What future for community radio?

+ plus Rethinking the growth of print media in India

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Media Development VOL LX 2/2013

FORUM FORUM FORUM

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

The current issue is the second to be exclusively digital. The journal is no longer available in print.
Members and Subscribers can download and print a PDF or individual articles.

The theme of the 3/2013 issue will be "Dialogue for Change". It will explore the true meaning of development in a world of economic disruption and imbalance. Focusing on the needs of marginalized and dispossessed people, it will question the role of development agencies and put forward new ideas for discussion.

WACC

communication FOR all

WACC has been publishing articles, reflections, and opinions about the world of communications for more than 60 years. In 1953 the first issue of The Christian Broadcaster appeared, running until 1969. From 1970 to 1979 WACC published the WACC Journal, renamed Media Development in 1980. It is still going.

In that same period the world has been utterly transformed by new technologies – from television to satellites to the Internet to digital platforms – in ways that were unimaginable. Communications today are fluid, dynamic, interactive and potentially liberating. Yet the old questions remain: accessibility, affordability, diversity, ownership and control.

With the capabilities offered by new information and communication technologies, how can we bridge long-standing information and knowledge divides? How can we empower people to articulate and shape processes of development and social change? How can we tackle questions of power, inequality and identity? Fundamentally, what kind of society do we want?

The 4/1990 issue of Media Development was titled "Radio – The Sound of the People". In the editorial, its then editor, Dr Michael Traber, wrote: "More than anything, people's radio could provide a climate conducive to development. It could symbolically establish an atmosphere of freedom, a move towards greater social justice and an opportunity for people to participate in the taking of decisions that affect them."

This is also the conclusion reached 20 years later by Birgitte Jallov in her book *Community Radio for Development and Empowerment* (2012) www.empowerhouse.eu, which is an in-depth survey of concepts and practical knowledge essential to creating sustainable, community-run and well-managed platforms for community voices.

She writes, "When well organised, community radio is the voice of everyone, including those living in poverty, which in many rural contexts means everyone in the community. This is the core of the use of community radio in development for empowerment: that it is a community channel, and space for everyone's voices, especially those who do not have access to speak elsewhere. So when development facilitators advocate that the voice of the poor be heard, they actually advocate part of the core conceptual framework of community radio."

A second invaluable book that has recently appeared is Radio in the Twenty-First Century (2012) www.perterland.com, a collection of essays and case studies edited by Janey

Gordon. Contributions focus on how community radio broadcasters and activists are using the medium to challenge corruption, aid the transition to political democracy and broadcast voices that might otherwise be unheard. They demonstrate the pivotal role of small radio stations in developing, sustaining and invigorating communities.

Community radio today cannot be divorced from technological convergence – as several of the contributors to this issue of Media Development point out. No longer does community radio simply benefit a local audience but also, via the Internet and social media, one or more diasporas or communities of interest. It is simultaneously narrowcast and broadcast with a certain element of Pirandello's

"Six Characters in Search of an Author" – whose tragic denouement calls reality into into question.

Carlos Arnaldo says that, "Community radio is a social process or event in which members of the community associate together to design programmes and produce and air them, thus taking on the primary role of actors in their own destiny, whether this be for something as common as mending fences in the neighbourhood, or a community-wide campaign on how to use clean water and keep it clean, or agitation for the election of new local leaders." Quoted in the Community Radio Handbook written by Colin Fraser and Sonia Restrepo (UNESCO, Paris 2001),

Community media – of which community radio is one sector – enable people to voice common concerns, to unite around common causes, to challenge decision-makers on their own turf, to create communities that better respond to the needs of their members.

As such, technological convergence posits a future in which community media (radio, television, digital platforms) become the nexus of grassroots democracy, of a genuine forum for good citizenship and good governance.

In that sense, community radio could enable people to take on the "primary role of actors in their own destiny" instead of being bit-players in someone else's drama.

The risk is that community radio loses its relevancy by becoming just one more voice among many. The challenge is for community radio to represent the locality in ways that shape it for the better. ∎

Community radio: Petri dishes for journalists and critics

Elizabeth Robinson

While preparing to write this article, the following message arrived in my email on a community radio list: "Nobody under 30 listens to radio at home or in their cars anymore, they plug in their devices and listen to podcasts or radio on demand... The monopoly we used to hold: ruling over radio signals is gone. It's over. Community Radio Stations that resist this change will be gone in a few short years" (Scooter, KPFT volunteer programmer). Within a day or so, another programmer had replied indicating that over 90% of young people listen to radio daily.

Of course, neither provides substantial evidence for their assertions; rather they are evidence of how seriously many of us feel about our sub-medium, community radio (CR). At least since the advent of television, various pundits have indicated that radio is dying, that it is becoming obsolete, a process that has been accelerated by the advent of first the Internet and now social media. Mostly, they overlook community radio entirely.

Finding proof for either position is likely a fool's errand. My intention here is to examine our landscape for suggestive anecdotal information that will provide some signposts for likely future possibilities and pitfalls.

My focus will primarily be North American but through an internationalist lens. I'd like to avoid defining or parsing CR into various categories – rural, urban, ethnic, indigenous, college, commun-

ity, low or full power, for example – and instead consider the commonalities amongst them. I am primarily considering stations that are largely volunteer based, that value local perspectives and define themselves as exceptional if not oppositional to corporate media. That is, their programming is driven by intentions to deviate from commercially constrained products.

To paraphrase KCSB's mission statement, "KCSB strives to ensure that opportunities are offered to a diverse community, especially people who are traditionally underrepresented in broadcasting… to provide programming that is…generally unavailable from other local media…to provide a forum for underrepresented and/or controversial perspectives on important local, national and international issues…to cover a wide spectrum of expression from traditional to experimental which reflect the diverse community which KCSB serves."

Given that not all CR stations would subscribe to all of that, it is an approach that most of them would not find distasteful. I would also hope that most of them subscribe to Article 19 of the UN Human Rights Charter, though I dare say that many in the US are unaware of it. What I am not including are state or religious stations where the content is functionally controlled by large entities rather than local ones. (This screen eliminates at least 50 % of the "non-commercial educational" licensees in the US).

Finally, note that I have avoided using the US term "non-commercial". In some countries, like Canada, non-profit is the standard wherein any "profi" is invested back into the running of the station. And at an international level, as in a number of African environments, providing promotion for local businesses is considered a positive value that CR stations can and should bring.

New technologies: the wolves at our gates?
One of the first US stations to use the Internet and to do so imaginatively was WFMU (wfmu.org). They used the Internet for playlists, for real-time exchanges with their listeners, for podcasting and

archiving long before many of us knew what those things were. Their general manager, Ken Freedman, came to community radio conferences extolling the endless possibilities and scaring the hell out of most of us. He was certainly encouraging us to get on board, but even imagining it was difficult when we

were hardly able to define the terms.

Those of us who were understanding or beginning to grasp the ideas were convinced that radio was dying. So imagine our delight a few years later when Ken said in a keynote address, "People like the Internet, but they love their radio stations!" He declared it and we embraced it, not just because it was self-serving for us, but because we had all experienced it. Callers for whom we serve as a lifeline. Listeners who pull off the freeway to make donations. People who recognize our voices when we're standing in line for movie tickets. Requests for copies of our programs. And so on.

That "love" will go only so far, and most community stations in North America have heeded the call to step up and at least have a web presence with many of us venturing well beyond that. It is now almost a truism here to say that our stations must incorporate new media in order to stay current, provide meaningful training for a world seemingly gone digital, and to communicate with our listeners on a two-way conduit.

However, we must be clear that we have the benefits of robust infrastructure that allows for connectivity and does so at not too great a cost. That is not the case for much of the global south and even our poor communities.

In Santa Barbara, California, WiFi hotspots allow free Internet connections up and down the main street. But less than a mile away on the Eastside, a predominantly Latina/o community, there are practically none to be had. And there are definite risks in assuming that the cyber world will always be there to serve us.

As Marcelo Solervicens, Secretary General of AMARC observed, we do not own the Internet and are dependent on service providers whose rates may become prohibitive. We are impacted by quixotic policies and practices of search engines and aggregators. And as the Web is increasingly privatized, we may be relegated to the "slow lanes" as the fast ones are reserved for the big spenders.

Frieda Werden of WINGS and CJSF reminds us

that our web presence brings with it a whole regulatory package that impacts our content as well as our budgets. In the US, for instance, the Digital Millennium Copyright Act makes it impossible to stream an entire program of one musician's work and it severely constrains what can be posted on the Web. There are charges for streaming with all of the

costs and restrictions anticipated to become more taxing as a new contract is developed.

Voices from the streets and beyond
If we consider the most visible and impactful political movements of the 21st century, the seemingly most important media phenomenon has been the proliferation of social media. "I am Iranian" was tweeted from all over the world when the Iranian government cracked down on its people. Tunisians took to the streets in opposition to the Ben Ali government's repression of young people who were surfing the Web.

The Egyptian uprising and ousting of Hosni Mubarak was captured on cell-phone videos that went viral around the world. In Madison, Wisconsin, the website "Defend Wisconsin" was utilized to both coordinate political actions and to push information out. The various Occupy movements relied on cyber messaging to get and keep people's attention.

Most recently, in Montreal, the Student Strike joined by so many others utilized all manner of social media. But as Sophie Toupin, a participant and project administrator of Media@ McGill, recalled, social media were very important in getting people out on the streets, but community radios like CKUT and WORT told the stories in their fullness, provided more complex information, and served to keep the issues in the public eye.

She commented that CR practitioners know how to harness the social-media content and make it available through their stations. Solervicens observed that the Arab Spring utilized social media but that the possession of access was reserved for a privileged populace. If the democratizing visions are to be realized, a more egalitarian method is essential. In the world of media, that is community radio – still affordable and accessible.

Community radio has been essential in cases of emergencies and remains the only media that can be relied on when power grids are down. This is true in relatively small-scale incidents like wild fires in my community, for which CR provided the only

broadcast information for a couple of days. In New Orleans and Haiti, where disasters of unimaginable magnitude occurred, Jim Ellinger and colleagues from Austin Airwaves cobbled together low-power radios to serve isolated and traumatized populations. Many communities have now distributed solar or crank radios to their people for just such eventualities.

Other threats on the horizon
In both Canada and the US, a number of community stations, particularly at colleges, have been taken over or sold. In economic crises, a number of universities have only imagined their stations as one-off revenue sources. The benefits to students and communities have been negated, often with a casual observatiwwon that they can just use the Internet. In other instances, stations (or potential stations) have been jeopardized by political shifts to the right, resulting in defunding of state support.

These threats are not unique to North America by any means. They pale by comparison to the plight of a Somali journalist who was arrested for daring to criticize the state, never mind the many journalists who are murdered for practicing their crafts. Nonetheless, the small incursions on independent media are cause for concern and vigilance. In Canada, the government is reportedly considering some form of digital radio with possibly one commercial operator running all stations.

What, Frieda Werden wonders, will happen to content and autonomy in that case? In the US, the economic recession has severely damaged professional networks that represent community media. The NFCB, for example, is now down to two staffers. The Pacifica Network is struggling financially and FSRN, the news organization that they support, is on the brink of collapse.

Silver linings
Despite these problems, there are many indications that CR is still vital and valued. The flip side of the sale of stations is that there are eager buyers. If radio is dead, why are they buying?! In the North American case, available frequencies are snatched up and new CR stations are being born. KHOI in Iowa, for example, has been on the air less than six months. Board Chair (and midwife!) Ursula Ruedenberg recounts that their community had no idea what CR

was or why they should want it. Through organizers' grassroots efforts, the community has embraced KHOI, and the station has been financed by "nickel and diming it" despite the end of federal funding.

In another six months, there will be a second opening for low-power stations that will allow for

hundreds of new community stations. That opening must be attributed to organizing from within the CR community, with the leadership of the Prometheus Radio Project. These things evidence the desire for alternatives to commercial media.

To come full circle, Scooter also said that CR stations must be laboratories for journalists and, I would add, for media critics. As Dorothy Kidd has said, we are also cultural Petri dishes providing access to music found nowhere else. We are all of this and more. ∎

Photo credits: p. 3 Prometheus Radio Project, Amman, Jordan (Elizabeth Robinson); p. 4 CKUT reporting a student strike in Montreal (Sophie Toupin); and p. 5 KHOI at six months old (Jim Ellinger).

Elizabeth Robinson has been a community radio practitioner for more than thirty years primarily at KCSB FM, Santa Barbara, and has been a media activist and advocate internationally, serving on AMARC's International Board of Directors for more than a dozen years. She has been assisted in this article by all of her CR compatriots named herein.

