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The Role of the Rural Newspaper
in National Development in the African Context:
A Reformulation with Particular Reference to Zambia

Sambwa Gabriel Chifwambwa

A Thesis

in

The Department

of

Media Studies

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts at
Concordia University
Montréal, Québec, Canada

June 1986

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ISBN 0-315-32253-5

ABSTRACT

The Role of the Rural Newspaper in National Development in the African Context: A Reformulation with Particular Reference to Zambia

Sambwa Gabriel Chifwambwa

The study posits that you can't know where you are going if you don't know where you have been.

Proceeding with a careful analysis of the "dominant paradigm" in development communication which implied a linear, top-down process, both rigid Marxian and western liberal ideologies are viewed as inadequate in clarifying the dialectical ethics of rural development patterns. To achieve holistic development, the concept and practice of self-reliance, but not autarchy, rooted in African cultural and technological heritage were emphasized as a necessary societal ethic for evolving an African identity.

To this end, the need of formal education is obvious. But care must be taken against the pitfalls that equate illiteracy to ignorance. In the context of the peasantry, this is a false antinomy as demonstrated by Freire's pedagogical approach.

On the basis of various rural press experiments in Africa and Zambia in particular, this study argues that with some degrees of critical reorientation the rural newspapers can be one of the means through which the peasant can be enabled to become the new actor on the African scene. Besides providing consistent reading material to neo-literates, they can be effective instruments in preserving languages, perpetuating and encoding oral culture, promoting new ideas and values.

Under people's control, they can function as circular loops of information and feedback. This entails unambiguity in power devolution, grass-roots involvement and democratic communication policies whereby past traditions and new perspectives stretch ahead for the great majorities' benefit far too long used to the sound of their own silence.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My appreciation goes to the Faculty and Staff of the Department for creating against all odds an atmosphere congenial to high-level and individually appropriate academic training.

I take the liberty, if I may, to thank in particular Debbie MacFadden and Lise Hamilton in the Secretariat for their diligence, Dr. Gail G. Valaskakis and Dr. William O. Gilsdorf, past and present chairpersons respectively, for their boundless support, confidence and care to affording me enriching para-curricular opportunities.

Turning to my Thesis advisers, Dr. Martin Allor and Dr. Stephen Hlophe of Concordia University, and Dr. René Jean Ravault of Université du Québec à Montréal (UQUAM), I say I could not have possibly found a more intellectually diverse and stimulating group. Their penetrating insights and rigorous probing of the work at hand have been extremely helpful in my own intellectual peregrination.

Outside the academic institutions, I acknowledge with grateful thanks the contributions of those who responded to my enquiries. Specifically I wish to mention the Intermediate Technology Development Group in London, U.K.; Fr. Jean-Luc

Gouiller in Chipata, Zambia; Dra. Gerard Akse of Graphic Media Development Centre, The Hague; Mr. Jonathan Zeitlyn, London, U.K.; Africa Literature Centre, Kitwe, Zambia and the African Association for Literacy and Adult Education, Nairobi, Kenya. Their materials strengthened my perceptions and helped facilitate my task.

I owe a great debt of gratitude to Mrs. Valerie Hardy who not only has processed this entire work but typed all my academic papers in the course of my studies, always showing great sensitivity and motherly concern for my well-being in the rough and tumble of an international student's life. In an increasingly self-tormenting world such high disposition is a very humbling experience and certainly elicits hope in the greatness of the human spirit.

Finally, my special thanks go to my son, Sambwa, who at age 10 quickly learned to endure with a brave face my late absences.

Needless to say I take full responsibility for all the gaps in perception, inaccuracies or unorthodox standpoints.

In Memoriam

Kabuya (Mulutula Mandefu) Paul
Maternal Grandfather
Of the Lion Clan
Brave Warrior
Skillful Hunter and Medicine man
Who sung Around the Evening Fire
His Epics against the Arab Slave Raiders
And Marauding Lions
Who Initiated me to the Legends
And Glories of the Tribe.

En tant qu'homme, je m'engage à affronter
le risque de l'anéantissement pour que deux
ou trois vérités jettent sur le monde leur
essentielle clarté.

.....

