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Introduction: Foundations of the Theory and Practice of Global Media and Communication Policy

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Introduction

In this introductory chapter, we locate "global media and communication policy" studies historically, highlighting some of the key touchstones that have given rise to intense discussion in a variety of policy arenas. These arenas are populated by heterogeneous actors – governments, firms, and civil society organizations – whose actions reverberate through settings encompassing the local and the global. The consequences of these actions have major implications for the media and communication industries and for all those whose lives are mediated by them. The significance of this policy field stems from the pervasive cultural, political, and economic implications of media and communication. Our focus in this Handbook is primarily on the political framing of these debates, on their histories, and on their different articulations.

Media and communication policy emerged as an identifiable field within the broader domain of Western media and communication studies in the 1950s. During this period, scholars were studying the relations between different types of media and communication and raising questions about economic and social development, mainly at the country level, and with an emphasis on tensions between autonomous and dependent development paradigms. In the 1960s and 1970s, challenged by young, critical scholars and the postcolonial context, the field began to be characterized by comparative studies and the policy implications of unequal North–South communication flows started to be examined. From the 1980s, there was increasing awareness that media and communication policy must be considered in reference to the transnational – as a level of policy debate and as a context – and to the role of nongovernmental actors. "Global" media and communication policy emerged as a field over an extended period and it did so in parallel with processes of technological and geopolitical change.

In the 1990s, while tensions remained around development strategies, policy discussion started to focus on local or indigenous problems within a globalizing information society. In the media sphere, a key political touchstone became the contestation over relationships between state and market and the obligations of the social welfare state (public service broadcasting (PSB) being a good example). These discussions intensified as digitalization of information and communication technologies (ICTs) fostered convergence within the media and communication industries and policy encouraged a more commercial and diverse media. Debate focussed on market liberalization, culminating in the 1995 G7 meeting where development objectives were framed as the achievement of

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a Global Information Infrastructure (GII) and in the mid-2000s, where a global information society policy agenda was formulated at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS).

Denis McQuail (1998: 224) wrote presciently that the idea of the information society will provide "a central organizing pillar" for future media and communication policy.[1] Clustered around this pillar are the keywords "convergence" and "governance." A topic which did not exist ten years ago is now at the center of global media and communication policy: Internet governance. If there is a public interest in media diversity and the communication infrastructure that underpins it, then the questions are how and by whom is that interest understood? What policies and practices are consistent with that understanding?

Global media and communication policy (GMCP) as an emerging field of study needs to take into account technological innovation, institutional dynamics, democratization, and processes favoring inclusiveness and plurality, rather than exclusion and inequality. Hamelink and Nordenstreng (2007) argue for a new "enlightenment," insisting that policy analysis must embrace formal mechanisms of the state – legislation, regulation, and prescriptive practices – and informal settings offering opportunities for non-state actors to express their opinions about the ideals (e.g., affordable and universal access to networks or diverse content) to which the media should aspire. These ideals are being contested by those favoring market-led solutions and commercial services, the libertarian ethos of the early Internet, conflicting notions about the idea of democracy (Hafez 2007), and, indeed, visions in which the media's embrace of "imperial globality" (Escobar 2004) is necessarily disempowering for most of the world's population.

In an early eponymous reader on the topic, Ó Siochrú *et al.* (2002: xiv) ask whether:

> the institutional structures and regulations emerging will operate genuinely, impartially, transparently and democratically to the benefits of all, or whether they will succumb to powerful sectoral interests, becoming yet another means to support the interests of the powerful over those of the majority.

We build on their work, positioning GMCP studies within a multi-level, complex, and highly politicized system. In this system, the boundaries separating local from global and the different media industry sectors are permeable. Understanding the significant consequences of global developments in this field requires an analytical framing that admits the political significance of this system; a system comprising many levels, actors and institutions, in a dynamic milieu of unequal interdependence (Raboy and Padovani 2010).

As a prelude to the reader's engagement with the new contributions to the field of GMCP that are presented in this Handbook, we set out our own critical synthesis of key paradigms and contestations. First, we focus on how we should regard technology in the framework of GMCP – an essential positioning in the light of an unhealthy tendency to see in the "digital" either the problem or the solution to challenges in this field. Second, we locate GMCP analysis within specific scholarly traditions of policy analysis that emphasize political interest. This provides a framework within which to consider GMCP from an historical perspective, which we discuss third, differentiating between the carriage and content industries. Fourth, we consider the tensions leading to policy destabilization, concluding with an assessment of the forces and opportunities for a GMCP regime, consistent with public intervention in the name of a democratic public sphere.

Technology and GMCP

The analysis of media and communication policy often begins and ends with technology. We set aside such deterministic accounts, although we acknowledge that the astonishingly rapid transition from analog to digital communication cannot be ignored. The implications of the shrinking of time and distance for societal practices of many kinds are raising new issues for social actors everywhere. Digital ICTs are implicated in policy-making, whether we focus on newspapers, television, personal computers, telecommunication, or other digital devices. Winograd and Flores (1986: 23) observed that "tools are fundamental to action, and through our actions we generate the world," a view later echoed in Lessig's (1999) idea that "code is law." These technologies are implicated in how we become who we are in the world.

We acknowledge the role of convergent technologies in creating new challenges for GMCP, but

are concerned in this Handbook more with how these technologies are articulated in the policy sphere, where political matters and both the intentional and unintentional design of these technologies have ramifications for how we encounter the media and how we communicate. Freeman and Soete (1994: 39) described ICTs as "the biggest technological juggernaut that every rolled," taking up the idea that these technologies are associated with economic growth and prosperity for all.[2] However, Freeman and Soete (1997) also argued that paradigmatic changes accompanying the spread of these technologies would not be fair and equitable for all and that innovations in this area would create major challenges for meeting public interest goals.