Look back for the future of community radio

Alfonso Gumucio-Dagron

The future of radio, the future of film, the future of television... So far, the standard response to uncertainty has proudly been that film didn't kill theatre, television didn't kill radio, and internet didn't kill any of the three. It may be true up to a certain point. However radio, cinema and television are very different today, other kinds of "animal", so to speak, and will keep changing into something else as technology advances. Ape to human: evolution in technology has comparable genes.

Technology has determined huge changes that have even questioned the way we name the "old" radio, film and television. In fact, most of what remains is just the name because even the habits of consumption have changed. Among filmmakers we often ask ourselves if we should still call cinema what now is the result of an entirely digital process: filming and post production are no longer done with celluloid but with digital devices, and even distribution and exhibition are rapidly changing. In most commercial film theatres digital projectors gradually replace film projectors, and before we know it film theatres will directly download from the internet the films they have scheduled to show.

Can we still call it "cinema", the 7th Art? Until very recently I would respond with the affirmative because it was the collective gathering for the consumption of cinema (or theatre) that characterized it, rather than the physical support or the machine used to produce it. However, this has also changed and films are often seen individually on a small personal screen on a plane, on tablets, smart phones or similar devices. The collective appreciation of cinema is vanishing.

Digital technologies have affected television and radio as well. We can read the future of community radio in its present. Community radio will soon be whatever its present contributes to its shape. The future is already here and it speaks about the uninterrupted (r)evolution in technology that deeply affects content, formats and perception.

Content and contempt

One of the main specificities of community radio has always been to address the problems of the "community" to which it owes its existence. Miners' radio stations in Bolivia or Maya stations in Guatemala could not be dissociated from their main audience, whether for political, social or cultural reasons, including language.

This has been changing along with the definition

of community. If the starting point was a community geographically located and characterized by the same cultural traits and language, this has evolved towards communities of interest, for example Bangladeshi workers in London and Dhaka tuning to the same station, or women in various Islamic countries listening to a gender-oriented radio station in the west. Geographic location became secondary to other considerations, thus content has also changed.

When audiences become less defined, programming follows the same pattern. One of the main losses is interactivity, in spite of the fact that we increasingly live in an interactive world where we are all "connected". The new audiences of community radio have spread as much as the reach of new technologies. A community radio station located in Chiapas, in Southern Mexico, may have a portion of its audience in California or Guatemala. Listening to radio stations through the internet has become common and is good in many ways. However, participation suffers. Real participation is no longer there.

There are no longer queues in community radio stations where anybody from the community would step-in to ask for the microphone and send a message to the community or speak about a burning social issue. This direct relationship has been replaced by telephone calls or email, facebook and twitter messages which are far from the "old-style" participatory approach, which was more committed in terms of ideology and collective action.

Technology, fascinating as it may be, often contributes to creating more distance between the audience and the radio stations. The advantages of new technologies conspire to reduce the effectiveness of community radio on social issues. Anybody who has had the opportunity to live the experience of a community radio two or three decades ago and today can see the difference.

In the 1960s and 1970s programming in community radio stations was to a large extent live, 100% live in some stations, particularly those that greatly depended on direct contact with community members. This was important for immediate participation by the audience: microphones were permanently open to allow any member of the community to have a say. Today, computers are standard even in the smallest stations and digital technology of very low cost is used to schedule hours and even

days of un-interrupted programming.

Instead of a permanent team of journalists and volunteers lively debating social issues with the audience, what we find is empty studios and one person at the control panel. Today most community radio stations are operated by one or two technicians uploading and scheduling music or pre-recorded programmes. Live programming has been reduced to a minimum, often to sports or local news, in the best scenario, since there are very few stations producing their own news. It is so much easier to hook into a national signal.

While directing my documentary film *Voices from the Magdalena* (2006) I visited Radio Simití in the Bolívar Department of Colombia. At some point, the station was completely empty because the sole journalist and technician in charge had programmed several hours in advance so he could go out to play football; so much for the participatory audience.

How could not content be affected by contempt? "Content" is not just valuable information or good music but a matter of the relationship with the audience. Community radio stations used to speak to a very well defined community on issues that were central to the daily life of the community, but this has changed. Most of the content of programmes is no longer specific to the community, and the community is less welcome to interact with the station, let alone to participate in democratic decision-making processes.

Implosion of formats

Technology innovation has imploded the well-established old format of community radio, sometimes for good but not always. Let's be honest: a very large percentage of so-called community radio stations air music all day long, as much of 90% of their programming is music. There are very few large community radio stations – those that have more resources and clearer objectives – producing their own programmes.

One of the main questions I usually ask when visiting a community radio station is how many hours of programming are produced in-house and how many are canned programs. The other important question I often ask is what percentage of programming is aired live, not including the music segments. The answer to those questions is very often

discouraging, for the reasons I mentioned above.

In the stations with more live programs one of the popular formats is the magazine that lasts 2 to 4 hours. This format allows a team of journalists to introduce news relevant to the community, to conduct interviews, to receive messages and telephone calls live, to moderate discussions, to attend to specific requests for songs, etc. And above all, to adapt to any breaking news that may deserve analysis from the community perspective. The magazine format is ideal for dialogue with the audience.

Changes in technology are affecting formats as much as contents. In the near future audiences will be as spread as broadband is, which means that a community radio station in Bolivia may represent a broad constituency of Aymara speakers dispersed in Sweden, Australia, the US and the Bolivian highlands, sharing values and memories and interacting among them in spite of the geographical distance. Web 3.0 and whatever comes next will emphasize interactivity in such a way that communities will be formed and operate not based on their physical location, but their common interests.

This of course affects the immediacy of contact with the audience, given the possibilities (and limits) of accessing internet in regions that may be sep-arated by 4 o5 five time-zones. Note that we are assuming all along that community media will be increasingly web based if the current trend is confirmed.

Other changes are related to technological convergence, which may open new doors for innovation in formats. Community radio online is becoming increasingly a multimedia experience, incorporating video images in support of radio programming. For many years now we have seen commercial radio programs being aired online, often along with video, from the very studios where audio transmission is being broadcast. This will become a regular feature in community radio online, and may increasingly lead to the convergence between community radio and community television.

"Talking heads" is obviously only a transition stage of the convergence process. Right now community television is mostly the live transmission of interviews or news from a studio, not much different from a video transmission made from a radio studio, but this will change as newsrooms in community media will be interacting with voluntary correspondents or contributors who will send news audio and video clips, as they already do for commercial media. CNN was wise enough to open its

doors to voluntary "iReporters", lifting the quality ban that used to apply to material that was considered technically not up to broadcast standards.

Policies and strategies for the right to communicate
Late in 2008 a group of independent communication researchers from Bolivia[1] organised an international seminar on policies and legislation for local radio in Latin America. During three days[2] we gathered to present country reports (including a couple from Europe) and to discuss the need for specific policies to promote and protect community radio in the region. A book was later published with all the papers presented and the final document that was agreed by participants.

The relevance of policies and legislation for community radio cannot be underestimated. It will suffice to look at the history of community radio to value its importance. The most emblematic community radio stations in the world suffered from political repression in their early days, including Bush Radio in South Africa, the miners' radio stations in Bolivia, the local stations in Indonesia and the rebel radio stations in El Salvador, among many other. It may be that the days of rough military dictators are over, but authoritarian regimes are still around.

We have learned from those days when the transmitter had to move from one place to the next within hours, when the army attacked and destroyed many radio stations, and when the lives of community radio journalists were in permanent danger.

Many things have changed. Democratic governments now see in community radio an ally in social, economic and cultural development. They recognise the importance of community radio in preserving and promoting national and local identities, and facilitating dialogue between different kinds of knowledge that deserve equal respect. Even political participation through community radio is considered essential for healthy

democracies where the concept of participation was traditionally reduced to voting in general elections every four or five years.

Countries such as South Africa have been among those that did not wait too long in democracy to enact legislation, policies and strategies to provide support, protect and strengthen community radio stations. Uruguay and Argentina have approved legislation that reserves a third of the analogical and digital radio-electric spectrum to community media. In recent years Colombia has been an example in Latin America in terms of allocating hundreds of operating licences to local community and indigenous radio stations that are completely autonomous.

It is now clear for both governments and civil society that one of the fundamental human rights is the right to communicate, which is above the freedom of expression that guarantees journalists and media to operate in a free environment, without political pressures. The right to communicate would allow citizenry to proactively seek its own means to communicate with society.

In Guatemala Maya stations have been suffering repression throughout several elected governments

of different political orientation. In spite of the Peace Accords of 1996, which recognize the importance of indigenous media to provide voice to Maya communities, governments have systematically ignored their responsibility on this matter and have preferred to give way to the pressure of private

media conglomerates and monopolies that control most of the television channels and radio stations in Guatemala. This is a country where community radio stations have to bid for their licences against commercial media houses: money rules, of course.

There are regulations in Brazil and Chile that prevent community radio stations from airing outside of their immediate constituency, just a few kilometres around, and forcing them to limit the power of their transmitters. In other countries advertising is forbidden to community media, even local advertising, which leaves the station in a very difficult economic situation.

In the Philippines, in Mexico and other countries, licences for community media are provided case by case, as there is no policy or general regulation. This explains why only a handful of local radio stations have a licence to operate in those countries and why all the others are considered "illegal".

Over the years one of the main arguments against democratising access to operating licences for community radio has been that the airwaves were saturated and there was no room left to accommodate the newcomers. This alibi is no longer valid since digitalisation and current technology allows multiplying by four the number of radio and television stations, and probably more in the near future.

Some politically progressive governments in Latin America have difficulty in understanding the importance of providing support to community radio as an expression of the right to communicate. In Bolivia, for example, instead of policies and legislation in support of community media the government has created a radio network called "Patria Nueva", made of some 50 local stations, which basically follows the programming of the main state-owned national radio station.

The world sees Latin America as a region of democratic and socially committed governments, a region where social movements express themselves freely and economic growth has not been another victim of the global crisis caused by market speculation. However, in terms of ensuring the basic right to communication, most countries have been very conservative.

The above considerations are essential when discussing the future of community radio. Yes, the future is important in terms of technology but if no measures are taken by governments to design poli-

cies and enact legislation that favours community media, the risk is that the only way of accessing community radio in the future will be through the internet.

Sustainability is not (just) about money
I've said it before: sustainability is not about money. Particularly in English the concept of sustainability is excessively related to financial resources, thus overlooking other aspects that are crucial for the development of social and cultural processes such as community radio. Without denying the importance of economic resources in sustainability, we have to consider social and institutional sustainability as well. This means that sustainability is not just a matter of income generation or external funding but also a matter of participation and democracy.

Social sustainability is about the participation of social actors and the ownership of the communicative process. Without community participation the communication experience becomes an island amidst the human universe in which it operates. Radio programming ought to reflect the needs of that human universe and support the community's political project. The definition of the political and communicational project is the basis for social sustainability because it indicates which route to take in the long run: Who participates in the project definition? How are the main decisions regarding the information policy and programming taken?

No community process can be sustainable if it does not have support from the community and if it does not represent the community in its programming and in its information policy. Social sustainability has to do with organizational, cultural and linguistic aspects, inherent to the ownership of the communication process. An experience of community media is legitimated when its political and communicational mission represents the audience's aspirations. The linkage with social actors is what guarantees its consolidation and its permanence throughout time.

Often community media fail due to its lack of connection with the social actors it is supposed to represent. When grassroots voices stop expressing themselves through the community radio station an ideological split originates between the medium and its actors. The process of social appropriation is diminished and interrupted. Therefore, the political

and communicational project remains alien to community aspirations.

Institutional sustainability is the framework that facilitates participatory processes. On the one hand it encompasses the existing regulatory environment and State policies, meaning that the political atmosphere allows the experience to develop without censorship and external pressures. On the other hand the regulatory environment deals with procedures and human and labour relationships within the community radio, the internal democracy, the decision-making mechanisms and management transparency.

There is no magic formula for integral sustainability of community media. However, the three components – social, institutional and economic – should be taken into account to achieve a balance that allows not only the survival, but also the development of participatory communication processes.

The above reflection on sustainability is based on a collective research exercise conducted in 2004 by a team of independent communication specialists with institutional support from ALER and AMARC.[3] After reviewing and listing over 100 experiences, 32 community radio stations were selected and studied in depth from the perspective of integral sustainability. The final report was published under the title "La práctica inspira" (Praxis inspires), providing very useful analysis on how some community radio stations survive and develop, and why others fail to do so.

