *"The Structure of Dependence,"* in K.T. Fann and Donald C. Hodges, eds., *Readings in U.S. Imperialism*. Boston: Porter Sargent, 1971, p. 226

Dominated visions of second and third world countries in the NWICO movement - spread influence through non-aligned movement and UNESCO in 1970s.

Anger at dominance of major news agencies - obstructing ability of Global South to contribute to representation of their national image and national interests

McBride report (UNESCO, 1980) - withdrawal of US, UK, and Singapore from UNESCO

Focused on global news system and political economy of news agencies

Explored the dynamics between political economy and content

Achieved mainly through quantitative analysis



Scientism vs. Critical cultural theory

Objectivity vs. Hegemony/ideology

- Media subject to hegemonic process - agents of legitimation - Herman and Chomsky
- Bias in foreign news
- Orientalism vs. Occidentalism

Representation:

- Representation - used to mean *standing in for or providing a likeness or replica for that which is its subject.*
- Representation as *meanings ascribed to people and things* - representations stand not for the original subject but for its meaning. Hence conflicts over representations are struggles over meaning, and in the case of our interests here, over the meaning of difference.

Ganguly, K. (1992) *Accounting for others: Feminism and Representation*

“the act of selecting certain news items for publication, while rejecting others, produces in the minds of the audience a picture of the world that may well be incomplete or distorted (Macbride Report, qtd. in Weaver & Wilhoit, 1983: 134)



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