And, indeed, the spread of digital technologies and networks has led many to question the role of the state in media and communication policy and to advocate market liberalization. Technological convergence was the justification for the move to liberalize media and communication markets in the 1980s (Baldwin *et al*. 1995; Levy 1999). Overlaid with the political climate marked by the election of neoliberal governments in the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK) and elsewhere, as well as the collapse of the Soviet system, market liberalization and competition were seen as instruments for releasing the potential of both telecommunication and media content markets. The spread of digital technologies and the ease with which these technologies ignored national boundaries expanded the reach of networks such that nation-states were no longer perceived as the only containers for policy measures.

The technological basis for these claims rested on the fact that the integration of networks supporting media and communication services had become feasible. Digital compression techniques were enabling a shift in production capability for voice, data, text, and image services. During the 1980s, there were policy discussions about the deployment of fiber-to-the-home in most wealthy countries, the spread of mobile and satellite networks, and data communication. Policy-makers began to focus on the international implications of these developments and they faced unprecedented pressure from below in the form of demand for greater diversity in media content, access to information services, and participation and transparency in policy development processes. By the mid-1990s, "digital divides" had entered the public discourse in both highly developed and less developed countries, and international trade in media and telecommunication goods and services had become an issue for the World Trade Organization (WTO), as well as for regional and national policy-making institutions.

New opportunities for reconstituting the public sphere also started to become apparent as it was recognized that these technologies are not simply given, but instead are constituted through the practices of those who use and govern them. Martín-Barbero (2001: 379) argues, for example, that "the key lies in taking the original imported technology as energy, as a potential to develop on the basis of the requirements of the national culture." This potentiality is central to whether civil society actors are able to mold the new technologies and applications consistent with values of equality, justice, and democratic practice.

In the emerging GMCP sphere, relations of power are influenced by processes of transaction and translation manifested in texts (standards and scientific papers), in technical artefacts (hardware and software), in the actions of academics, policy-makers, engineers, and civil society actors, and in the growth and distribution of financial resources. As Mattelart (1996/2000: 20) suggested, "the dream of establishing the pre-Babel 'great human family' is present throughout the history of the imaginary of communication networks," but this dream remains elusive. To understand why this is so, we need to position GMCP analysis with respect to the appropriate analytical tools and perspectives.

Analytical Tools and Perspectives

Policy analysis can be understood as the study of bureaucratic organization and the role of authority. In the US, for example, the "public policy movement" claimed to offer a new approach to the problems of government policy. Lasswell's (1972) early work in the 1950s was aimed at developing knowledge about the policy process and at improving the information available to policy-makers. He warned that policy analysts should not become directly involved with policy-makers, although he was later shown to have been involved in the Cold

War counter-propaganda campaigns of the US government (Samarajiva and Shields 1990). Lazarsfeld (1941) had distinguished between administrative and critical research traditions in media and communication policy analysis, stressing the importance of immunity of policy analysts to ideological, political, and other pressures. As Braman (2006) has argued, however, analysts such as de Sola Pool (1974) acknowledged that media and communication policy is shaped by politics and that this needs to be considered in framing research in the field. de Sola Pool had suggested that international – or global – policy is likely to be influenced by the most restrictive regime. Today, we find a mix of relatively open and restrictive policy regimes and this creates a complex intersection of actors, goals and practices, especially when the analytical frame encompasses global developments.

If policy-making is understood as a process involving "many sub-processes" (Hogwood and Gunn 1984: 24), as extending through time, and as consisting of a "web of decisions and actions that allocate … values" (Ham and Hill 1984: 11), then we need to ensure that the analysis of GMCP embraces all the individuals and groups whose values and actions intersect in consensual and conflicting ways. In this respect, policy-making can be regarded as a process of persuasion and argumentation that takes place within a complex system of actors and institutions (Kingdon 1984). The analysis of struggles between actors in the media and communication policy field is exemplified by studies undertaken by the Euromedia Research Group from the mid-1980s. Writing on behalf of the Group, McQuail and Siune observed that in media politics:

> no actor is really completely in control; they all share control over issues affecting their interests, and therefore depend on support in order to fulfil their wishes. Any public policy can be considered as an intermediate moment between two successive states of the field that institutional structure has to regulate. (McQuail and Siune 1986: 14)

And, later that:

> many different actors want to participate in policy-making and influence decision-making. … Because of their formal positions, some of these are decision-makers, others are in the neighbourhood of decision-making, while some are at such a distance from decision-making authorities that they hardly or seldom can communicate or try to influence the policy-making in any way. (McQuail and Siune 1998: 24)

This may be a circumspect way of describing the three principal social categories involved: state, economy, and civil society. These categories still pertain, but the arena has shifted from the nation-state to the global; or, rather, the sphere of policy has exploded – it is here, there, everywhere.

The Euromedia Group found that "mass participation in decision-making is in no way direct, and only very indirectly do the public, the mass, have any kind of influence on decisions about the new media" (McQuail and Siune 1986: 25). This was, in retrospect, however, a categorical conclusion about the politics of the process – particularly in the assumption that policy decision-making is what the politics of media and communication policy is about. And, as the Group would later observe, "media politics" is a field with its own dynamics (Siune and Trützschler 1992).

Thus, the framing of the terrain of media and communication policy as a hotly contested political battleground – that is, as a field of tension and struggle rooted in social history and in the notion that technologies are not neutral but emerge out of particular circumstances (Williams 1974/2003) – is a strong theme in scholarly research in the field. More conventional readings which have privileged the "forces of technology" or economic determinism throughout the history of media and communication have been challenged and reinterpreted through this prism. A focus on political contestation has also influenced the engagement of policy activists whose work is predicated on the claim that the media are paramount social institutions, and that *public intervention* with respect to their orientation is both legitimate and necessary (Melody 1990). The media and communication industries are among the most lucrative growth areas of global capitalism and the owners of these industries do not hesitate to engage in political activity to promote their interests. Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), including oppositional groups, have identified this sector as essential to the development of a democratic public sphere and, consequently, they have focussed their attention on efforts to democratize the media. Policy scholars, in turn, have been strongly influenced by this activism.