Designing the future

There are two ways to look at the future and both are similar for individuals or for collectives. Either you plan and strategise towards previously set objectives, or you just let the future modify your life as it comes. The same applies to community radio as a collective participatory process: either we have a vision of it in ten, twenty and thirty years, or we just survive by adapting to whatever the technology determines.

The second option is not an option for community radio. It is only by taking into account the issues that we have briefly considered that community media can design its future and attempt to regain control of it. All four issues are intimately related: content, format, policies and sustainability. We need to deepen our discussions on all four.

National and regional policies, legislation and strategies that take into consideration community media as one tier of the broadcasting sector are essential to gain recognition and support from national states. Community media need to be recognised as a social and cultural development tool, along with schools, cultural centres or libraries and sports facilities. Their role in society has to be acknowledged.

This will have an impact on sustainability, ownership by the community and society at large, and will provide substance for better-designed programmes, both in terms of content and formats. Through participation not only social sustainability increases, but also dialogue that helps community radio stations to be proactive in development and social change. n

Photo credits: p.6 Radio Maragusan, Philippines; p.8 Radio Sagarmatha, Nepal; p.9 La Voz de la

Comunidad, Guatemala; p.11 Radio Sangam, Pastapur, India (Alfonso Gumucio).

Notes
1. Alfonso Gumucio launched the idea, which was promptly embraced by Karina Herrera-Miller, Cecilia Quiroga, José Luis Aguirre and Erick Torrico Villanueva.
2. "La radio local en América Latina: Políticas y legislación", 19-21 November 2008, La Paz, Bolivia. http://www.freewebs.com/radiolocal/v
3. Asociación Latinoamericana de Educación Radiofónica (ALER) y Asociación Mundial de Radios Comunitarias (AMARC).

Alfonso Gumucio is a development communication specialist and author with wide experience in Africa, Asia, South Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean. He was the Managing Director for Programmes at the Communication for Social Change Consortium, and previously worked for seven years with UNICEF in Nigeria and Haiti. He served several other United Nations agencies as an international communication specialist, as well as The Rockefeller Foundation, Conservation International and AusAid. He is the author of several books: *Communication for Social Change Anthology: Historical and Contemporary Readings* (2006), *Making Waves, participatory development for social change* (2001), *Conservación, Desarrollo y Comunicación* (1990), *Las Radios Mineras de Bolivia* (1989), *Comunicación Alternativa y Cambio Social* (1989), *Popular Theatre* (1995), *El Cine de los Trabajadores* (1981) and *Les Cinémas d'Amérique Latine* (1981).

Impact of digital convergence on community radio in the USA

Bill Hamilton

Bertold Brecht, the German playwright, suggested the ideal radio system would be one where we change "over from distribution to communication. The radio would be the finest possible communication apparatus in public life if it knew how to receive as well as transmit, to let the listener speak as well as hear, to bring him into a relationship instead of isolating him. Radio should step out of the supply business and organize its listeners as suppliers."[1]

Community radio in the United States faces relatively new and unique challenges. These challenges arise from the convergence of information technologies, telecommunications and broadcasting, consumer electronics, and the entertainment industries. This is what is meant by "digital convergence" in this article. Thus, digital convergence encompasses on-air and online broadcasts, podcasts and other sources of digital programming, satellite radio, cable music channels, social media, portable music players, etc.

The growing impact of the convergence of these technologies on community radio listenership and donor giving has been profound. As important, the decline in total listenership has been accompanied by a decrease in the time spent listening by those who do listen. All these factors together have precipitated a crisis that threatens the livelihood of many community stations.

Adding to the financial pressures outlined above

is the likelihood the annual Community Service Grants (CSGs) from the Corporation of Public Broadcasting (CPB) will expire in October 2014. The CSG can account for as much as 50% of a small station's income. The expiration is due to Congressional refusal to renew funding of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's support for public and community radio. Concomitantly, state funding has also declined.

Also contributing to this crisis was the decision by the Department of Commerce to end funding for the Public Telecommunications Facilities Program (PTFP) in April of 2011. Elimination of this program has ended the ability of community broadcasters to obtain Federal grants to aid in facilities upgrades, such as the ability to acquire digital transmitters and replace worn or otherwise outdated broadcast and production equipment.

Given the funding dilemmas outlined above, 18% or approximately 32 community stations are at risk of financial insolvency when the CSGs cease in October 2013 (an at risk station is one where the CSG accounts for 30% or more of its operating budget). A large percentage of these stations are in rural areas and many provide the only radio broadcast services available to their listeners while some are the only broadcast services available at all. More ominously, it is feared that 50% of the remaining community stations could cease operation in the next five to seven years.

Following the passage of the Public Broadcasting Act in 1967 and the creation of the CPB and in 1971 National Public Radio (NPR), the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) allocated FM frequencies from 88.1 to 91.9 MHz for non-commercial broadcasters. Over the ensuing years, there emerged five different types of non-commercial radio broadcasters in the US. These are public radio stations affiliated with NPR, community radio stations, college based radio stations, low power FM stations (LPFMs), and religious broadcasters.

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting has provided CSGs to qualifying stations since the early 1990s. The qualifying criteria have remained relatively constant over the last 22 years. These criteria include having a minimum number of paid staff, a signal exceeding 250 watts, a substantive donor base, and evidence that listenership is robust and consistent given a station's geographic location.

With these criteria, only NPR affiliates and a large number of community stations have qualified for CSGs. Religious broadcasters were specifically excluded from receiving Federal support.

Currently, there are over 2800 non-profit radio stations broadcasting in the United States. Of these, almost 900 are public radio stations, 184 community stations, 50 college stations, 700 low power FMs, with the remainder religious broadcasters. Among the community broadcasters, there is a diverse mix of rural and urban stations. Many rural stations serve specific ethnic communities while other rural and urban stations provide programming reflecting local cultural and musical traditions. A majority serves multiple audiences by having a variety of programs oriented towards different listening communities within their broadcast domain.

From 1971 onwards, the number of community broadcasters increased steadily. Many community broadcasters emulated the programming strategies first pioneered by KPFA in San Francisco. KPFA was founded by pacifist Lewis Hill and in 1949 became the first community broadcaster in the United States.

Previously, non-commercial stations were licensed only to educational institutions such as high schools, colleges, and universities. Hill's vision was to promote cultural diversity, promote pluralistic cultural expression, and contribute to a lasting understanding between individuals of all nations, races, creeds and colours. It also included a commitment to freedom of the press and as a forum for various viewpoints.

Given the political activism that animated the 1960s and 1970s, many community stations were founded by veterans from the civil rights and anti-war movements. Their political orientation was distinctly new left and progressive. This orientation serves to highlight, broadly speaking, the difference between public and community broadcasters.

The ability to create community radio stations was ended by the FCC's decision in 1993 to impose a moratorium on the issuance of new licenses. This was due, in part, to a growing shortage of available frequencies, particularly in urban areas, and opposition from the National Association of Broadcasters (the lobbying organization for commercial broadcasters) and NPR. Technical challenges aside, the commercial broadcasters and NPR opposed the

creation of new community radio stations due to fears these stations would drain listeners from the existing pool of radio users.

In 2003, the FCC briefly began accepting applications and issuing licenses for LPFMs. These licenses were reserved specifically for educational non-profits situated in primarily rural areas where non-contiguous frequencies were still available. In 2012, the FCC began accepting new applications for LPFMs. The application window closes in October 2013.

WMNF Community Radio
The dilemmas affecting large and small community broadcasters can be clearly discerned in the struggles facing WMNF Community Radio in Tampa, Florida. WMNF broadcasts at 88.5 FM with an effective radiated power of 70,000 watts. WMNF was granted its license in 1978 and given approximately two years to begin on-air broadcasts.

During the following one and a half years, members from the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now and Volunteers in Service to America along with a small cadre of local volunteers conducted a door to door fund-raising campaign to acquire the needed funds to purchase broadcast and production equipment, secure a broadcast location, and rent tower space for the antenna. Over 1,000 people donated nearly $25,000 during the campaign, enabling WMNF to take to the airwaves in the fall of 1979.

WMNF, like KPFA, is committed to providing programming for the ethnically and culturally diverse members of the Tampa Bay area, as well as those looking for a musical and public affairs alternative to the fare offered by commercial radio. The initial broadcast schedule included weekday programs consisting of folk music in the early mornings, big band music in the late mornings, soul and blues in the early afternoon and blue grass during the late afternoons. Evening programming included blues, English folk, alternative and punk rock, jazz, etc.

Whereas the weekday programming consisted of horizontal strips (i.e., consistent and predictable programming across the weekday daytime parts), the evening programming was more diverse and unpredictable. Weeknights were largely composed of specialty programs, featuring artists from many different musical genres. These programs sought to attract dedicated listeners who would tune-in for specific musical styles. Weekends were similar to evenings but with more diversity. Weekend programming included shows for the local Jewish, African-American, and Polish communities as well as music for devotees of reggae, blues, gospel, soul, sixties, etc.

As part of its mission, WMNF was committed to providing programming that advocated values associated with economic and social justice. Though WMNF was initially not able to fund a fully fledged news program, it did provide a morning and evening drive time headline service and, subsequently, a weekday call-in discussion program that included recorded speeches by national and international activists. These programs became very popular and served to cement WMNF's left-wing reputation. Indeed, one of the station's mottos was, "You are listening to WMNF radio, at the left end of your radio dial."

The importance of this needs further elaboration. In the 1980s and 1990s, there were few broadcasters on either radio or TV (particularly in the Southern United States) who advocated on behalf of the poor, the ethically marginalized, and critically examined issues of war and peace, economic justice, etc. WMNF's orientation resonated within the Tampa Bay community. In fact, WMNF discovered a remarkable thirst for alternative news and perspectives that served to grow its audience.

During the next 20 years, WMNF flourished. As its reputation grew, WMNF's ability to successfully attract donor support also grew. WMNF held two one-week fund drives each year. In a pattern that extended over the next 26 years, each successive fund drive succeeded in raising more money than the preceding one. In the fall of 1980, WMNF raised $40,000 during its one-week fall fund drive. By 2005, WMNF raised more $500,000 during its fall fund-drive. As expenses grew, WMNF added two additional fund drives. These were three and a half days in length and were held every winter and summer, beginning in the early 1990s.

Changing programmes, changing audiences
WMNF's programming has gone through successive changes. In 1981, WMNF began broadcasting a two-hour program devoted to women's issues on

Saturday mornings and a weekly program on local arts and culture. In the 1983, it added a mid-day news and public affairs strip called Radioactivity. This became an important forum for local, national, and international voices. In 1997, WMNF became one of the first community stations to begin daily weekday broadcasts of the Pacifica Foundation's "Democracy Now."

In 2000, WMNF added a one half hour afternoon drive time news program that subsequently was extended to an hour with the addition of Free Speech Radio News (FSRN), a syndicated national and international news service, and in 2001 a three-hour Sunday morning strip devoted to issues important to the Tampa Bay area's African-American Community.

In April of 1997, WMNF was among the first community stations in the United States to create a web site (wmnf.org) and to begin streaming its

programming over the World Wide Web. Subsequently, WMNF added online archives to enable listeners to hear programs they may have missed. These technical innovations were WMNF's first response to what is now called digital convergence. Though staff was aware of the advent of personal music players, online music programs, and music channels offered over local cable channels, the lack of impact on WMNF's fund-raising served to minimize concerns.

It should be noted that by 1985, WMNF had a weekly audience of 100,000 discrete listeners each week. Yet, audience growth did not keep pace with the dramatic increase in the Tampa Bay area's population. In fact, over the 33 years of WMNF's existence, the audience peeked at 120,000 in the early 2000's, falling in 2010 to an Arbitron[2] estimate of 83,000.

As stated above, the steady increase in donorship

led staff to view the uneven growth in listenership as an issue that could be best addressed through program changes initiated every two years. Hence, big band gave way to news and public affairs and blue grass to an afternoon strip called Traffic Jam, featuring AAA music (adult, album, alternative). Later

changes involved dedicating each weekday night to a specific musical genre. For example, Monday evenings became blues night, Tuesday night featured 60's and jam band artists, Wednesday alternate and punk rock, Thursday English and American folk, and on Fridays soul and rhythm and blues.

These programming changes only had a marginal impact on total listenership even though donorship continued to rise. The two most lucrative strips in terms of donor support have remained constant for many years. These are the morning drive time music programs collectively known as the Morning Shows, closely followed by the mid-day news and public affairs strip known as Radioactivity. The Morning Show broadcasts from 6am to 9am and Radioactivity from 10am to 1pm Monday through Friday.