It is at the moment that s/he realizes his/
her humanity that s/he begins to sharpen the
weapons with which s/he will secure his/her
victory.

Frantz Fanon

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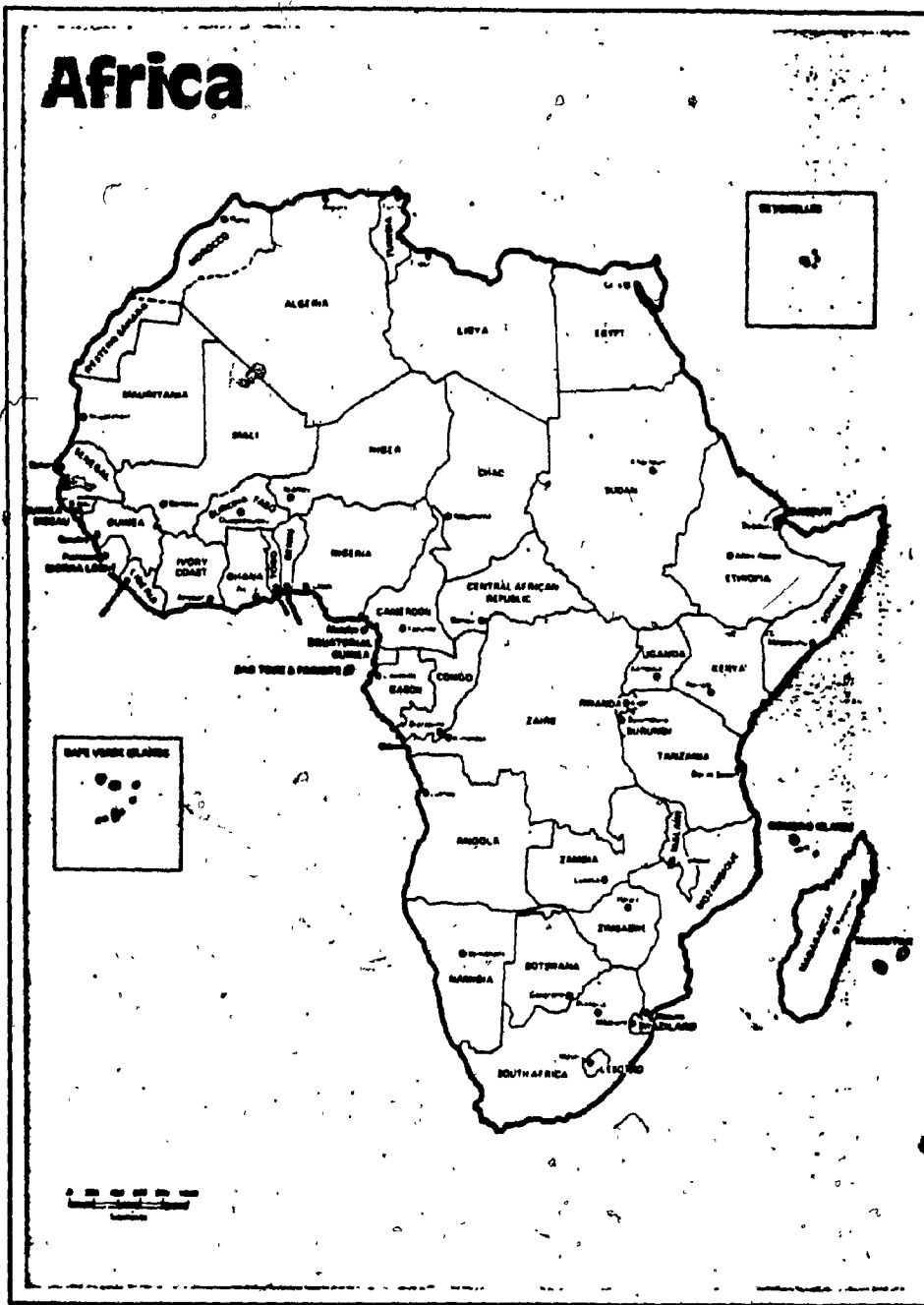
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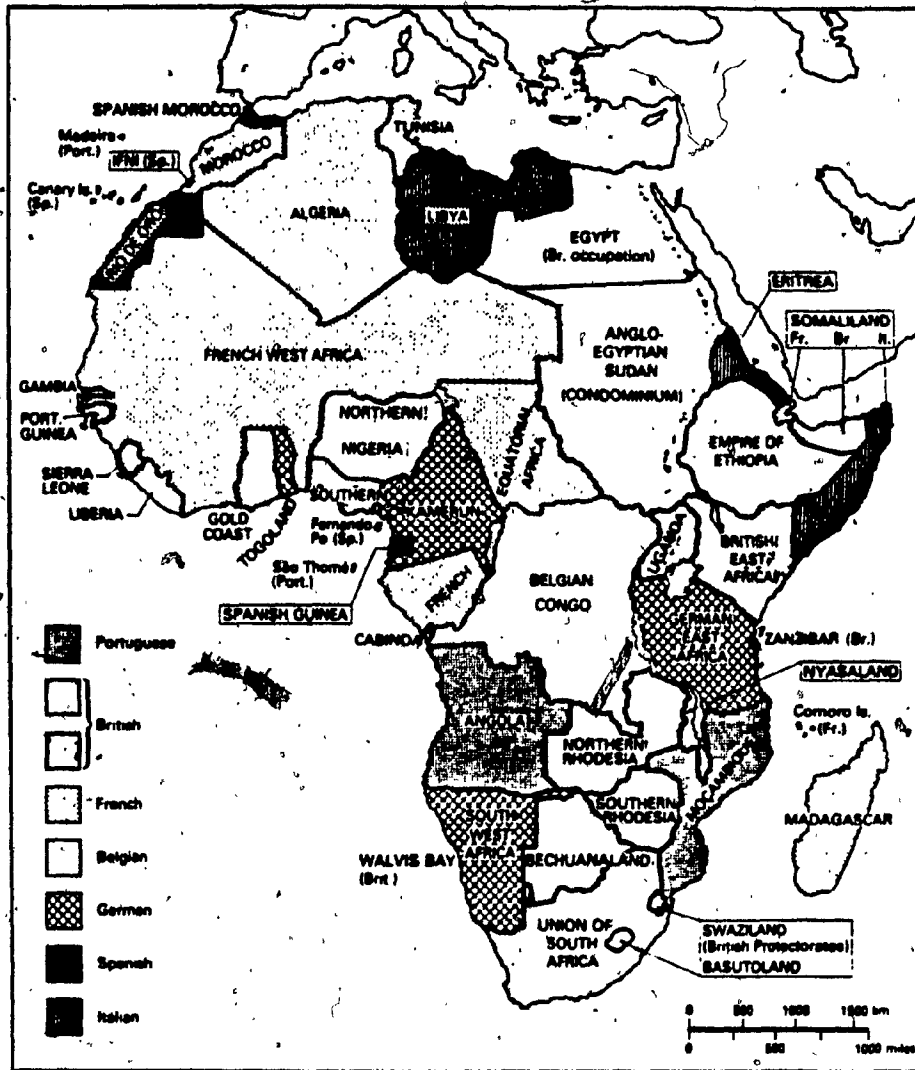
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Africa