If media and communication policy is now being constituted on a global level (both spatially and in the sense of the global as all-encompassing), we need to identify who the actors are and with whom they identify. Analytically, these actors can be seen as participants in policy communities, as actor networks, or as epistemic communities (Kenis and Schneider 1991; Atkinson and Coleman 1992; Haas 1992). Empirical research can focus on the arenas in which the politics of policy-making are conducted, on the activities of the participants, and on the way the actors interact with each other. Analytically, we need to consider changes in the distribution of, and dependence on, resources such as knowledge, financing, social and cultural values, and political power. Frequently, these actors "not only hold in common a set of principled and causal beliefs but also have shared notions of validity and a shared policy enterprise" (Haas 1992: 16). In the light of this, in the context of GMCP, we need to understand the factors influencing policy coordination; whether national policy-makers can identify "national interests" and behave independently of interest groups; and whether national policy-makers seek to create, defend, or expand their power as the GMCP regime takes shape.

The policy analysis tradition often focusses primarily on elite actors. For example, Majone (1989: 161) refers to "specialists who share an active interest in a certain policy or set of related policies … they all contribute to policy development by generating and debating new ideas and proposals." He argues that analysis should focus on contestable points of view and the way these change over time. However, as Samarajiva and Zainudeen (2008: 27) point out, "policy requires knowledge, but … the knowledge is necessarily incomplete. Decisions must be taken with the best available evidence" and, in addition, non-specialists are now participating in many aspects of policy-making in the GMCP arenas. As a result, the roles of these non-specialists need to be taken into account.

Many of the analytical models for the study of policy-making focus mainly on processes, neglecting normative issues, and they emphasize individual decision-making. We argue that GMCP needs to be analyzed at the individual and the institutional levels (Edquist 1997) so as to tease out the dynamics of power as they are articulated through the local to the global. This requires us to make assumptions about the coincidence between individual and institutional preferences and motivations. We do so by regarding the structural properties of social systems as institutions which, following Giddens (1984: 24), give "'solidity' across time and space."

Analysis of GMCP also needs to depart from the well-established theoretical traditions in the study of global policy problems that focus principally on state–state relations; that is, on anarchic state actors and on exogenously given institutions (Ruggie 1975). Instead, we suggest that the constructivist school of global policy analysis (Wendt 1992) is more consistent with an endeavor to include non-state actors and to acknowledge the importance of the ideational or political facets of policy. In this analytical tradition, research focusses on the distribution of power among institutions and the interactions among agents and institutions which are understood to co-determine outcomes within a political system.

Finally, the traditions of policy analysis differ on whether the dynamics of institutions and their practices are the result of "spontaneous processes" or of deliberate design, as well as on the extent to which cumulativeness, path dependency, and learning play important roles (Lundvall 1992; Dalum *et al*. 1993). These characteristics of policy-making are all dependent on information and the flow of communication. In the case of GMCP, it is important to recall Melody's (1989) observation that institutions are created from a need to share information through processes of communication which are manifested in legislation, the state, regulatory bodies, social networks, and corporate and civil society advocacy groups, as well as in their norms, rules, and routines and the way power resources are distributed. These, then, are the analytical framing tools that we can bring to the study of GMCP. The next section signposts some of the key features of media and communication policy that historically have resulted from the dynamic intersections of interests, particularly with respect to broadcasting, telecommunication, and, more recently, the Internet.

GMCP in Historical Perspective

An artificial line was drawn, historically, in policy practice between the content or media and the carriage or telecommunication industries. Following the establishment of freedom of

expression as a constitutional principle in the liberal societies of Europe and North America, these countries refused to regulate the press as an industry and enacted only the most modest of regulations concerning professional press conduct. The advent of radio (and later television) broadcasting gave impetus to state efforts to influence media content. Public broadcasting institutions, production subsidies, and various types of content regulation and promotion measures became major policy vehicles during the twentieth century. In the content industries, the main preoccupation of national governments was with issues of ownership, cultural sovereignty, and public interest considerations, overlaying international policy issues that started to emerge with the advent of radio in the 1920s and which exploded with the satellite distribution of broadcast signals in the 1980s.

Carriage policy, meanwhile, was concerned principally with networks and the economic characteristics of publicly or privately owned operators, and national policies were subsidiary to international agreements and regulations (Codding 1991). The first International Telegraph Convention was signed in Paris in 1865 by members of the International Telegraph Union (ITU) – now the International Telecommunication Union. Since the 1920s, intergovernmental committees coordinate technical studies and standards and establish frameworks for the allocation of the radio frequency spectrum, today with companies and private sector consortia.

In both areas (content and carriage), public policy intervention was influenced strongly by prevailing ideological and geopolitical currents – most notably, the rise and decline of the Keynesian Welfare State, the postwar emergence of an international consensus on human rights, and the politics of the Cold War and its aftermath. Long, convoluted – and highly politicized – discussions on the role of "freedom of information" in the postwar international order led eventually to the adoption of Article 19 of the United Nations (1948) Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which stated that:

> Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

The 1950s onwards saw the integration of national media and communication policies into processes of postcolonial development, capitalist expansion, or socialist construction, depending on the nation-state concerned. In the West, commercial media vied with PSB and other forms of communication, characteristic of the welfare state. Authoritarian states dominated their national media systems while, internationally, the media served essentially as propaganda beacons for the systems they existed to promote. New forms of alternative media emerged everywhere, challenging local and national power centers, providing voice, and facilitating mobilization, for the plethora of new social movements.