In 2001, WMNF began a building campaign to construct a new broadcast centre. Over the next four years, WMNF raised $2,750,000 towards the $3,250,000 cost of the new facility, moving in in 2005. The broadcast centre has four studios for on-air broadcasts, a live music studio, and facilities for online digital programming. During this period, WMNF's on-air fundraising continued to rise. By 2005, WMNF was raising over 1,000,000 per year from its on-air fund-drives.

The success of these drives led WMNF to create what called "The Circle of Friends." Individual Circle members pledge a certain amount per month to the station with no need to renew their membership each year. The Circle now accounts for over $325,000 in annual revenue and has 1600 members. The circle members have collectively enabled WMNF to offset the loss of revenue associated with declining listenership.

In 2007, with assistance from the Department of Commerce, WMNF acquired a hybrid digital transmitter and began to broadcast in both digital and analogue formats. One of the technical innovations made possible by digital transmission was the capability of having four digital broadcast streams instead of just one analogue stream. WMNF also streamed these digital channels online. The decision to begin digital broadcasts followed the FCC's adoption of the IBOC (in band on channel) standard for the United States. As has happened with analogue television broadcasts, the FCC planned on ending analogue radio services in 2015, though this now is in doubt. Unfortunately, the existence of on-air digital streams didn't lead manufacturers to make or consumers to buy the digital radios needed for listening. In fact, one has difficulty finding digital receivers of any kind.

Consequently, the availability of four digital streams has not had an impact on on-air listening. As important, WMNF's ability to stream its digital channels did not attract many listeners either. Listenership to the online programming ranged from several dozen to several hundred depending on what was being offered. An online presence by itself does not bring listeners or users. Like so many community stations, WMNF lacked the technical expertise and creative imagination to makes its website and online programming a valued destination.

In the fall of 2010, WUSF radio, the local NPR affiliate changed formats, moving from daytime classical music programming to news and public affairs while retaining jazz for evenings and overnight. The impact on WMNF listenership was dramatic. A review of Arbitron survey data indicated WMNF listenership fell by 20% as a result of these changes. Internal polling revealed that WMNF's audience was not only shrinking but the time spent listening was also decreasing. As worrisome was the

realization that the average age of listeners was also rising. In the 1980s and 1990s the average age of the WMNF listener was in the mid to late thirties. By 2012, the average had risen to the high forties.

This trend is accentuated by generational differences between older and younger listeners. Younger listeners do not use radio in the same way older listeners have. The younger generation's listening needs are being fulfilled through self-created music programming on portable music players, online listening via cell phones, listening at home and work on computers, satellite radio, and cable music channels. This is another example of the impact digital convergence is having on WMNF and community radio through out the United States.

Empirical and anecdotal evidence suggests also declining listenership is directly correlated with the emergence of progressive news and public affairs programming on cable television channels, satellite radio, and other digital platforms. Thus, changing listening and viewing habits, combined with the ability to digitally record television programming, coupled with the emergence of podcasts and other listening and viewing technologies, not to forget the availability of dedicated satellite and cable music channels, undercut the unique and important role WMNF had played for many of its listeners and supporters.

media consolidation in the United States. Where for decades broadcasters had been prohibited from owning more than one radio station in any given market, the new rules allowed financially well-endowed broadcasters to begin buying more and more commercial stations. In Tampa, Florida, for instance, one broadcaster now owns six stations.

The by-product of consolidation was the gradual disappearance of localism, *writ large*, in most media markets. Frequently, commercial broadcasts originate thousands of miles from the cities in which they are aired. Obviously, local programs are broadcast, particularly during the morning and evening drive times but other than local advertising most of the other programs are nationally syndicated. The most prominent casualty of consolidation was the disappearance of the local radio newsroom and with that a decreasing emphasis on local news, including the disappearance of programs which were local and culturally distinctive in character.

The de-emphasis on localism in American commercial radio has become the most well known by-product of media consolidation. A more interesting by-product of consolidation has been the realization that community radio's greatest asset is its membership in a specific community, its ability to reflect local values and concerns, its emphasis on locally produced programming, and its direct dependence on local volunteers and programmers.

Localism in the age of consolidation and digital convergence

With the adoption of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, the FCC modified the rules governing media ownership. Thus began a period of intense

Given this renewed awareness of and commitment to localism, WMNF and many other community stations are re-analyzing the listening needs of their local communities and attempting to forge new alliances with specific ethnic communities, lo-

cal non-profits, and other groups whose missions are primarily, if not exclusively, local in nature. Some of the modifications WMNF has made to its programming schedule reflect this new appreciation of localism.

For instance, WMNF has stopped broadcasting FSRN. In its place, WMNF broadcast an afternoon call-in program oriented towards discussing issues of local and regional importance. It has also renewed its emphasis on serving the many different ethnic communities in the Tampa Bay area by broadcasting programs designed to serve their musical and informational needs in addition to featuring local artists in its music programming. Such changes by themselves will not increase listenership or donor giving. Hence, WMNF is re-imagining what can be done to amplify and enhance its digital potentialities.

Currently, WMNF uses its first digital channel for the simultaneous broadcast of its primary on-air programming; the second, Bull's Radio, is leased to the student government of the University of South Florida; the third, The Source, is used for syndicated news and public affairs programs from NPR, BBC, and a variety of independent and institutional providers; while the fourth, Hawk Radio, is leased to Hillsborough Community College for student produced programming.

In total, WMNF's web based broadcast services, including the main web site, generate 80,000 hits per month; not enough activity to attract significant revenue from online advertising (which is permitted by the FCC) or enough listeners to offset the costs associated with creating and maintaining WMNF's digital infrastructure. What income the web does provide is limited to revenue received from the two schools mentioned above and a small amount from online donations. What can be done?

WMNF is actively transforming its website and reviewing its online programming. It hopes to build a dynamic and attractive source of programming that will reach into and beyond the Tampa Bay community. WMNF is planning on offering live performances and other events on its digital platforms. The Source will be modified to accommodate live community forums, group discussions, live speeches, and other programming that is unique and local in nature. Since WMNF has remote broadcast capabilities, it can also stream audio from public

gatherings and events in addition to music performances from local and national artists performing in the Bay area.

WMNF is also installing portable digital video equipment in its live music studio. This will enable WMNF to record and make video podcasts of performances by local artists, interviews with notable speakers and lecturers, as well as community based roundtable discussions. WMNF is also considering streaming live video of programmers hosting their programs. Other strategies include the hiring of a digital editor to make WMNF's news and public affairs programming available online to the listening impaired.

Enhancing the interactive capabilities across all of WMNF's digital platforms is a further and, perhaps, more profound goal. Though programmers do regularly receive emails and phone calls from listeners, the adoption of technologies to enable listeners to interact not only with program hosts but each other is another avenue WMNF could use to attract and increase listenership. One arresting example may be having programmers and listeners co-produce programs together. The model for such co-production is already underway. On Saturdays, WMNF is broadcasting a program where the co-hosts are "live in studio" while actually interacting with each other from separate cities. This is being accomplished using Facetime and an audio software program called Sip Jaket.

Consistently reaching out to like-minded organizations that share WMNF's values is another avenue to accent and enhance localism. Over the last two years, WMNF has been inviting representatives from many different local non-profits and charities to record announcements discussing services and upcoming events. These announcements are scheduled for specific times so that members of those organizations can tune in to hear them or go to web to listen to them on the archives. Hosting open houses, neighborhood get-togethers, events at local restaurants and museums, and producing music concerts are other ways WMNF can continue to reaffirm its local character.

Conclusion
In 2012, Ford and Volkswagen announced that they would begin making digital radios standard equipment in almost all their cars for model year 2013.

Other manufacturers will inevitably follow their lead.

Even more promising is the decision by Sprint and Nokia to implant digital receivers in some of their phones. The advantage of having a digital receiver in one's phone is obvious; one can listen to local programming without having to use cellular data streams.

In addition to these developments, all types of digital radios will soon be available in the American marketplace. The growing availability of digital radios in cars, at home or work, and on one's cell phone may allow WMNF and other community broadcasters to attract new on-air listeners and donors.

But more important is modifying the relationship WMNF has with its listeners. Instead of simply having passive listeners, community broadcasters must develop multiple strategies for transforming listeners not only into users but into active participants, if not producers.

As outlined above, such strategies will involve the creation of listening communities who can communicate with each other as well as program hosts in real time. Using Skype, Go to Meeting, Google's Hangout, Facetime, Sip Jaket or other interactive software technologies could serve to increase listener participation.

Realizing this goal comes at a price. Increasing bandwidth, installing and managing new digital technologies internally requires a substantial and continuing investment on WMNF's part. The tension between funding and incorporating new digital technologies while still struggling to maintain revenue is the root source of the anxieties and uncertainties confronting WMNF and other community broadcasters.

If successful though, WMNF and many other community radio stations may be able to partially fulfill Brecht's vision, briefly noted at the beginning of this article. ∎

Photo credits: All photos WMNF Community Radio Station, Tampa, Florida (Bill Hamilton).

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2. Arbitron is a radio ratings service that uses several different methodologies to estimate the size of listening audiences.

Bill Hamilton has been actively involved with community radio in the US since 1980. As a correspondent, he covered both Democratic and Republican conventions as well as hosting news and public affairs discussion programs on community radio. He holds a BA in philosophy and did graduate work in Guatemala studying post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among highland villagers subjected to military pogroms during the civil war.

Low power radio stations

Low Power FM radio stations are community-based non-profit outlets that broadcast to neighbourhoods and small towns throughout the country.

LPFM stations have a limited broadcast range of just a few miles, but their impact on communities can be immense.

These non-commercial stations inject vibrancy into a radio dial that has suffered from years of media consolidation.

LPFM stations offer a platform for content and viewpoints that traditional media overlook. These stations foster community identity and serve as hubs for vital safety information during local emergencies.

The Federal Communications Commission first authorized LPFM stations in 2000, and it issued more than 800 licenses to colleges, churches, labour unions, civil rights groups and other organizations across the country.

Claiming the tiny stations would interfere with commercial radio's full-power signals, however, broadcast-industry lobbyists pressured Congress into passing a law that radically reduced the opportunities available to LPFM stations.

As a result, thousands of potential new radio stations were blocked.

A subsequent FCC study rejected the interference argument, and the agency urged Congress to repeal the LPFM restrictions. But it took years of advocacy from Free Press, Prometheus Radio Project and other organizations to create momentum to change the law.

In early 2011, President Obama signed the Local Community Radio Act, which paved the way for fresh music, local perspectives and community news on the public airwaves.

The FCC is now developing the rules that will govern these new community stations. The agency's next move will determine whether just a handful of stations start broadcasting – or thousands take to the airwaves.

Free Press continues to work with Prometheus Radio Project [http://www.prometheusradio.org/] and others to ensure the best outcome for community radio and educate the public about the LPFM application process.

(Source: Free Press: www.freepress.net/low-power-fm-radio)

Radio Days 2012: Chances and challenges

Stefan Möhl

"Will radio remain the most important medium on the continent?" This question from Professor Franz Kruger, Director of the University of Witwatersrand Radio Academy, launched the regional conference, Joburg Radio Days 2012 at Wits University in Johannesburg, South Africa. The speaker's remarks inspired vibrant discussions about the future of the medium in Africa.

In the frosty winter week of 4-6 July 2012, professionals from business, politics and science met at the University of Witwatersrand (WITS) campus in Johannesburg, South Africa to examine the following central questions: What consequences does technological and social change have on the traditional medium? Are there successful business strategies for broadcasters to assert themselves in a multi-media environment? And: What role does so-called "community radio"' play in the local development of rural areas in Africa?

The Joburg Radio Days are the most important international radio symposium in the region and are organized in time-honoured fashion by the WITS Radio Academy, with on-going support from KAS Media Africa. In the context of the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) Media Africa's overall goals, the present report focuses on the following key topics: The effects of digitalisation and mobile communication on radio journalism in the region, community radio as an agent of local development, as well as limited media diversity and granting of licences in Zimbabwe.

The opening session with the title, "The current state and future challenges of an old medium", set the theme of the conference and reflected the contrasting opinions on the topic.

According to the British radio expert, James Cridland, radio is not dying out at all. Merely the way it is used is changing: "The forms of broadcasting, producing and consuming is multiplying. These days radio is at home on multiple platforms." Furthermore, digitalisation should be viewed as a chance to create authentic interaction with the listener.

Anthony Duke, co-founder of the first independent South African radio station, Capital Radio, had a different opinion. According to Duke, the audience barely switches to the internet since the majority of listeners in southern Africa do not even have internet access. Digitalisation is not important for

the survival of the broadcasters, but rather their content and quality.