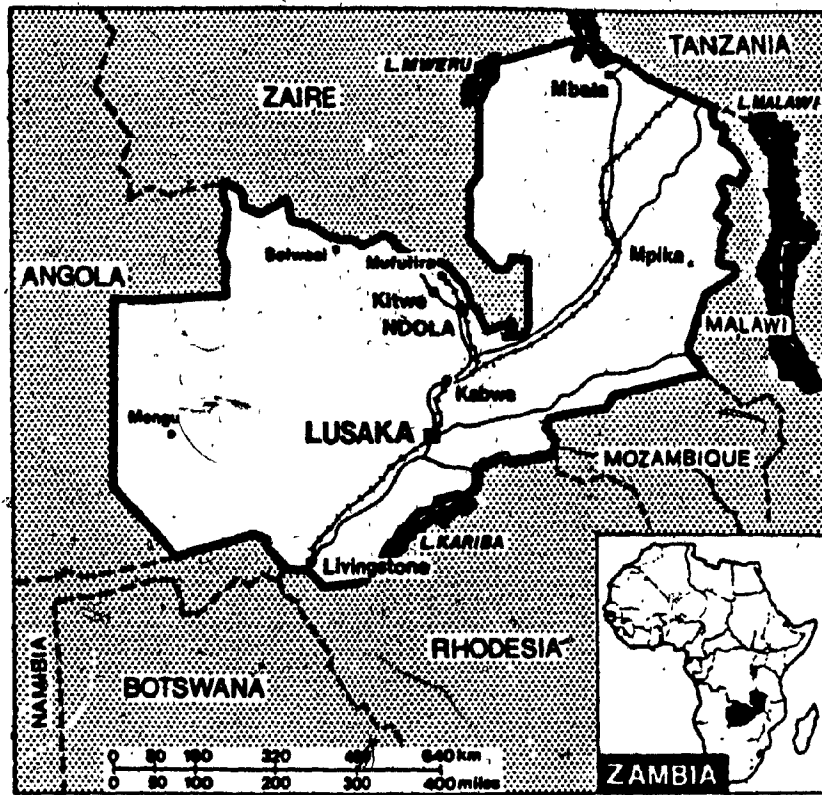


Source: Africa Review, 1985. World of Information.



The pattern of alien rule in Africa, 1914.

Source: Europa Publications Ltd., Fifteenth Edition, Africa South of the Sahara, 1986.



Source: Africa Guide, 1982, p. 389.

Note the Line-of-Rail from Livingstone through the Copperbelt.

The line from Kabwe to the Tanzanian border is part of the Tanzania Zambia Railways (TAZARA) built in 1976 with financial and technical assistance from the People's Republic of China.

ZAMBIA



Source: Zambia in Maps by D. Hywel Davies, University of London Press, 1971, p. 51.

INTRODUCTION

1; Statement of the Problem

Wilbur Schramm (1964, p.27) cites Frederick Harbison's study "Education for Development" as follows:

The progress of a nation depends first and foremost on the progress of its people. Unless it develops their spirit and human potentialities, it cannot develop much else - materially, economically, politically or culturally. The basic problem of most of the underdeveloped countries is not a poverty of natural resources but the underdevelopment of their human resources. Hence their first task must be to build up their human capital. To put it in more human terms, that means improving the education, skills, and hopefulness, and thus the mental and physical health of their men, women and children.

In the 1960's and 70's, the orientation and commitment of planners and policy makers appeared to indicate a greater investment in telecommunications infrastructures, particularly Radio and Television, and the urban press. Radio to a lesser extent than the others, all these media are dependent on an inordinately large infusion of foreign material and consequently "portray the ideas, values and cultures of rich societies" (Mytton, 1983). And yet, in true nationalistic fervour, across the breadth and width of the continent, the

electronic media and much of the secular press are under government or ruling party control. Television, cinema houses are confined to and newspapers mainly circulate in urbanized enclaves. And to compound the situation, the multiplicity of ethnic languages within any given nation-state has led to severe and often delicate problems of compression. The result has been that the majority of languages do not find an outlet on the air waves or in print; that the majority of the citizenry in the rural areas and the proletariat class on the fringes of urban settlements, often illiterate or semi-educated, are effectively powerless and alienated. (Hachten, 1971; Head, 1977).

In such a social and historical context, I beg to formulate the proposition that "if people were genuinely able to express themselves and communicate among themselves through channels of popular power," their education, skills, hopefulness could be enhanced. (Mattelart, 1980). Such a dynamic and humanitarian process would give the peasants and the poor the opportunity to be involved in policy orientation and support national development activity, thereby establishing a concomitant sense of commitment, personal and national identity.

Furthermore, this study posits that the dialogic process of encouraging peasants to probe more deeply into their lives and circumstances to devise ways of improving their

lives enhances conscientization and ultimately democracy. Indeed as Andreas Fugelsang has rightly observed: "Democracy is not a system that can be introduced (from outside), but it is the end product of a communicative process." (Graff, 1983, p.28).

The radio medium on which many early theorists pinned their faith for a quick and painless transition from "tradition" to "modernization" has evidently failed to deliver. Apart from cognitive problems, radio cannot provide long and detailed information which the listener can retrieve as and when he needs it.