Thirty years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, one of the postwar international organizations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), established an International Commission to tackle global issues, primarily concerning content. *Many Voices, One World* – the MacBride Report (ICSCP 1980/2004: 13) – spearheaded a call for a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO). Identifying a long list of inequalities, the authors of the report asserted that:

> the basic decisions in order to forge a better future for men and women in communities everywhere, in developing as well as in developed nations, do not lie principally in the field of technological development: they lie essentially *in the answers each society gives to the conceptual and political foundations of development*. (emphasis added)

On the carriage side, the ITU published its *Missing Link* or Maitland Report (ITU 1984). In contrast to the MacBride Report, this report emphasized technology. It focussed on the dearth of investment in infrastructure in developing countries and on the failure of telephony to reach large numbers of the world's population, especially in rural areas.[3]

A flurry of activity in the mid-1990s signaled a paradigm shift in global policy in this field. A UN-UNESCO World Commission on Culture and Development published *Our Creative Diversity*, calling for "an international framework that complements national regulatory frameworks" (1995: 117) in the area of media, communication, and cultural policy. The report included passages such as the following:

> Concentration of media ownership and production is becoming even more striking internationally than it is nationally, making the global media ever more market-driven. In this context, can the kind of pluralist "mixed economy" media system which is emerging in many countries be encouraged globally? Can we envisage a world public sphere in which there is room for alternative voices? Can the media professionals sit down together with policy-makers and consumers to work out mechanisms that promote access and a diversity of expression despite the acutely competitive environment that drives the media moguls apart? (UN-UNESCO 1995: 117)

In the same year, a joint ITU–UNESCO (1995) study entitled *The Right to Communicate: At What Price?* deliberated on the extent to which societal goals could be reconciled with the commercial objectives of the media and communication industries. This joint report represented a rare effort to bridge the gap between the carriage and content sectors. The study noted the detrimental effects of economic barriers for access to telecommunication services; the lack of infrastructure in some countries; and the absence of an international universal telecommunication infrastructure.[4]

The question of the role of national communication policy took on a new character in the early 1990s with an aggressive stance on infrastructure development taken by the US government. The trope of "deregulation" that had characterized the 1980s gave way to a new frame, best expressed in the government's 1993 *National Information Infrastructure: An Agenda for Action* (United States 1993), which heralded the alleged emancipatory benefits of the information age.

The Clinton Administration transported the idea to a meeting of the ITU in Buenos Aires in 1994, where Vice President Al Gore launched the notion of a GII and then forwarded it to the next G7 meeting in Brussels in February 1995. In some respects, this represented the most significant policy shift in multilateral politics since the end of the Cold War in the media and communication field. The GII was presented by its promoters as a transnational, seamless communication system which would revolutionize human relations and national economies (United States 1994). The GII proposed a single vision, program, and policy framework for the role of ICTs as a means for achieving an idealized global society (Kahin 1996). The idea became a concrete project in February 1995, with the adoption by the G7 countries of an eight-point plan for implementing it (see Raboy 1999).

The GII project was further developed in other venues, such as the 1997 WTO agreement on market access for basic telecommunication services, signed by all members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) along with some 40 "developing" or "transitional" (i.e., East and Central European) countries (WTO 1997). Under this accord – again, the result of a US initiative – signatories agreed to set aside national differences in their respective domestic definitions of basic telecommunication (United States 1996). Henceforth, telecommunication infrastructure development in 90 percent of the world market would proceed with minimal regard to national regulatory constraints, particularly concerning domestic ownership requirements.

The European Union (EU) meanwhile outlined its own vision of the "information society" in a series of reports. The Bangemann Report, which soon became a cornerstone of EU information and communication policy, "urge[d] the European Union to put its faith in market mechanisms as the motive power to carry us into the Information Age" (European Commission 1994: 3). The European Commission's High Level Expert Group (HLEG) was set up by the Directorate of Employment and Social Affairs in 1995 to examine the social aspects of the EU vision of the information society. The HLEG report proposed to refocus debate on communication regulatory issues and the social aspects of the uses for new ICTs in order to build "a strong ethos of solidarity" in the European Information Society, where "the traditional structures of the welfare state will have to undergo substantial changes" (European Commission High Level Expert Group 1997: 15). At this time, the mention of social solidarity and the suggestion of a new global tax to finance inclusion in the information society ran counter to the strong industrial policy orientation toward market-led investment and competitiveness that prevailed elsewhere in the Commission.

The various incarnations of the GII and information society were harbingers both of an emerging global regulatory system in media and communication and of a future system of world governance.[5] They were characterized, notably, by the open leadership of a powerful group of

countries, allied with the leading transnational companies active in the sphere of media and communication, and absent any participation, even nominal, of civil society nongovernmental actors. By the end of the 1990s, concern about injustices and inequalities in the emerging international regime for media and communication had reached the highest level of the United Nations. The General Assembly stated that:

> We are profoundly concerned at the deepening mal-distribution of access, resources and opportunities in the information and communication field. The information and communication technology gap and related inequities between industrialized and developing nations are widening: a new type of poverty – information poverty – looms. (United Nations 1997: Paragraph 5)

The non-participatory model was soon challenged, initially by the anti-globalization movement that was beginning to emerge, first with opposition to the OECD's Multilateral Agreement on Investment and then, spectacularly, in the wake of the Seattle protests against the WTO. Eventually, this crystallized around the WSIS, during which an alternative model of global governance was put forward vigorously by an unprecedented mobilization of civil society organizations (see Raboy and Landry 2005; Raboy *et al*. 2010). Throughout this GMCP developmental period, policy analysts were investigating the strategic interests of the traditional actors from the formal regulatory and corporate communities. Relatively few researchers paid close attention to the significance of the emergence of global governance or its implications.

Carriage and convergence

Fostering a competitive environment in the face of ICT convergence became the main goal of many policy-makers. Market liberalization and the establishment of new national regulatory authorities generated international debates on standards, the interconnection and interoperability of networks, tariffs for services, trade, intellectual property rights, electronic security, and privacy. As Noam (1994: 289) put it:

> regulation had been essential to the old system, partly to protect against monopoly, partly to protect the monopoly itself. In the transition to competition, what was left of regulation was seen as temporary, shrinking reciprocally with the growth of competition. In time, it would diminish to nothing. Yet can one expect the "system of systems" to be totally self-regulating?

Cross-national comparative policy studies suggested that a process of politically and economically motivated policy convergence was underway as governments were exhorted by the private sector to stimulate innovation and competition in the carriage industry (Ergas 1985; Mansell 1987). This fed into debates about international trade liberalization in the early 1990s.[6]

Within the ITU, there was consideration of how this institution should adapt to the changing policy landscape, but the monopoly telecommunication operators resisted change in a bid to protect their market dominance.[7] In this period, there was consideration by policy analysts as to whether a new global regime for the governance of the telecommunication industry was in the making (Zacher 1996; Hudson 1997). Central to their investigations were issues of state sovereignty (Drake 1995; Cox 2002) and the nature of perceived threats to economic power (Comor 1994; Cowhey and Aronson 2009). With convergence on the horizon, the dominance of the wealthy countries in the existing institutions, especially of the US, began to wane (Cowhey 1990; David and Steinmueller 1996), further destabilizing the policy-making regime. The contested interactions among the protagonists at the national and global levels increasingly became visible, creating momentum toward policy change at the national level (Bauer 1994; Blackman *et al*. 1996).