Radio landscape is changing

Throughout the conference the internet's fundamental relevance for the radio of the future was repeatedly emphasized. The diversity of the radio landscape is increasing rapidly. The general belief was that, in the long run, radio and the internet would merge and be used on mobile products such as Smartphones and Tablets. In addition, interaction with the audience via social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter will become increasingly important.

This opinion was also shared by Mandla Soko, General Director of Radio at the public radio station, SABC. The listeners were sceptical, however, when he proposed a state regulation to shape the increasing digitalisation of radio. The government,

according to Soco, must also establish mandatory rules and licences in the World Wide Web. However, the question of how such a regulation would look in practice was left unanswered.

"Community radio gives a voice to the voiceless," claimed the activist, Gabriel Urgoiti, "in fact, it finally lends an ear to the cries of the disadvantaged." The speaker from Argentina quickly captured the audience's attention as he spoke about his commitment to community radio in its role as a local and non-commercial citizen media in South America and South Africa. In his opinion, community radio is a central component of a pluralistic media landscape.

Particularly in rural areas in Africa, they even play an important role in the development and improvement of communities – people who contribute to the radio station and learn how to articulate their needs and problems.

Furthermore, they acquire important skills which increase their employment chances. Urgoiti stipulates, though, that local communities must stay in possession and control of community radio stations so they remain true to their non-commercial character.

Truth Radio, which was organised by prisoners in the high-security prison, Pollsmoor near Cape Town, is one of the most exciting examples of community radio that was presented at the Radio Days. Radio improves the mood in prison and aids in the re-socialisation of prisoners, according to Marius Boaden, Director of Truth Radio.

A contrary example was presented by the Kenyan radio expert, Esther Macharia. In her home country, community radio stations are active participants in racist agitation and defamation. "In Kenya almost every ethnic minority has its own radio station. Local politicians partly exploit them to their own end and openly incite violence."

As a solution to the ambivalent role of community radio, a national umbrella organisation was suggested which would, on the one hand, provide a unified voice in facing the government and, on the other hand, could give an early warning against xenophobic propaganda.

Just like at the 2011 Radio Days, South Africa's neighbour Zimbabwe was also a hot topic in 2012. Last year the Zimbabwean government announced the awarding of commercial radio licences. Many applicants, however, were left empty-handed as only one licence was granted, to the pro-government Director of AB Communications, Supa Mandiwanzira.

A lively discussion was sparked at the Radio Days 2012 when Mandiwanzira came up against two of his licence adversaries, John Masuku and Gift Mambipiri, who had strived in vain for a broadcasting permit.

Masuku and Mambipiri were extremely critical of the government's process of awarding licences. "Supa Mandiwanzira is a further example of how power stays in the hands of regime loyalists. The broadcasting reform in Zimbabwe is a sham reform," explained Mambipiri.

In the face of criticism, Madiwanzira asserted that his rivals simply wrote the worse application. Furthermore, his political views and activities should be a private matter.

Overall, the conference participants were pleased that even one commercial radio licence was awarded in Zimbabwe. However, this is just a small step toward a pluralistic and independent media landscape. No doubt, the limited freedom of opinion in Zimbabwe will continue to be a central issue at the conference in years to come.

Markus Brauckmann, Director of KAS Media Africa, said: "The Radio Days have impressively underlined that it really is an assembly of first-rate professionals and meaningful discussions. The traditional medium radio remains on our agenda and we will continue to support the conference to the best of our ability." ∎

Source: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. Media Programme Sub-Saharan Africa.
http://www.kas.de/medien-afrika/en/publications/31753/

Why the Arab world needs community radio

Daoud Kuttab

Despite the ongoing debates about cause and effect, the protest movements that began in Tunisia and spread throughout the Arab world have had one clear vehicle: freedom of assembly and expression. The crowds of Arab youth who have assembled in cities, towns and villages have forced authoritarian rulers to recognize them, their right to protest the status quo and their right to demand change. While in some countries winning this right has been accomplished relatively easily and quickly, in other countries it has been difficult, dangerous and deadly. Yet the protesters have continued to demand the right to voice their grievances against the powers-that-be.

While the protests and mass expression of demands have taken place largely using traditional means (e.g. word-of-mouth, demonstrations, marches and sit-ins, all broadcast via satellite television channels), like all revolutions, we have seen an explosion of creative ideas that have leveraged creative solutions. From the use of colourful graffiti in Libya to new and social media in Egypt and Syria, young Arabs have been busy making their voices heard through a variety of new platforms.

Yet one tool that has escaped the majority of Arab protesters has been radio.

Like many other traditional media tools, radio has been declared dead numerous times only to see its revival and novel usage in new settings and contexts. But while the rest of the world, including many semi-closed regimes, has been tolerant of private and community radio, the Arab world, including some relatively open societies, has persistently rejected any regulation that would grant radio licenses to anyone other than government organizations or the elite business entities that circulate within their orbit.

There are historic reasons for this anti-radio policy. As radio was experiencing its golden age, the post-colonial Arab world witnessed repeated revolutions and coups in which a military general typically took over the national radio station along with the presidential palace. Communiqué number one announcing the new ruler was usually broadcast over the radio waves and all other organs of government quickly fell in line.

Naturally these same military dictators who took power by capturing the radio network would then take all measures to protect it from challenges to their power. In the Arab world, the buildings that housed radio stations, and later television stations, often came to be the most heavily guarded pieces of real estate in the entire country. Media outlets effectively were turned into military installations with multiple passes and body searches required for entrance.

The programming broadcast by these stations was also entirely controlled by central governments. A direct telephone line would connect the office of the radio or television director to the palace of the president or king. Even with the proliferation of satellite television and the Internet in the 1990s and 2000s, radio licenses continued to be denied to all but the most loyal and trusted friends of the rulers. And when private licenses were granted, the owners were given clear instructions not to deal with politics and news.

Much like attempts to control Arab citizens through centralized security and administrative apparatuses, media enterprises were similarly restricted to the country's capital, where they could be kept under watch of the ruling elite.

As for programming, centralized and government-controlled media, as well as the few private media companies owned by businessmen close to the governments, generally focused their coverage on protocol-laden reporting of formal events and achievements of the leader and his government, while the rest of the news focused on regional and international news. This system also ensured that all

news coverage was sanitized of anything that might disturb or question the prevailing government narrative. The stark absence of local news – a kind of escapism policy – ensured that the public's attention was diverted from the pressing social, economic and political issues that local communities were facing.

This control over media sources was so entrenched and comprehensive that even when the Arab uprisings managed to unseat ruling powers, little was done to change the prevailing media structures. It became clear that changing rulers was somewhat easier than causing genuine change in the media regulatory framework that had been built up over decades.

Air waves uncontested by revolutionary voices

The millions of protesters in Tahrir Square or Alexandria or Suez who succeeded in creating geographical zones free of security or police control, were unable to even think about – let alone work toward – creating an equivalent on the airwaves, i.e. local radio stations through which they could propagate their revolutionary vision. Transmitter equipment was nowhere to be found and electrical engineers were not even called on to create a simple transmission system – the kind that any physics student can set up for his high school science fair. Decades of government intimidation had clearly had its effect on the psyche of everyday Egyptians, Tunisians or Yemenis.

While the deregulation of laws to permit private media ownership of radio would be a step in the right direction, it would not produce the kind of community-based radio environment that exists in the great majority of the world's countries.

For example, Jordan, which in 2003 did establish an audio-visual commission to license private radio stations, proceeded to attach a high fee for stations that dealt with public affairs. Any private radio station that broadcasts news and political programming must pay a 50% surcharge fee. Government or semi-governmental agencies, such as the police, public universities and government-appointed municipalities, are exempt from the licensing fees, while NGOs, private universities and elected municipalities are not.

In Tunisia, the new government installed after the flight of Ben Ali introduced a licensing regime for private radio in which the license cost over $60,000 a year – hardly an incentive to create community radio stations. In Egypt, the former Mubarak regime issued a single private license on the condition that this commercial station stay away from news or politics. After the revolution, the license was renewed by SCAF without any tendering process.

What is it about community radio that has made Arab leaders so wary of it? What is community radio? This is a question that is often asked in the Arab region even though the concept has been widely accepted in the rest of the world for decades. UNESCO and AMARC (The World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters) define community radio simply as radio owned and operated by a local community, usually with the support of volunteers and local contributions. Typically, community radio stations are owned by NGOs and are limited

in their broadcast coverage to a particular community, language or special audience.

Autocratic Arab rulers who enforced national unity by the power of the gun certainly would not be interested in any media that encouraged local communities to celebrate their specific ethnicity, language, culture or religion. The assumption in the Arab world has always been that forced assimilation and the denial of community-based freedom of expression would produce stability. For a while – a long while – this system seemed to work. The nationalistic rhetoric that glorified the struggle for pan-Arabism, or Palestine, or whatever the political/national flavour of the month was, fooled citizens into believing that their rulers were really trying to do what was best for them.

Empowering local communities

Community radio, of course, is not just about issues of identity and ethnicity. Local commun-

ities that can control the means to express themselves, communicate within their own populations, and develop mechanisms for speaking to local and regional powers via radio, are instantly empowered in ways not easily tolerated by authoritarian power. To deny this basic communication capacity ensures that these populations remain forever ignorant, unable to educate themselves, and therefore unable to fight for their rights.

World Bank studies conducted in Africa and Latin America have shown that countries that allow community radio stations measure considerably better than countries that ban community radio. Poverty and unemployment figures are less, and productivity and development indicators are much higher.

Community radio is also credited with arresting the dangerous epidemic of emigration from rural communities to urban centres. The Washington-based Center for International Media Assistance (CIMA) issued a long report in 2011 praising the role of community radio entitled *Voices from Villages: Community Radio in the Developing World*.

The report's executive summary said, "International aid agencies are showing ever greater interest in community media's ability to inform and empower. More governments are acknowledging the contribution of community media to education, public health, and economic development and are creating policy and legal frameworks to enable its expansion."

There are those voices who wrongly claim that community-based media will exacerbate tensions between various ethnic and national communities, contribute to the break-up of countries, and even introduce civil war. The fact is that the people living in the various countries that make up the Arab League are diverse in a multitude of ways.

Instead of denying this diversity and forcing people of different backgrounds to conform to a single cultural and national identity, a more humane approach would be to allow these diverse flowers to bloom within the national garden.

By embracing and empowering these different groups, the Arab world's new rulers will be planting the seeds for stable governing bodies that will better withstand both internal and external threats. Community radio would therefore be a savior for these new regimes and not in any way an obstacle.

In order to successfully introduce community radio to the Arab world, an enabling environment needs to be created. Legislation must be introduced that simplifies the laws allowing communities to broadcast on specified frequencies. This creates an atmosphere in which organized groups and communities are empowered to communicate, using one of the simplest and most inexpensive media tools available.

A microphone, audio mixer and a simple transmitter with an antenna are the basic equipment needed to establish a radio station. In addition to start-up capital, training is vital to promoting best practices when using radio for development, expression and raising awareness.

UNESCO, the global UN body charged with supporting culture, education, and science, considers the establishment of community radio to be their number one priority around the world. Whereas most regions of the world have worked with UNESCO to set up community radio stations, the Arab world has lagged in this area, late to understand the concept let alone setting up stations, training volunteers and creating a network of community radio stations.

However, it is worth noting a number of recent initiatives that have begun in the Arab world with the aim of introducing community radio. Aswatona, a project of the Amman-based Community Media Network, will establish seven community radio stations in seven Arab countries over the next three years. These stations will begin by broadcasting over the Internet and via satellite and will then add FM broadcasts as soon as countries allow for their licensing.

The programme, funded by the Swedish Agency for International Development, also includes an advocacy component aimed at pushing national governments to permit community radio to operate with as few bureaucratic and financial restrictions as possible. The British Foreign Office has also recently supported this effort with a three year grant aimed at reaching an additional three Arab countries.

Communities, especially those outside the main metropolitan capitals of the Arab world, have largely been ignored by autocratic powers. Now that these totalitarian power structures are being replaced by democratically elected governments,

Directory of Community Radios in Bangladesh

Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC) has published a Directory of Community Radios in Bangladesh. Today 14 community radio stations are on-air in the country, aiming to ensure empowerment and the right to information for the rural community.

The stations are broadcasting altogether 120 hours of programmes a day on information, education, local entertainment and development motivation activities. Around 536 women and youth are now working with those stations throughout the country as rural broadcasters.

The Directory will serve as an easy reference of Community Radio Stations in Bangladesh for Development Partners, Officials of different Ministries of Government, Academia, Researchers, Media, and other professional groups working or taking an interest in issues of community radio for development in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC) has been struggling for the last 12 years to open up community media to give a focus to the voices of ordinary people.