And if the use of newspapers to sustain development strategies is limited by an obvious and widespread factor: illiteracy, then we suggest, as many experts recently have, that the print media have an important role to play in promoting literacy. This can be achieved through a deliberate process of decentralization of the production and distribution centres and if the newspapers are "adapted to the needs of the bulk of readers and adopt a format and a style designed to promote reading interests" (Reports, 1981).

Shifting its earlier emphasis on radio, UNESCO has, for more than a decade now, stressed the establishment of the rural press in Africa, in order to "provide reading material to new literates in rural areas in their own languages, facilitate dialogue between authorities and rural people,

decentralize information and inform readers about local events as well as about events in the world at large" (DCR, March 83, p.2).

Evaluating the experience of mimeographed village newspapers in Liberia, the Director of the Liberian Information Service had this to say:

They carry to the people information on better health practices. They tell the farmers modern ways of agriculture. They impress upon the people of rural communities that they are an important part of a rapidly growing nation and not just members of a small tribe. Most of all, they inspire our citizens in these communities to undertake civic programs for themselves. (Martin, 1964, p.246).

The illustration and theoretical concepts above provide us with the basic framework, the functions of the "information resources" or the McLuhanesque "media and messages". The fundamental questions still to be addressed would be: How do we design communication to convey the development message? How do we lessen misunderstanding about methods and objectives and create trust?

Faced with the excruciating dilemma Nyerere described as the "terrible ascent into modernity", my underlying hypothesis can be expressed in the following manner.

- There can be no holistic development without literacy, understood as a functional acquisition of reading and writing

skills and "a continuous process of improvement and better mastery of environment" (Ouane, 1982).

- Planned, written and produced by the local people themselves, the rural newspaper portends to be the best catalyst for individual change embedded in the indigenous culture and step-by-step social progress.

To this hypothesis can be added i) an economic factor: The availability of newsprint or printing presses need not be a precondition or a bottleneck. Experience has shown that inputs can be acquired at reasonable if not low cost. The rationale must always be that one development should lead to another when it truly aims at meeting the basic social needs of the people.

ii) a normative factor: for there to be any pay-off, the information shared and the idea of the development reality must simultaneously be credible. For instance, small farmers who have no fertilizer, cannot borrow money, etc. will benefit little from information about new agricultural practices. The same goes for social services and infrastructure such as health, roads, storage facilities, efficient marketing, etc.

In other terms, our hypothesis calls for the integration of the traditional communication praxis - in the context of the sum total of the national culture - with the "discovery

and encouragement of universalizing values". Specifically, to use Gramsci's words, the African crisis "consists in the fact that the old is dying while the new cannot be born." Thus there is urgent need to conduct an extensive search for oral data on past and contemporary events and artifacts before these traditions vanish for ever. In Mali, the rural newspaper has shown to be a versatile and efficient carrier of "contemporary popular culture, including a body of knowledge in the technical, social, cultural and civic domains" (Ouane, 1982, p.248).

In Zambia, the role of a rural/provincial newspaper is theoretically well grounded. A government policy document states that the rural newspaper is viewed as "the best teacher for adults and is still one of the greatest and most reliable disseminator of information, education, skills and social attitudes that are conducive to rapid social economic development" (GRZ/MIBS, 1985). We shall argue that in practice the approach has followed the mechanistic linear model; has lacked a strategic thinking contingent upon the training of leadership which would encourage innovations and a rural transformation from below, based on the recollection of the people's own culture, a reflection on their heritage and the use of their language.

2. Historiography and Theory

a. Political Economy

Economically and politically, modern Africa is a "highly intricate complex" of various enclaves, created by Western capitalist countries in the furtherance of their economic interests. The decline and annihilation of fairly sophisticated medieval cultures and agricultural technologies - often after fierce and bloody resistance wars - turned Africa into what Karl Marx called a "black game reserve". (Shinnie, 1971; Lara, 1975; Crowder, 1985; Ekechi, 1983).

In 1562, the first cargo of African slaves on the English vessel "Jesus" marked the beginning of a period unparalleled in the cruelty with which the "Dark Continent" was plundered, blacks hunted down and millions of them enslaved by "civilized" adventurers and colonizers. It is estimated that between 60 to 150 million blacks perished at sea or ended up in the mines and plantations of the "New World". (Cohen, 1979; Rodney, 1972; Dumont, 1966; Rawley, 1981).