Trade liberalization in the carriage sector was perceived as a challenge to the balance between national security and the benefits of global competition (Krasner 1991; Melody 1991), giving rise to a multilateral repositioning in many international forums (Mansell 1993). In effect, a Western liberalization model was exported world-wide (Mansell 1992). The policy research community highlighted the extent of policy convergence, indicating that it was not "freely" chosen, but these insights had little influence since the forums for debate, effectively, were closed to all but those who elected to serve as consultants to the government or corporate decision-makers.

Content and culture

In the content markets with the stronger tradition in the Western countries of open debate about public interest considerations, the policy research community arguably had somewhat more influence, although defining the public interest in broadcasting (and in the press) was always difficult (Melody 1990; Blumler 1992; Barendt 1993; Hoffmann-Riem 1996). Concerns about the dominance of media producers in commercial markets stimulated scholarly debate on the "one way" flow of content and the impact of media imperialism (Nordenstreng and Schiller 1979; Fox 1997), although, in parallel with the shift to markets in the carriage sector, research on audiences suggested that they were capable of resisting the dominant ideologies exported by the US and other countries (Boyd-Barrett 1998), and as a result diluting the case for national policies aimed at protecting domestic markets.

A paradigm shift was underway in digital content regulation. Digital technologies were regarded as enabling abundance rather than scarcity in media production (Mansell 1999), supporting many-to-many distribution, nonlinear programming, and transnational or global markets. This seemed to challenge traditional justifications for content regulation based on its pervasiveness, invasiveness, publicness, and influence. Government regulation was shifting toward greater reliance on self-regulation (Verhulst 2002).

Policy analysts found themselves divided on the issue of the implications of the growing commercialization of content. Some argued that broadcast policy in the West had been ineffective in protecting public service content that is responsive to citizen interests; they further argued that markets would be more effective (Collins and Murroni 1996). Others called for a strengthening of national regulatory authorities to protect PSB (Curran and Seaton 1997). The pluralism and diversity of media content was at stake in all of these debates.[8] The fundamental question was how best to ensure a space for civic culture in the media landscape (Haque 2001; Dahlgren 2003).

As the prevailing model of press freedom and media diversity was exported around the world (Siebert *et al.* 1956), there was academic criticism of the promotion of Western values through media and communication policy (Curran and Park 2000; McQuail 2005a; Kim 2008). Comparative research focussed mainly on the Western nations but there were some efforts to develop more comprehensive accounts.[9] The overall assessment was that policy convergence was well underway in the content segment of the media and communication industries with policy increasingly emphasizing competition law and access principles over public interest objectives (Galperin 2004).

Some scholars warned that this policy was disadvantaging citizens and the less wealthy countries,[10] and that the institutional set-up internationally was not consistent with the public interest:

> Today's institutions and processes of world communication have a disempowering effect. This operates through censorship, deceit, victimization and information glut. The withholding and distorting of information obstructs people's independent formation of opinion and undermines people's capacity to control decisions that affect their daily lives. (Hamelink 1996: 3)

The overall result of developments in both the content and carriage industries and the policy maneuverings of governments was a period characterized by efforts of institutional *reform*, although there were clear tensions between the interests of the public and those of the state–industry complex.

Media and Communication Policy Destabilization

With the spread of the Internet in the late 1990s, there was an increase in the visibility of the disputes over policy and regulation, and the formal institutions of policy were faced with many disruptive issues, leading to considerable destabilization of the existing policy regimes, both nationally and internationally.[11] In particular, the global intellectual property regime was destabilized by the use of the Internet and digital platforms for file downloading and file sharing. "Lex Informatica" would prove extremely difficult to agree (Reidenberg 1998) and, on the international front, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) would take on an important role in shaping the media and communication marketplace.[12] There are conflicting views about how developments in this area affect the developing countries and Brazil, Russia, India, and

China have been particularly vocal on this question. These and other countries sought to preserve their rights of ownership to indigenous information as well as to improved access to global sources of information (Yusuf 1989; Correa 1994; Chaudry 1995).

Another key site of policy destabilization has been with respect to the radio spectrum, the essential "infrastructure" for the content and carriage industries. Digitalization and convergence provide new opportunities to seek economic efficiency in spectrum use and to find creative ways of generating revenues for the state through auctions (Cave 2001; Ting *et al.* 2005). In addition, the relative abundance of spectrum has led to moves to free up segments of the spectrum for new commercial uses,[13] as well as for use by alternative media groups. Changes in spectrum allocation, including the "digital switchover" for television and radio planned in most countries for the coming decade, requires international and national coordination, calling further attention to the importance of GMCP.[14]

In the face of policy destabilization, some look to the market to redress inequality, while other analysts observe that "catching up, forging ahead, and falling behind" are influenced by non-market factors (Abramovitz 1986; David 1995). A key difference in policy debates in the 2000s, in contrast to the 1970s and 1980s, is that rather than regarding ICTs and the media mainly as instruments of Western hegemony, many developing countries are demanding inclusion and an end to "digital divides," making access a major focal point for global policy debates. The debates of the WSIS were qualitatively different from those of the NWICO in this respect.

Stein and Sinha (2006: 426) have argued that: "whether future communication policies are market or public interest driven, or the product of national or international regulatory regimes, scholarship suggests that these policies require a socially agreed set of principles at their core." The turn to principles of governance in the face of disruptive pressures in the field of GMCP and the realization that policy making is no longer the introspective preoccupation of nation-states (Mansell 1996), are providing the stimulus for the expansion of GMCP as a field of study. Led by trade policy and private interests in investment (Braman 1990), the emergence of new challenges to global governance can, from one vantage point, be understood as a move to remove the "dead hand" of government so that new technologies will yield the benefits of the information society. From another, however, the emergence of a new regime of governance for GMCP is better understood as part of a general trend of visible and active challenges to existing power relationships at all levels.