BNNRC has been addressing the community radio and community TV access issue for over a decade, almost since its emergence in the year 2000, helping to bridge the information gap of rural Bangladesh.

The directory may be downloaded here:
www.scribd.com/doc/116034307/Community-Radio-Directory-in-Bangladesh

one would hope that new leaders will change their policies towards these communities for the better.

Allowing community radio to thrive has no cost for governments and produces amazing results in communities, and therefore in nations. Creating a welcoming administrative and legal environment for community radio in the Arab world should be a "no-brainer" – provided that we have leaders that genuinely care about their communities. ∎

First published online in Arab Media & Society, Issue 16, Fall 2012, and reprinted with permission. www.arabmediasociety.com/?article=799

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Apoyo para adopción de DRM en América Latina

La XIV Asamblea de la Asociación Latinoamericana de Educación Radiofónica (ALER) reunida en Quito, Ecuador, del 23 al 26 de setiembre del 2012 declara su apoyo a la adopción de la norma Digital Radio Mondiale (DRM) para la futura digitalización de la radio en nuestro continente y llama a los Gobiernos de la región a adoptar este estándar.

Desde el punto de vista de la radio popular y local nos parece claro que DRM+ es el mejor estándar, entre otras cosas porque:

* Existen implementaciones disponibles en software que se pueden bajar de la red y que permiten la modulación y demodulación DRM, lo que permite el desarrollo de moduladores/excitadores DRM con bajo costo.
* DRM permite el aumento del número de estaciones de Radiodifusión dentro de la banda actualmente asignada para Radiodifusión FM.

Las estaciones que actualmente transmiten en las bandas de onda media y onda corta mejorarán drásticamente la calidad de audio. Las estaciones que actualmente transmiten en la banda de FM podrán operar con el sistema Surround 5.1. Con la norma DRM es posible transmitir diapositivas, textos, páginas web, e incluso video en vivo con baja definición a receptores que cuenten con tales opciones.

Para obtener la misma zona de cobertura de un transmisor analógico, utilizando el sistema DRM se requiere una potencia de alrededor de 1/10 de la potencia del transmisor analógico, por lo cual el sistema DRM genera un enorme ahorro de energía, tanto para las emisoras como para el país y adicionalmente el costo del transmisor es mucho más barato ya que la parte más cara de un sistema de transmisión es su etapa de potencia.

El DRM es una norma nueva de carácter mundial promovida por medios públicos no comerciales y de la cual anunciaron su adopción países de dimensión continental como India y Rusia. Esto abre la posibilidad de contar con una norma de Radiodifusión Digital de carácter global.

El DRM es una norma que permite que coexistan emisoras de baja potencia y de gran potencia bajo un esquema descentralizado de Radiodifusión, que es lo que se requiere para que todos puedan transmitir y recibir, dondequiera que estemos.

Por cuanto rechazamos los sistemas que requieren distribución centralizada como el DAB, que genera un control centralizado de las transmisiones, al igual que rechazamos otro sistema relevante como el HD Radio, que es propiedad de una sola empresa, o el sistema ISDB-T por cuanto requieren mayor acho banda que DRM, favoreciendo la escasez de canales de Radiodifusión y contribuyendo a la permanencia de grandes monopolios. (Fuente: ALER.)

Rethinking the growth of print media in India

Gopalan Ravindram

Recent times have seen an increasing number of reports about the plight of press systems in the Western hemisphere in contrast to the growing prospects of the print media in Asia, particularly in countries like India and China. While many attribute the success stories of the Indian and Chinese newspaper sectors to the inherent strengths of their booming economies, some argue that there are visible and invisible trajectories of these success stories.

The underlying causes of the plight of the press systems in the West are believed to be in the domain of internet media, while the growth trajectories of the Indian press are apparently caused by non-Internet domains. The advent of a website titled www.newspaperdeathwatch which seeks to have a countdown for the death of the newspapers as its agenda, is reason enough to ponder the different situations facing the print media systems in the Western hemisphere and countries like India.

Before we plunge into the crux of the story, let us take a quick tour of what constitutes the Indian press in terms of its characteristics, complexities, market segments and legacy issues, anchored by the print culture of the last 500+ years.

India's first encounter with the printing machine happened around 1578 when the Portuguese Jesuit Henrique Henriques printed *Thambiran Vanakkam* using Tamil fonts in India. Citing Graham Shaw (1987), Venkatachalapathy (2012) points out that only 266 books could be printed in the long interval between 1556 and 1800 (in 1554, the first romanized Tamil book was printed in Lisbon).

The first newspaper in India was started in 1780 by James Augustus Hickey with the title *Hicky's Bengal Gazette or The Calcutta General Advertiser. The Indian Newspaper Report 1904* (London) lists 15 Madras-based (now Chennai) newspapers and among these eight were English publications and seven were vernacular publications. These newspapers had circulation ranging from a few hundred copies to 5000 copies.

Newspapers played a crucial role during both independence struggle and the struggle for democracy during the Emergency period (June 1975 – March 1977). The Indian press reached new heights in terms of content, design and reach thanks to the impact of the magazine boom the post-Emergency period witnessed. India is now home to thousands of newspapers and millions of readers.

Indian newspapers are segmented by their language, state and regional affiliations. Even though, some English newspapers claim to be *national newspapers,* such claims are rather misleading as no Indian newspaper has a national reach in terms of a nation-wide geographical access.

Advertising revenue and circulation figures

The health of any press system is gauged by the health of two parameters – advertising revenue and circulation figures. According to *The State of the Media Report 2012*, US newspapers' circulation registered a steady decline from the figure of 62.3 million in 1990 to 43.4 million in 2010. On the advertising front, the revenue declined from a high of 48.7 billion US dollars in 2000 to 20.7 billion US dollars in 2011 (Edmonds, 2012).

On the other hand, the circulation of Indian newspapers rose from 126.9 million in 2000 to 308.8 million in 2010 (*MOSPI* 2013), whereas their advertising revenue share is only 39 percent of the total advertising revenue generated. In the prism of another statistic, the share of television in India in the advertising pie has been growing steadily since 2005 when it garnered 37 percent to 42 percent in 2012.

However, compared to its 49 percent share in

the total advertising revenue generated in India in 2005, the print media could garner only 39 percent in 2012. But, in contrast to the USA scenario, the share of the online media has only moved from 1 percent in 2005 to 6 percent in 2012 (Goyal, 2013).

What should be seen as the growth trajectory in the international context can also be seen as the site of lurking danger for the Indian press, if the rapidly changing intra-media scenarios within India are taken into account. One such scenario has been anchored by the booming television sector in India, both in terms of the proliferation of channels and increasing advertising revenue. From 132 in 2000, the number of television channels (private) jumped to 841 channels in 2012 *(TRAI, 2012:73)*

From 124 million households in 2009, the television sector catered for 130 million households in 2010, with a penetration rate of nearly 60 percent. On the macro level of reach and penetration, the figures by the *Indian Readership Survey 2011*, provide a more meaningful comparison to understand the different growth trajectories of press, television and internet media. According to *IRS 2011*, television, print and internet have a reach of 59.8 percent, 39.1 percent and 3.2 percent of the Indian population respectively. This data set again proves that television appears to be filling the gap faster than print.

What should be gleaned from the above figures is the fact that the prospects of the Indian press system are tied to the prospects of the television sector in India, at least in terms of the share of advertising pie and reach. The second intra-media scenario that requires our attention is the competing profiles of the vernacular and English language print media markets in India.

A cursory glance at the list of top 10 Indian newspapers reveals only one English newspaper (*Times of India*) at rank 6. The rankings from 10 to 20 again show only one English Newspaper (*Hindustan Times*) at rank 17. The rankings from 20 to 30 show eight English newspapers and only two vernacular newspapers.

In terms of circulation figures, the largest circulated Indian English newspaper, *Times of India,* has only less than half the 16.37 million circulation of the largest circulated Hindi newspaper, *Dainik Jagran*. With 7.61 million circulation, *Times of India* has five better placed vernacular newspapers ahead and four vernacular newspapers behind.

More importantly, the overwhelming domination of the vernacular newspaper comes alive if one does a back of the envelope summing up of the total circulation of the ten English newspapers in the 30 top newspapers list and puts it alongside the circulation figure of the number one Indian newspaper published in Hindi, *Dainik Jagran*. We find that there is only a marginal difference between the two. In short, the number one Indian newspaper is a Hindi newspaper, whose circulation figure of 16.6 million approximates the combined circulation of the ten English newspapers.

Cornering the market

Citing the *First Press Commission Report of 1954*, Jeffrey (2000: 27) mentions that there were "330 daily newspapers in the whole of India, with a total circulation of about 2.5 million, nearly 28 percent of which was in English." Why there were no possibilities for *Dainik Jagrans* during the 1950s? How did English newspapers corner 28 percent of the total circulation figures?

The answer probably lies in weaker literacy during the 1950s compared to now. In 1951, only 16.1 percent Indians were literate. In 2001, 55.3 percent and in 2011 74.4 percent. The growing literacy figures are to be seen as the primary mover of the growth of the Indian press. But there are other agents of change too. Jeffrey (2000) argues that besides literacy, the conditions and needs for political participation also make an impact on the fortunes of newspaper markets. Jeffrey (2000:31-32) says:

"The example of Kerala reinforces my belief that politics is the key in provoking people to buy newspapers. Throughout the twentieth century, the Malayalam-speaking region on south-Western

coast has been the most literate place in India. In 1960, the year of the mid-term state election, which produced the highest voter turnout in Indian history (84 percent) and the defeat of the Communists, Malayalam newspaper penetration was roughly thirty five newspapers for every 1000 people, India's overall newspaper penetration was about twelve to 1000. ...Crude measures from the rest of India support a hypothesis that, in making people into newspaper readers, literacy and political participation precede raw purchasing power and advanced printing technology."

Not surprisingly, Kerala, with a literacy rate of 93 percent in 2011 (the highest among Indian states), boasts two newspapers in the top ten list, *Malayala Manorama* (9.7 million) and *Mathruboomi* (6.3 million), whose combined circulation approximates the combined circulation of all the English newspapers in the top 30 list (*IRS*, 2012).

What is interesting to note also is the fact that the English newspapers' share of 28 percent of total circulation figures in 1954 has now been reduced to a penetration level of just 8 percent. Should we again blame it on the role of literacy and politics that Jeffrey (2000) points to? In a sense, the answer seems yes, considering the growing gravitation of the elites among literates to latch onto new media devices such as tabs and pads while taking advantage of their upward mobility in terms of wealth and high literacy levels.

However, they are seen as lacking in political participation and are blamed during every election for not going to the voters' booth (Gopalas-

wami, 2011). These are most probably the people who continue to be the main sponsors of the growth of the English segment of the Indian press, in both urban and rural India.

Expanding markets

Other possibilities exist for a different reading that points in the direction of the untapped potential of the Indian press as regards the neo-literate markets and the intra-vernacular and English press markets. As the literacy levels across India have been increasing over the years, the demography of the Indian newspaper market also goes through changes. More importantly, it heralds an expanding market for both vernacular and English newspapers. Even though the Indian press is predominantly vernacular in its profile and reach, there are growing diversities within the English newspaper segment.

The combined power of literacy and political participation, which resulted in the overwhelming presence of the Malayalam language press in Kerala, can be seen to work differently in the case of English newspapers in what are essentially Hindi speaking states. They number 13 and in eight of these states, English newspapers are cultivating new pastures.

For instance, Rathore (2012) reports that while the national average for the penetration of English dailies hovers around 8 percent, in states such as Jharkhand and Rajasthan (which have to be seen as typical examples of vernacular newspaper markets, compared to the non-vernacular/mixed

markets of such as metros like Delhi), English newspapers reached growth figures of 31 percent and 37 percent respectively.

States such as Jharkhand are going through intense contexts of political turmoil and political participation because of the ongoing struggles between the state and the *naxalites*, the militant, far left and radical communists. The state's literacy figure jumped from 53.5 percent in 2001 to 67.6 percent in 2011, providing the context for the coming together of literacy and political participation to fuel newspapers' growth.

This is to prove that we shall not be solely driven by the perspectives fuelled by cross-country or cross-regional comparisons in judging the growth trajectories of press systems. Even though such perspectives help us to relate to a growing contrast between the print media markets of USA and Europe *vis à vis* the markets of Asia/India, they can also cloud our perceptions of the fundamentals which have led to this situation.

These fundamentals are about the saturated parameters of literacy, media reach and access in the Western hemisphere and the evolving parameters of literacy, media reach and access in countries like India. There is bound to be a steady growth as regards all media, including Internet media, until the levels of saturation are reached in India.