To this day, this "human haemorrhage" inflicted on Africa and subsequent "share-out" in 1884-85 which merely intensified the enslavement of blacks, can be cited as major reasons for the acute problems of instability and

underdevelopment so persistent on the continent. (Jackson and Rosberg, 1984; Amin, 1972 and 1977; Richards, 1983).

If hindsight is often the well-spring of wisdom, it can be observed that the granting of independence to ill-prepared colonies has been nothing more than nominal. Domination has persisted and even intensified. Most of Africa has actually emerged as part of a neo-colonial network responsive to the demands of Western capital and trans-national corporations' greed. Today's "informal empires" are truly riding high on the crest waves of the "dictatorship of material-poverty" under which the majority of Africans are buried. (Sklar, 1983; Seidman, 1977).

One of the central concerns of modern imperialism and international politics in general is that of primary resources and raw materials which Africa is potentially endowed with. This reality remains an incipient source of tension and conflict in capitalist boardrooms and between East and West.

Along this relationship-continuum, the dominant tradition of the "Godly" western nations has been that the industrial civilization has carried them into increasingly egalitarian, effective and desirable societies. All the while, the former "noble (but ignorant) savages" were destined to relapse in varying fashion into "savage despotism

and stagnation corresponding to their deprived and naturally inferior humanity." Reflecting Hegel's unforgettable dicta in the 1830's, this blind racism conveniently assumed that there was no African history to know, no culture beyond the occasional curious findings of the ethnographer. In short, Africa was static! (Davidson, 1982, 1965).

Enshrined as an immanent truth applicable to all situations, this outlook of necessary white precedence justified in the last century the culture of the new imperialism. In due course, it opened the way to latter-day mythologies of "development" supposing as these generally have that Africans, having no history of their own, can have no development of their own (Wolf, 1982).

The ahistorical assumptions of race superiority, of divine malediction had justified the trans-Atlantic slave-trade, and legitimized brutal colonization (Kake, 1975). Now it was development that had to be transferred "if the Africans are to be saved." This kind of dispensation elicited Kaunda's weary comment:

Even to-day, when you look at some African, Asian and Latin American countries, you will recognize that development and progress is understood as development and progress in a European or American way. The prevailing ideas, attitudes, techniques, etc., reflect too often the European and American way of life. (1968, p.11).

Therefore, the contentious and fundamental question arises: What kind of development model should Africa pursue? Elliot Berg and others have argued that a de facto concept of socialism is deeply rooted in Africa's hierarchical systems (1972). And George Dalton has observed that:

The destructive aspect of colonialism was not an economic exploitation of Africans in the conventional Marxist sense; it could hardly be so, considering that material poverty was already the common lot before the Europeans arrived. Typically colonialism did not make Africans worse off materially; it destroyed culture and society of which the indigenous economy was an inextricable part. It destroyed materially poor but unusually integrated ways of life, wherein economic and social processes were mutually dependent and reinforcing. (1972, p.52).

This may very well be, although Dalton is somewhat disingenuous regarding the essence of exploitation. The greatest dissenter would be Marx himself. Apart from the intricacies of the "labour-value" concept, we are concerned here with the fact that "oppression conditions a people to follow not to lead."

On a parallel track, Senghor's insight is worth noting:

It is a fact, now commonplace, that the standard of living of the European masses has been able to rise only at the expense of the standard of living of the masses in Asia and Africa. And in that sense, because it profited from it, the European proletariat never seriously opposed colonialism. (1959, p.54).

The ensuing pains of "capitalist enclosure" on hapless peripheries have occurred within a "degradation" set by continually adverse terms of trade, "endemic inflation" inherent in capitalism's oligopolistic practices, a global financial system so built as to "continue to impose an even higher toll on weak and experimental systems" (Cunha, 1985; Aryes, 1984; Davidson, 1985; Williams, 1981). Moreover, the developing world cannot fail to see the contradictions in policies which preach the magic of the free market but denies its benefits to foreign exporters of raw materials. Nyerere's keen remark still haunts us; that there can be no free exchange between a dwarf and a giant, no equal relationship from a fundamentally flawed situation of inequality.