To understand the nature of these challenges, we need to consider how the term "governance" is conceived. The term comes from the Latin word *gubernare,* which means steering or guiding (Rosell 1995). Global governance debates over how best to achieve this have been underway since the mid-1990s, when the Commission on Global Governance defined governance as:

> the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs. It is a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and co-operative action may be taken. It includes formal institutions and regimes empowered to enforce compliance, as well as informal arrangements that people and institutions either have agreed to or perceive to be in their interest. (Commission on Global Governance 1995: Chapter 1, np)

The Commission's remit had been to "suggest how global, regional and national institutions should be developed to better support co-operation in today's world" through multilateral action. And by 2000, the United Nations Millennium Declaration made it clear that governance had become an important issue for economic and social development:

> Around the world, more people are recognizing that governance matters for development – that institutions, rules and political processes play a big role in whether economies grow, whether children go to school, whether human development moves forward or back. (United Nations 2000: 51)[15]

Governance processes and institutions can enable or constrain action and they involve the conditions for the creation, exploitation, and control of technology, markets, and society more generally.[16] Similar to the policy analysis tradition, the analysis of governance processes is sometimes aimed at establishing their responsiveness to rational assessment and evaluation. In line with our perspective on policy-making discussed earlier in this chapter, we acknowledge that evidence can be misunder-

stood, ignored, or disputed and valued in very different ways. In the face of the growing complexity of media and communication systems, we expect GMCP governance to be difficult and uncertain. Governance within a global system of institutions, practices and policies is also challenging in the face of the growing involvement of civil society actors, offering "knowledge, skills, enthusiasm, a non-bureaucratic approach, and grassroots perspectives" (Commission on Global Governance 1995: Chapter 1, np).

The reshaping of public, private, and civic roles is occurring in the GMCP field in tandem with a move away from the Washington Consensus on market liberalization and Western-style democracy. New forms of governance raise many issues of legitimacy and accountability as civil society actors seek visibility in governance processes – who speaks for whom? (Edwards and Gaventa 2001; Kendall and Anheier 2001). It is also important to note that "governance regimes emerge as a result of shared ideas and discourses or ways of describing developments in technology and society. … Governance regimes are also culture specific and not all systems work the same way" (Mansell and Wehn 1998: 180). Global governance systems, like other institutional systems, are relational and this creates the need to focus on:

> who is empowered versus disempowered (instrumental power); who is constrained in a given situation versus who gets to write the rules (structural power); and, finally, how basic identities, interests, and issues themselves are reconstituted or transformed in particular historical contexts, in turn redefining other relations of power (called meta-power). (Singh 2002: 6)

Some argue that the multiplicity of actors now involved in governance offers opportunities for resistance to the historical dominance of corporate and government actors, while others warn that the use of digital technologies to support many facets of policy-making is associated with "a citizenry that is less and less capable of participating in decision-making that can be meaningfully described as democratic" (Braman 2006: 315; 1990). We expect the dynamics of "meta-power" to have indeterminate consequences for GMCP, but we argue that intervention is needed through processes of global governance if inequalities reflected in and reproduced by the media and communication environment are to be addressed.

In the GMCP field, there are advocates of a global framework to support public broadcasting (Raboy 1998) and to provide diverse forums for debates about the governance of offline and online worlds (Raboy *et al*. 2003). Policy reform has challenged state sovereignty (Price 2002) and new formal and informal forums for global governance have many implications for the traditional content and carriage industries and for services using the Internet.[17] Their consequences for individuals as citizens and consumers are intertwined with the design of technologies. These developments are the subject matter for GMCP analysis.

This view is itself contested by those espousing a move away from various attempts at institutionalized governance. For instance, Zittrain (2008: 242) argues that governance leads to diplomacy, which ends:

> either in bland consensus pronouncements or in final documents that are agreed upon only because the range of participants has been narrowed. It is no surprise that this approach rarely gets to the nuts and bolts of designing new tools or grassroots initiatives to take on the problems it defines.

Zittrain looks to the generative characteristics of technology and technically skilled people of goodwill, relying substantially on peer production, rather than on consultative processes, to address GMCP issues. Our framework for GMCP analysis and understanding of governance departs from this individualistic approach. In line with Lane's (1966) interest in a "knowledgeable society" – that is, societies distinguished by the way they collect, organize, and interpret knowledge so as to collectively address social and economic problems; and with Innis's (1950) concern with oligopolies of knowledge and the problems they present, analytical frameworks are needed to examine the practices of global governance that are most likely to safeguard citizens' interests. The contributors to this volume offer approaches to studying GMCP that are consistent with this goal.

For example, the WSIS in 2003 and 2005, an international event to address GMCP issues, was a major step in developing such governance practices insofar as it succeeded in bringing together multiple actors, including representatives of civil society (Servaes and Carpentier 2006). But as Cammaerts and Carpentier (2006: 17) observe:

> the rhetoric that surrounds these alleged inclusionary practices tends to make use of a very fluid signifier: participation. It is now claimed more and more that civil society, as well as business actors, are "participating" in the global political processes that build future societies. … These rhetorics are discursive reductions of the plurality of meanings that are embedded in the notion of participation.

The framework for GMCP analysis that we are suggesting must also, therefore, acknowledge that "participation" is a contested concept and a priority for analysts of emerging forms of GMCP governance. As Padovani and Tuzzi (2006: 99) acknowledge, the multi-stakeholder approach which the WSIS enabled brought together actors with varying resources and power. It led to "a contribution in broadening the agenda, a fruitful convergence of different civil society actors, and a continuity of interactions beyond the WSIS process," but it did not establish a means of fully countering the hegemony of the North – this road is a long one and it is deserving of the attention of GMCP scholars.