India being India, with an uneven territory of social demography, conditioned by tradition, modernity, development and globalisation, media landscapes are also likely to undergo rapid changes in terms of individual growth as well as growth at the cost of other media sectors. ∎

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On the Screen...

WACC-SIGNIS Human Rights Award 2012

The WACC-SIGNIS Human Rights Award 2012 has gone to the documentary film *Forbidden Voices* directed by Barbara Miller (Switzerland, 2012).

In Cuba, China and Iran the blogs of Yoani Sánchez, Zeng Jinyan and Farnaz Seifi are upsetting the state monopoly on information, although what these women write puts their lives at risk.
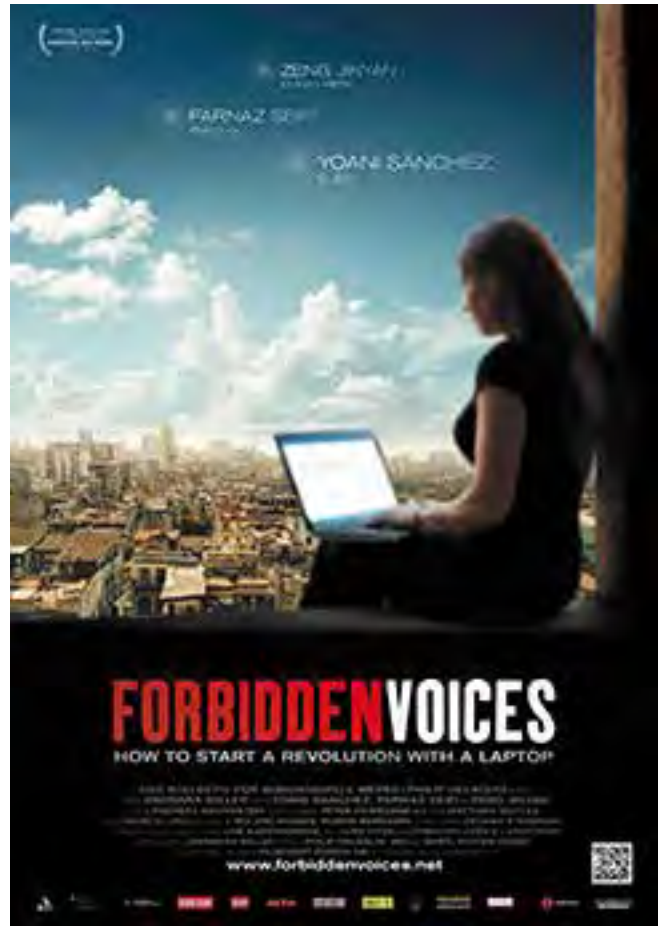
Forbidden Voices accompanies them on their dangerous journeys and explores their use of social media to denounce and combat violations of human rights and freedom of speech in their countries.

Generación Y, a blog by Havana-based Yoani Sánchez, quickly became very popular after its April 2007 launch. Given an award by the Spanish daily *El País* in 2008, it takes a critical look at the everyday economic and social problems that Cubans have to deal with. Sánchez is subject to strict government censorship and smear campaigns and has even been physically attacked.

Despite the government's censorship and repressive methods, the Chinese blogger and activist Zeng Jinyan has been using her blog and Twitter since 2006 to describe her life, including the imprisonment of her human rights activist husband Hu Jia, who is famous for defending AIDS sufferers and the environment. When Hu was arrested, she and her baby were placed under house arrest, with guards stationed around their home to prevent them going out. She continued to write about the fight for basic freedoms in China.

Censored and threatened, Iranian blogger and online women's rights campaigner Farnaz Seifi finally had to flee abroad and now lives in Germany. She and other Iranian women's rights activists are an example of how the Internet can be used to influence governments. She is a member of Change for Equality (www.we-change.org), a website launched in September 2006 by a group of about 20 Iranian women to advocate changes to laws that discriminate against women.

The criteria for the WACC-SIGNIS Human Rights Award are a documentary film (rather than a feature film) from the year in question that seeks to throw light on a question of human rights reflecting the values and priorities of WACC and SIGNIS.

In 2010 the award went to *The Garden at the End of the World* directed by Australian film-maker Gary Caganoff about rebuilding Afghanistan. In 2011 to *Verdades verdaderas* directed by Nicolás Gil Lavedra about Argentina's Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo and based on the life of Estela de Carlotto.

Forbidden Voices has been endorsed by Reporters Without Borders.

There is a web special version at http://forbiddenvoices.net/de/home.html and further information at http://forbiddenvoices.net/en/en-start.html

SIGNIS prize for Best European Film 2012

Amour by Michael Haneke (Austria – France – Germany) is the winner of the SIGNIS Award for Best European Film 2012, offered by the European region of SIGNIS, the World Catholic Association for Communication.

This film (still above) is the story of a married love that has survived the passage of time but cannot cheat death. Georges (Jean-Louis Trintignant) and Anne (Emmanuelle Riva) are comfortably retired music teachers, both in their 80s, living in Paris. Following Anne's stroke, their daily lives become dominated by her physical deterioration and approaching death.

Amour challenges the viewer to face and confront the moral dilemmas posed by the stark realities of aging and death.

The Angel's Share by Ken Loach (UK) took the runner-up position. In third place was *Jagten/The Hunt* by Thomas Vinterberg (Denmark), fourth place was *Barbara* by Christian Petzold (Germany) and fifth was *Dupa Duleari/Beyond the Hills* by Cristian Mungiu (Romania).

This is the second time the SIGNIS Europe prize has been awarded to Michael Haneke. In 2009 he was awarded for *The White Ribbon/Das weisse Band*. Other winners were *Le Havre*, 2011, *Of Gods and Men/Des hommes et des Dieux*, 2010, and *Waltz with Bashir*, 2008.

SIGNIS Europe has members in 22 countries and is one of the six regions of SIGNIS, the World Catholic Association for Communication. Every year SIGNIS Europe awards a prize for the best European film of the year. The purpose of this prize is to promote and to create interest for those European films which emerge because of their cinematographic quality as well as for the value of the theme in the film. The winning film was chosen by SIGNIS Europe national members after two voting rounds.

Yerevan (Armenia) 2012

At the 9th Golden Apricot Yerevan International Film Festival (8-15 July 2012) the awards of the Ecumenical Jury appointed by INTERFILM, SIGNIS, and the Armenian Apostolic Church, went to *If Only Everyone*, directed by by Natalia Belyauskene (Armenia, 2012).

Motivation: This film addresses the legacy of the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan. A young woman's search for her soldier father's grave sets off events that lead to forgiveness – of oneself and of "the other" – through dialogue and reconciliation. It is about how we can come to see our common humanity even in those once seen as only as the enemy.

In addition, the jury awarded a Commendation to *Future Lasts Forever* directed by Özcan Alper (Turkey, 2012).

Motivation: The story of a young musicologist's trip into a Kurdish region of Turkey to gather elegies becomes a sequence of encounters with images and testimonies of violence and survival. As such, it speaks to the fate of minorities throughout the world. This film explores the process of discovering and reclaiming history and identity and points to the importance of preserving symbols of faith.

The Members of the Ecumenical Jury were: His Grace Bishop Gevork Saroyan (Armenia) (Armenian Apostolic Church); Ricardo Ruiz de la Serna (Spain) (SIGNIS); Kristine Greenaway (Canada/Switzerland) (INTERFILM).

Kiev (Ukraine) 2012

At the 42nd Molodist Kiev International Film Festival (20-28 October 2012) the awards of the Ecumenical Jury of SIGNIS and INTERFILM in the competition for full-length feature films went to the film *Hemel* directed by Sacha Polak (Netherlands/Spain, 2012).

The film masterfully portrays the prolific deterioration of moral values in the Western society. Its main character, a young woman named Heaven has to master the coming of age. With outstanding pictures and light, and in a provocative manner, *Hemel* shows the confusion between sex and love. Heaven is entangled in numerous affairs, looking for the true love and affection her parents could not give her. The film clearly affirms that there is hope, no matter how disoriented or lost one may feel.

In the competition for first professional short films, the jury awarded its Prize to *Oh Willy ...* directed by Emma de Swaef and Marc James Roels (Belgium/France/Netherlands, 2012).

In this short animated film, the main character is confronted with the death of his mother. In a deep yet playful way, his sorrows and nightmares lead him to a soothing vision of afterlife. The general softness of the fabric used for making puppets reflects the frailty of life. The innovative qualities of this film serve the purpose of giving us a better understanding of life with the means of the art of animation.

The Members of the Jury were: Gatis Lidums, Riga (Latvia); Magali Van Reeth, Lyon (France); Oksana Sokolyanska, Kiev (Ukraine).

Leipzig (Germany) 2012

At the 55th International Festival for Documentary and Animated Film Leipzig (29 October to 4 November 2012) the award of the Ecumenical Jury of SIGNIS and INTERFILM comprising € 2000 by the VCH-Hotels Germany GmbH – in the "Verband Christlicher Hoteliers e.V." (www.vch.de) including the Hotel MICHAELIS in Leipzig – went to the film *Like Stone Lions at the Gateway into Night* (Comme des Lions de Pierre à l'Entrée de la Nuit) directed by Olivier Zuchuat (Switzerland/Greece/France 2012).

The film is about so-called re-education camps on the Greek island of Makronissos in the Aegean Sea, where communist intellectuals were detained under degrading conditions from 1947-51. Poetic texts by the internees, found in the cracks of the ruins, have now been reawakened in film.

By means of these texts, the prisoners kept their human dignity. The film is shattering evidence of the courage and mental strength needed to resist a dictatorship of uniform thinking; a document of gentle poetry against shouted slogans.

Texts, touchingly spoken by voices of the past, break with our conceptions of a country that many know only as tourists. Produced as a film essay in an excellent workmanlike fashion, *Like Stone Lions at the Gateway into Night* presents a stark contrast between a colourful postcard idyll on the image level and a documentation of abysmal powerlessness, deep hopes and lived courage on the sound level.

Perhaps it was necessary that more than 20 years had to pass after the fall of the Iron Curtain before these texts could unfold their deeply human message from a time of ideological polarization and instrumentalization. It does us here in Europe a lot of good to think about Greece as it is presented in this film.

Jury Members were: Tomas Axelson, (Sweden); Thomas Bohne, (Germany), President; Johanna Haberer, (Germany); Bernadette Meier (Switzerland). For more Information: www.dok-leipzig.de; www.inter-film.org

Saarbrücken (Germany) 2013

The INTERFILM Jury at the 34th Film Festival Max Ophüls Prize awarded its Prize to *Fünf Jahre Leben* (Five Years of Life) directed by Stefan Schaller (Germany, 2013).

Motivation: This is the story of a man who was a prisoner in Guantanamo for five years. The film shows a particular section of this time. Acted convincingly and shown from a nightmarishly real per-

spective, the film provokes questions about humanity and dignity. It sets its own testimony against an enforced confession – a plea for the power of will and against oblivion.

Members of the Jury: Brigitte Affolter, Switzerland; Julia Helmke, Germany; Harald Koberg, Austria; and Marisa Villareale, Germany.

Berlin (Germany) 2013

At the 63rd International Film Festival Berlin, held 7-17 February 2013, the Ecumenical Jury awarded its Prize in the Competition to the film *Gloria* (still below) directed by Sebastián Lelio (Chile/Spain, 2012) for its refreshing and contagious plea that life is a celebration to which we are all invited, regardless of age or condition, and that its complexities only add to the challenge to live it in full.

The Jury awarded a Commendation in the Competition to *An Episode in the Life of an Iron Picker* directed by Danis Tanovic (Bosnia-Herzegovina/France/Slovenia, 2013) for spotlighting people who are often invisible, and portraying their dignity, resilience, and invincible will to live.

The Ecumenical Jury awarded its Prize in the Panorama to the film *The Act of Killing* directed by Joshua Oppenheimer (Denmark/Norway/Great Britain, 2012).

This deeply unsettling film exposes the evil mass murders which took place in Indonesia in 1965 and reveals the monstrosity of these crimes. It re-opens a deep wound with the conviction that it is worth-while to unearth such atrocities.

The Ecumenical Jury awarded a Commendation in the Panorama to *Inch'Allah* directed by Anaïs Barbeau-Lavalette (Canada/France, 2012) for its use of poignant metaphors, images and stories to instil compassion, for foregrounding women's lives and points of view in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and for showing that certain life situations make it hard not to take sides.

The Ecumenical Jury awarded its Prize in the Forum to the film *Krugovi* (Circles) directed by Srdan Golubovic (Serbia/Germany/France/Slovenia/Croatia, 2013) for its compelling presentation of the human capacity to overcome seemingly invincible prejudices, and to achieve healing through reconciliation.