On the other hand, the Marxian paradox, or the "ambivalence of Marx", has always been to express throughout his entire work the dignity of man and his spiritual needs without ever resorting to metaphysics or the ethics of religion. Rooted in this quest for justice but transcending the limits of historical materialism, the anti-colonial struggles are embedded in "a new consciousness of their poverty, a sense of frustration and alienation against the privileged nations" of the West hitherto able to foist a situation of "unequal exchange" upon others. (Senghor, 1959).

The Communistic ethos, so alien to African spiritual values, has through "coercion and seduction" arrived at blending both the power and thought processes. Thus, any critical scrutiny of the ideology becomes a conspiracy against the power system. Lenin's words in 1920 truly turn history on its head: "In the face of such a State, the proletariat must defend itself" (Paz, 1985).

The disturbing reality for African countries lies in how to quickly engage the process of "decoupling" from both the capitalist grip and the communist trap wherein these nations must "paradoxically both seek external aid, trade and investment and simultaneously struggle against" as they seek to strengthen their economic base and protect their sovereignty. From this perspective, there can be no one necessarily right road to the Eldorado of development.

Gorman insists:

Perhaps even more significant is the growing number of doubters of both the capitalist and the socialist models of development and democracy. Many roads have been tried and many have failed.

and he continues insidiously:

It is a perversion of Socialism which manifests itself in an equality of poverty and scarcity. True socialism, having experienced the productive dynamism of capitalism, must be a society of abundance. (1984, p.171-187).

One thing remains certain. The increase in agricultural productivity at the end of the 18th century in Europe was the determining factor in the inception of development. It promoted and made possible the cumulative development of the economy. (Dumont, 1966, 1980).

b. Communications

At independence, Africa's internal communications networks were all outward looking to the metropolises. Even airline routes followed "the same longitudinal tracks" forcing air-letters (from the East to the West coast) through the sorting offices of Europe.

In 1962, Africa had the lowest total circulation of daily papers of any region in the world and the highest illiteracy rates. (Ainslie, 1966).

From the turn of the century, the development, ownership and motivation of the Press followed a very uneven pattern in West and East, Central and Southern Africa. It was a lively outspoken Press in English-speaking West Africa, an increasingly powerful racist Press in South Africa. In other parts of English, French and Portuguese-speaking Africa, the Press remained largely under the control of the settler regimes in place. Press freedom much acclaimed in Western democracies was at best ridiculed but usually stifled. The concept of broadcasting as a function

independent of Government was non-existent. (Kasoma, 1979; Ainslie, 1966; Barton, 1979). Thus, the leaders of emerging Africa were "quick to seize upon the propaganda role of the media while paying lip service to their more essential role in national development" (Ugboajah, 1972, p. 84). The dubious reputation as "the continent that gags its Press" has a very long history!

In his book, Facing Mount Kenya, Jomo Kenyatta shows us where we must begin. We must immerse ourselves with the traditional communication culture of the African peoples which contained the forces of backlash and promoted the forces of transportation, renewal and survival. Kenyatta regretted that the use of drums, horns and other folk media for celebrations, rituals, information transmission are now very rarely used "owing to the interference of the Europeans with the African institutions and the desire to suppress them by imposing Western civilization" (1962, pp. 95-96).

Save for a few missionary outfits, rural newspapers in many countries have never been the object of any genuine attention or careful study as potential vehicles for social education. Reading a newspaper in Africa - or anything else - depends upon where one lives. Julius Nyerere has summarized the dilemma of the urban-peasant gulf in tragically graphic terms: "While other nations try to reach

the moon, we are trying to reach the village." Barton correctly identifies the problem when he states:

The "national" newspapers of Africa can never hope to bridge this gulf. Indeed if they ever tried to, they would be in danger of putting themselves in an even more parlous economic position than they now face, for that life style of difference between the townsman and the villager mitigates against producing newspapers with an appeal to both, and even if a magic formula could be found to editorialise the city newspapers for the rural areas, distribution costs would rule such a plan out.

And he adds with much insight:

Gradually, but much too slowly, it is becoming clear to the governments of Africa that the peasants of their nations will only be reached, if at all, by a press which is tailored specifically to peasant needs and produced in the rural areas. (1979, p. 281).