Conclusion: Toward an Emergent GMCP Regime

The critical question being asked now, in the wake of the economic meltdown at the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century and in parallel with continuing discussions about governance, with respect to many endeavors, is what is the appropriate role for the state? We argue that a paradigm shift is under way regarding this question. After twenty years (or more) of a global dominant discourse of non-intervention, the state once again has the wind in its sails. For example, the US Congress has begun to ask questions regarding the pending demise of major US newspapers, many of them as venerable as the medium of the mass-market newspaper itself (Kirchhoff 2009). Should governments bail out these institutions in the name of the public interest? Should they be reorganized as not-for-profits? And, almost in passing, where does the line blur between public and private interest in this regard?

If the present moment is indeed one of crisis, it is useful to recall what Gramsci (1971: 276) had to say on the topic nearly a century ago: "The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear." Former US White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel put it more prosaically: in public administration, "you never want a serious crisis to go to waste," as he told a *Wall Street Journal* conference of corporate chief executives (Seib 2008: A2).

In the field of media and communication, a somewhat arbitrary set of circumstances determined that the state (at least in Western countries) did not intervene in the press but did so in broadcasting and telecommunication. This "line in the sand" has led to opposing arguments: for some, the fact that the press is "free" of government intervention seems to dictate that broadcasting should be so as well. For others, it highlights an absurdity where society deems that one form of information medium is in the public domain while a neighboring one is not (see Barendt 1993).

In telecommunication, a different set of variables has marked discussion of the role of the state. Here, debate traditionally has revolved around the question of equal access to the means of communication, rather than the content that is transported through the pipes. The WSIS highlighted the deep extent of the policy divide between media and communication, defined this way. Initially, the WSIS was supposed to concern itself with technology and infrastructure. But voices from emerging democracies and civil society forced discussion of purpose, function, and content – in short, a social justice perspective – onto the table. The WSIS ended up, however clumsily, outlining a sweeping agenda for social intervention in media and communication through global public policy and through a new approach to governance.

The WSIS also highlighted the importance of *process* as a factor in public policy development. Indeed, one could say that the slow emergence of democracy over the past 200 years has been marked by a series of struggles around who shall determine the role of the state, and how state power is to be used. Marx may have been correct in identifying the state as the executive committee of the bourgeoisie but, sadly, attempts to find an alternative vehicle for steering social development have failed.

The role of democratic civil society in this context is critical at two levels: first, in the elaboration of sustainable self-governing institutions outside the sphere of government and the economy; and, second, in broadening the range and enriching the

quality of representation in democratic processes. Civil society engagement with policy has been a part of the media and communication environment since at least the emergence of PSB nearly a century ago, but its influence has waxed and waned. "Media and communication policy," then, as we are defining it, refers to *all* efforts to influence media and communication systems, including those by the state, industry, and civil society.

In this Handbook, we have sought to extend the boundaries of conventional thinking about media and communication policy, well aware that, as editors, we are supportive of a particular proactive bias. Our position is founded on the premise that as the media are paramount social institutions, *public intervention* with respect to their orientation is both legitimate and necessary. The notion of "public intervention" is often confused with that of government or the state. Our approach encompasses state and government activity, but it is not limited to these. Indeed, in the recent context of the state's retreat from public policy involvement, media and communication policy has been handled on the periphery of formal state concerns. Global corporations are increasingly involved in direct negotiations with governments and other actors in promoting their projects. Civil society organizations have identified media and communication as being essential to the development of a democratic public sphere. Yet, the broad media-consuming public has not identified policy in this area as being on an equal footing with other sectors such as health care, education and the environment in terms of social priority.

The question of GMCP is likely to rise on the agenda, as progressive politics are redefined in keeping with the new political challenges of the next wave of globalization. Global events such as the WSIS have begun to highlight the importance and scope of the media and ICTs as we advance through the twenty-first century. The arrival and breathtaking spread of the Internet and the accompanying transformation of the way people communicate are contributing to a generalized interest in this field on an unprecedented scale. In rethinking governance, then, it is necessary to pay special attention to media and communication: to the role of the media in emerging political structures and to the communicative contexts in which the global media and communication environment is evolving.

Overview of the Handbook

In this Handbook, the chapters are presented in five parts:

Part One. Contested Concepts: An Emerging Field

In the emerging GMCP field, concepts, their applications and implications are contested depending on political interests and normative positionings. The early history of international institutions, some of which continue to shape policy at the global level, is discussed by Magder (ch. 2), followed by MacLean's (ch. 3) account of the evolutionary dynamics of these and several other very influential international institutions, and by Melody's (ch. 4) assessment of the likelihood that monopolizing forces can be countered through global policy measures in the face of contested interests at all levels. In GMCP, it is perhaps the concept of the "free flow" of media and information that most galvanized policy actors in the early post-World War II period. Nordenstreng (ch. 5) provides an historical analysis, tracing this strongly contested concept through its more recent articulations in the context of Internet governance. This concept is intimately linked to debates about human rights and, in particular, whether a "right to communicate" should be enshrined in international law. Jørgensen (ch. 6) examines the gap between the discourses of human rights advocates and those in the GMCP field. This part concludes with Carpentier's (ch. 7) reality check on the limits of policy-making in the light of his deconstruction of the basic assumptions underlying global policy developments and the contested power relations among the multiple actors.

Part Two. Democratization: Policy in Practice

In this part, we acknowledge just how far the GMCP regime had been transformed by the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century. Now, the formal government institutions and corporate governors of media and communication work in tandem with multiple new actors or "stakeholders," often loosely coupled, but, equally,

committed strongly to the practice of fairness and justice. New departures in this respect are visible in the efforts of civil society at the global level, as demonstrated by Cammaerts (ch. 8) in the context of the WSIS, in the efforts of social movements aimed at policy reform, as discussed by Shade (ch. 9) in the global "North", and in initiatives to foster community media in the global "South", as portrayed by Coyer (ch. 10). New practices are also seen in actions taken to address the dilemmas faced by policy-makers and media practitioners operating in conflict zones, as discussed by Price (ch. 11), in post-Soviet countries, as depicted by Richter (ch. 12), and in Europe, generally, as presented by Jakubowicz (ch. 13). This part ends with Hintz and Milan's (ch. 14) analysis of the contestations within these social movements and their effectiveness in meeting the goals of democratizing GMCP and media practice.