The Ecumenical Jury awards a Commendation in the Forum to *Senzo ni naru* (Roots) directed by Kaoru Ikeya (Japan, 2013) for showing a deeply impressive example of the beginning of new life after the Tsunami catastrophe in 2011. The protagonist finds inspiration to rebuild his home in the rich spiritual heritage of Japan.

The Panorama and the Forum prize carry a prize money of € 2500 - each, donated by the Catholic Film Work in Germany and the EKD (Evangelical Church in Germany).

The Members of the Ecumenical Jury were Gustavo Andujar (Cuba) – President; Jean-Luc Gadreau (France); Markus Leniger (Germany); Charles Martig (Switzerland); Maggie Morgan (Egypt); and Roland Wicher (Germany).

Fribourg (Switzerland) 2013

At the 27th Festival International des Films de Fribourg (16-23 March 2013) the Ecumenical Jury, appointed by INTERFILM and SIGNIS, awarded its prize to *Three Sisters / San Zimei* directed by Wang Bing (France/Hong-Kong, 2012). The film guides us to Yunnan, a province in China.

We follow the three sisters Yingying, ten years, Zhenzhen, six years, and Fenfen, four years, living in conditions of immense poverty. The mother has disappeared and the father is obliged to work in a town far away.

Three Sisters (still below) shows with majesty and respect the other side of the coin of globalization, the era of consumption and its consequences on those left behind, the most fragile members of society, the children.

The cinematic perspective discovers a world that confronts the precarious situation in the everyday life of the three sisters with their love, tenderness and a deep sense of responsibility between them.

The Toronto International Film Festival 2012 web site had this to say about the film:

"Chinese director Wang Bing's concern with those who do not fit in with the image of neo-capitalist super-modernity imposed by the country's elites is at the heart of his remarkable new documentary, *Three Sisters*. Filmed in a remote mountain village in Yunnan, China – where roughly eighty families raise livestock and cultivate potatoes at an altitude of 3,200 metres – Wang's beautifully realized film follows the lives of one such family, capturing their day-to-day existence with startling intimacy."

The Ecumenical Jury award consisting of CHF 5,000 is conferred jointly by two church institutions working in development cooperation, *Fastenopfer* (Catholic) and *Bread for All* (Protestant). It goes to the director whose film best reflects the situation of men and women in Africa, Asia and Latin America and which stands up for human rights and genuine solidarity.

The Ecumenical Jury also gave a Commendation to the film *Watchtower / Gozetleme Kulesi* directed by Pelin Esmer (Turkey, 2012). The film underlines the human and effective way in which a man, hurt in the past, helps a woman in distress.

The Ecumenical Jury consisted of Anne-Lise Jaccaud Napi, Vevey (Switzerland), Marie-Thérèse Mäder, Zürich (Switzerland), Elizabeth Pérès, Issy Les Moulineaux (France), and Jean-Claude Robert, Antélias (Lebanon) – President. ∎

On the Page...

Voces de Latinoamérica: diversas formas de contar una lucha inacabada

Políticas y legislación para la radio local en América Latina es fruto del Seminario Internacional "La radio local en América Latina: políticas y legislación", realizado entre el 19 y el 21 de noviembre de 2008 en la ciudad de La Paz (Bolivia), recoge diecinueve ponencias de académicos y profesionales de la comunicación para el desarrollo y el cambio social, quienes desde sus reflexiones y prácticas en radio, proponen coordenadas frente al quehacer de la radio en Latinoamérica, resaltando la importancia de generar un marco legal que visibilice y promueva un estatus para los radialistas y apasionados del continente, quienes encarnan nuevas y viejas formas de resistencia y de transformaciones sociales.

Además, este texto, presenta un recorrido por las diferentes variables que condicionan el ejercicio de las radios ciudadanas/comunitarias en esta parte del planeta. Desde la mirada reflexiva de Luis Ramiro Beltrán, Rosa María Alfaro, José Ignacio López Vigil (por mencionar algunos autores) podemos encontrar diferentes lecturas a una realidad latinoamericana que se orientan al reconocimiento del papel de la radio en los procesos políticos y sociales de los diferentes países, pero también las dificultades que lidian los activistas y líderes por el "reconocimiento legal" y la generación de una política pública acorde a las necesidades de la región–en algunos países- frente al derecho a la comunicación y a la democratización de los medios.

La discusión central que presenta el libro *Políticas y legislación para la radio local en América Latina,* gira en torno a la resistencia comunicativa que perdura en la *otra* radio, en contraposición con los intereses económicos y políticos que se reflejan en las agendas de los grandes medios, como una lucha que se legitima desde los derechos humanos universales: el derecho a la comunicación y la libertad de expresión; los cuales se promueven en los Principios para un marco regulatorio democrático sobre radio y televisión comunitaria (AMARC-ALC,2008), que orienta y alienta la batalla frente a gobiernos y centros de poder de países como Guatemala, México o Argentina.

Este escrito, en primer lugar nos acerca a las realidades de las radios comunitarias en países como Brasil, Colombia, Perú, Argentina, México, El Salvador y Bolivia, permitiéndonos entender un poco más las necesidades particulares, las características propias de cada contexto y las luchas ganadas o perdidas sobre los procesos comunicativos que cada región adelanta. En segundo lugar, nos amplía la perspectiva frente a los retos que se avecinan, en tanto somos cada vez más una sociedad globalizada resignificada por las TICs

En tercer lugar, nos señala algunas dificultades de las radios comunitarias a saber: la carencia de producción propia, el desaprovechamiento de la Internet, la ausencia de sistematización de los productos y la sostenibilidad social y económica. Y en cuarto lugar, nos presenta un recorrido por la situación actual en Bolivia, las tensiones y los retos que supone la generación de una legislación acorde a las necesidades de expresión, reconociendo que este país históricamente ha sido clave para entender la comunicación alternativa en nuestro continente.

Este libro nos permite confirmar el papel tan preponderante que representan estos medios de comunicación en Latinoamérica, especialmente la radio comunitaria, como un dispositivo que responde a la necesidad básica de las comunidades de expresarse y tomar partido; desde este lugar, no hay duda que estas prácticas fomentan la construcción de ciudadanía a través de la participación y del diálogo comunitario que fluye por los micrófonos, asimismo, alimentan el espíritu autogestionario de las comunidades y permiten resignificar la cultura local y la identidad.

Todo lo anterior permite afirmar que la radio, hoy más que nunca, tiene el potencial de revitalizar la historia y la construcción de nuevas ciudadanías, a partir de su cercanía con la gente, con los lenguajes, con las narraciones locales, las formas de contar el día a día, de recrear el mundo desde la

óptica de los protagonistas: las comunidades. Así, este documento es una provocación para aquellos que en sus prácticas cotidianas, ya sea desde la academia o desde su quehacer como ciudadano, le aportan a dinamizar la radio como una herramienta para narrar el pasado y presente, pero sobre todo para construir futuro. ∎

Reseña por Ibeth Molina Molina, Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios, Facultad de Ciencias de la Comunicación.

Alfonso Gumucio Dagron y Karina Herrera-Miller (coordinadores). *Políticas y legislación para la radio local en América Latina.* Bolivia: Plural editores, 2010, pp. 474. ISBN: 978-99954-1-337-8

Two new books in the field of memory studies

The 2/2010 issue of *Media Development* pioneered the concept of "the right to memory" in the context of the broader field of "communication rights". That issue was followed by an edited volume on *Public Media, Public Memory and the Politics of Justice* (Palgrave-Macmillan, 2012). Its contributors asked how do the construction, representation and distortion of public memory affect the way we treat other people? How is policy-making influenced by the way the media cover contentious issues such as the largely ignored conflict between Russia and Chechnya? Or the claims of indigenous people in Peru to know what really happened during the war against the Shining Path? Or South Africa's post-apartheid attempts to build a new nation?

Related to this field of study, two important new books have appeared that will be of interest to communicators and political activists. The first focuses on "one of the most exciting new interdisciplinary fields of research" – cultural memory studies. The other offers a "comprehensive discussion of the concept of media memory."

Memory in Culture by Astrid Ell (translated from the German by Sara B. Young) is the outcome of more than a decade of engagement with memory studies. First published in Germany in 2005, it encompasses the profound changes that have taken place since then so that the English version "not only represents the history of memory studies... but it also considers the field's most recent developments, such as the growing interest in globalized remembrance and mediatised memories."

Astrid Ell is Professor of Anglophone Literatures and Cultures at Goethe-University, Frankfurt am Main, Germany. She has co-edited six books, has published widely in leading international journals and anthologies, and is on the Advisory Board of the Palgrave Macmillan Memory Studies series.

After a scene-setting Introduction that seeks to identify today's extraordinary fascination with memory, Chapter 2 introduces the fundamental and most sophisticated concepts of cultural memory developed during the 20th century: from Maurice Halbwachs to Aleida and Jan Assman. Chapter 3 offers an overview of discipline-specific concepts of memory from history, social sciences, literature and art studies, and psychology.

Chapter 4 outlines a semiotic model of memory in culture in an attempt to build a framework for transdisciplinary research. Chapter 5 takes into account the important role of the media in cultural remembering. And Chapter 6 sketches the foundation for literary studies as part of memory studies, introducing concepts and methods for studying literature as a medium of cultural memory.

Chapter 6 is an Afterword that asks where memory studies are going, concluding that whatever dir-

ection it takes "We cannot afford the luxury of not studying memory." It argues that memory studies are necessarily holistic. "Memory studies is interested in the entire spectrum of possible interrelations between past, present, and future as they take shape in sociocultural contexts. It is only such a broad definition of the field that will enable its further development and prevent it from repetition and a certain predictability of its findings" (p. 173).

This book must be a first choice for anyone seeking a comprehensive overview of memory studies to date. The style of writing is lucid; the translation is excellent; and there is an excellent bibliography covering the highways and byways.

On Media Memory is an edited collection of contributions. The editors are all Senior Lecturers in communication with a particular interest in journalism at institutes of higher learning in Israel. The book was conceived at a workshop held at the University of Haifa in 2009 dealing with the concept of "media memory" from various perspectives.

The book's title echoes that of Maurice Halbwach's seminal work *On Collective Memory*, but "brings Media and Mediation – both with capital Ms – to the forefront of the scholarly enquiry of collective recollecting." In particular, the book "advances the field by posing new questions regarding the interrelationships between the shaping of collective memories and the operation of the mass media in changing cultural, political, and technological contexts."

On Media Memory has five sections offering different perspectives on the multiple and complex dimensions of media memory. The first discusses key concepts, methodological advances and concerns, and new analytical points of view. The second deals with ethical questions and their interactions with the concept of witnessing, focussing specifically on the role of information and communication technologies.
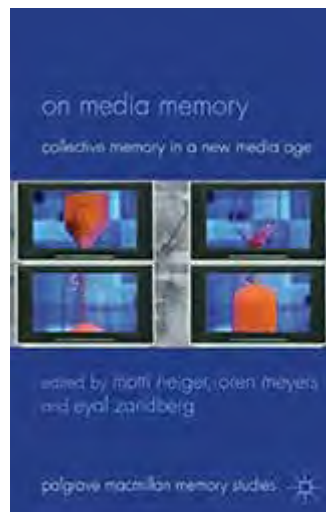
The third section looks at the construction of media memory via popular culture (e.g. television series in Britain, Israel and Spain) and the fourth studies different ways in which journalism constructs the past. The fifth and last section, titled "New media memory", highlights the relationships between innovative technologies and collective recollecting.

One chapter "develops nthe theme of media and memory through the argument that new media ecologies and virally globalized memories require a paradigm shift to a new conceptualization of media memory with a concomitant epistemology." Another explores how the technological apparatus of the "new archival formations" links mediated memory and traumatic memory.

Andrew Hoskins, founding Principal Editor of the SAGE Journal of *Memory Studies*, concludes the book with an argument for a "bolder and more comprehensive vision of the nature of media and memory in terms of contemporary 'ecologies' of media/memory" (p. 278).

Pointing out that "none of the 'what', 'how', 'why' and 'when' of remembering and forgetting are untouched by the advent of digital media", Hoskins calls for scholarly research into the "shift of the locus of individual *and* social remembering to the dynamic of connection in the present" (p. 287).

There is growing interest in the ways in which the public and private are mediated and the ways in which digital technologies are changing perceptions and understandings of what the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur called "the duty of memory" – which he identified as "the duty to do justice, through memories, to an other than the self."

Both *Memory in Culture* and *On Media Memory* advance that struggle. ∎

Reviewed by Philip Lee (WACC).