Part Three. Cultural Diversity: Contesting Power

We begin this part with a narrative on the struggles among oppositional voices throughout the postcolonial history of Indian policy-making presented by Das and Parthasarathi (ch. 15). We move on to Boateng's (ch. 16) analysis of contestations over power when the goal is to sustain cultural diversity through knowledge production that respects the interests of those in the global "South". Karim (ch. 17) then assesses the prospects for media pluralism given the requirement for exclusionary policies of the global "North" to be countered. Kraidy (ch. 18), Naji (ch. 19), and Manyozo (ch. 20) offer insights into the changes in media and communication governance in the case, first, of Arab media policy aimed at satellite distribution of media; second, of the press; and, third, of communication initiatives in the African region. All of these contributors highlight intra-regional contests over power and the inequality of global South–North exchanges, as well as controversies within regions. In the final chapter (ch. 21) in this part, Grant offers an insider's view of the challenges of negotiations on trade in cultural products, culminating in the framework of UNESCO's 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

Part Four. Markets and Globality

If media and communication markets have reached a phase of globality, this is due in part to the reach of networks, but networks arguably have always sustained and conditioned the role of media and communication, without necessarily determining the role of the market. In this part, we begin with Picard's (ch. 22) explanation of the economic model of media market dynamics, which is then juxtaposed and interpreted through the lens of Empire and its influence on postcolonial media and communication by Alhassan and Chakravartty (ch. 23). Imperialism following from the power of Empire is visible in Calabrese and Briziarelli's (ch. 24) discussion of bilateral trade agreements and in Dunn's (ch. 25) examination of international trade agreements and policy as well as in the national case in South Africa, as discussed by Teer-Tomaselli (ch. 26). We complete this part with Lentz's (ch. 27) illustration of an analytical approach to the discourses of power that so often are visible in periods of policy transformation, in this instance in the US, demonstrating the value of theoretical paradigms beyond the mainstream of economics.

Part Five. Governance: New Policy Challenges

In the final part of the Handbook, the authors take up some of the big challenges for GMCP which are claiming attention, not because they are new but because they are crucial to human well-being and they remain contested, uncertain, and threatening in various ways. Gallagher (ch. 28) discusses gender and the media, Maxwell and Miller (ch. 29) examine the environmental issues raised by the promotion of digital technologies, Braman (ch. 30) offers insight into national and international developments implicating the media in anti-terrorism measures, Livingstone (ch. 31) assesses the claims for policy intervention for the protection of young people online, and Pauwels and Donders (ch. 32) examine how issues of convergence are being addressed with uneven success in the EU. Each chapter offers a distinctive perspective, but all of these authors indicate that a GMCP regime, consistent with fostering diversity, justice, and inclusion, and in line with respect for human rights,

is not yet in place. The final chapter in this part sets about the difficult task of defining a research trajectory for media and communication scholars who want to influence change – whether from "below" or "above" (i.e., through formal or informal policy-making processes). Padovani and Pavan (ch. 33) illustrate the "dynamic milieu of unequal interdependence" of the networks of actors present in GMCP-making, raising questions about why they emerge, who they influence, and why it is crucial that we understand their effectiveness, rather than simply calling for processes which include multiple stakeholders.

Notes

1 "A largely new era of media policy is opening up in which economic, social, cultural and political issues carry equal weight and for which the concept of an information society provides a central organizing pillar" (McQuail 1998: 224).

2 A slogan first introduced by George Gilder (1993).

3 See also Milward-Oliver (2005). The Maitland Report was cited frequently during the WSIS debates. For discussions on the shift to markets, privatization and liberalization, see Kaplan (1990); Dunn (1995); and Petrazzini (1995).

4 Debate on the "right to communicate" has a long history, as discussed by Fisher and Harms (1983) and Kleinwächter (1998) in the context of press freedom and governance of the journalism profession (Curran 2000). This is a contested area because of the close association between media freedom and democracy (Keane 1991; Corner 2004; Stein 2004). For a recent synthesis of this debate see Raboy and Shtern (2010).

5 Lovelock and Ure (2002) provide a brief discussion of the history of the developments leading up to the GII vision.

6 For an overview of early discussions on the internationalization of the information society and trade, see Bressand *et al*. (1989); Henten and Skouby (2002); and Mansell *et al*. (2007).

7 This story is documented in ITU (1989; 1991) and Hills (1998).

8 See Garnham (1995); Humphreys (1996); Doyle (1998); and Freedman (2008).

9 For research including non-Western nations, see Venturelli (1998); Hallin and Mancini (2004); McQuail (2005); and Buckley *et al*. (2008).

10 See Becker (1984); Hamelink (1984); Melody (1986); and Flichy (1995).

11 These are documented in McChesney and Schiller (2003).

12 Branscomb (1994) asked "who owns information?" while Lessig (1999; 2008) argued for preservation of the existing intellectual property governance regime while releasing information for all to "remix" in the open commons. See also Schiller (2000; 2007) and Benkler (2006).

13 Note that these moves concern spectrum for civilian use; the military in many countries continues to use substantial portions of available spectrum. For example, in the UK, the Ministry of Defence had management rights to 35 percent of spectrum bands in the UK Frequency Allocation Table, with shared use for much of this by commercial or other public sector users (DTI 2007).

14 The "digital switchover" is discussed by Marsden and Verhulst (1999) and the challenges of spectrum management are discussed by Melody (1980); Smythe (1987); and Ibarguen (2003).

15 See also Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations–Civil Society Relations (2004); (also discussed in Raboy *et al*. 2010).

16 An associated term is "governability," referring to contexts in which policy may be neither implementable nor enforceable (Kooiman 1993).

17 For discussions of the reforms needed in each of these areas see Melody (1997); Loader (1997); Mueller (2000); Kleinwächter (2001); Papathanassopoulos (2002); Jacint (2003); Goldsmith and Wu (2006); and Ludes (2008).

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