The costs towards the organizational and operational processes of rural based newspapers in Africa have been estimated by UNESCO and other field experts to be negligible in relation to the massive national budgets that sustain the urban and propaganda oriented mass media.

The fact that the political élites have failed to appreciate the need for functional knowledge as the prerequisite condition for true progress is a sad epitaph on the monument of hypocrisy that characterizes the empty rhetoric of such slogans as "Power to the People", "Green

Revolution", etc.

We believe that Africa has reached the stage whereby the proverbial predicament of a "chicken and egg" situation has become a preposterous and escapist argument. There now exists a unique opportunity to induce a circular exchange of information and development through a balance between the time-bias of the oral-aural tradition and the space-time bias of writing on documents that can easily be transported and stored.

The dialectic of literacy and knowledge is a historical and universal fact. The rise of newsheets and community papers - the penny Press - in the old and new countries of Russia, Europe and North America demonstrated in the last and early this century their inherent capacity to move up literacy and living conditions in basically agrarian or peasant communities.

In Africa, wherever such an experiment has taken place, the impact on local populations has been tremendous. (Bourges, 1978; Barton, 1979; Ouane, 1982).

c. Education

Africanists, both of the liberal or marxist variety, have often been challenged by their critics on grounds that "without the intelligent guidance from the white man, the African could hardly develop his resources" (Ekechi, 1983).

We start with the proposition that although all normal people are not equal, all are at least endowed with a good measure of "social intelligence", or the ability to always work towards a greater adaptation with the environment. It would be narrow-minded therefore to equate the inability to read or write with ignorance or lack of rationality. Equally we reject the ethnocentric conception of "civilization" which has postulated it to be the glitter and end result of an education transplanted by colonialism and exercised with generous doses of the Church's divine mission.

In the context of the oral and aural cultures of Africa, the process of education is like the embryonic leaf of the banana tree which always unfolds to become the next supportive leaf thus symbolizing the fact that skill, adaptability must grow from within and spread outwards. Indeed, to educate generically means to "draw out" from the other such meanings and insights that are necessary for genuine rearing in the community's values, customs, folklore and beliefs (Mounoumi, 1968).

To be sure, the relationship between education and rural development has been the subject of considerable debate in colonial and independent Africa. Norman Miller notes in this respect:

The early missionaries and all of the colonial governments frequently referred to the need for adapting education to the requisites of primarily agrarian societies. Yet if there is one topic on which all observers of African education agree, it is that the inherited patterns are too European, too academic and too unresponsive to the needs of the countries they serve (1969, p.1).

Paradoxically, during the colonial era, education for the indigenous people was severely restricted and only provided access to a limited number of inferior clerical and teaching jobs. Thus it is little wonder that Africans largely shunned the "special" vocational and agricultural schools for they viewed them a deliberate attempt to slow down their progress. To this day Africa's developmental goals are retarded by a dearth of an artisan corps. The "wind of change" pushed rural education into the background "as the need for high-level manpower became the major determinant of educational development."

This change of course certainly accelerated the impressive expansion of secondary and higher education but in the late 1960's there was a rising apprehension that things had gone "too far too fast". Africanization was at a dead end as the economic pendulum began to swing back. An educational system mainly oriented towards white collar occupations was not only dysfunctional but clearly "ill-suited to the needs of the rest of the populations" (Miller, 1969).

In a bitter critique of development patterns in Africa, Dumont has lashed out at the inherited bias in favour of the urban modern sector and has called for a major restructuring of priorities in favour of the rural sector. On his part and from an obviously different perspective, Nyerere has advocated a Tanzanian type of education which is self-reliant, that is, self-fulfilling, self-realizing and liberating because it encourages the "growth of socialist values" and rejects those "appropriate to the colonial past." (1967).

d. Zambia

Formerly Northern Rhodesia, Zambia lies on the Central Africa Plateau between 22°E and $33^{\circ}33'\text{E}$ longitudes and $8^{\circ}15\text{S}$ and 18°S latitudes. It is thus well within the tropics and fairly centrally placed within the African continent. Except in the lower reaches of the three great river valleys, the Zambesi, the Lwangwa and the Kafue, the country's elevation (ranging from 3,000 to 5,000 ft. above sea-level) relieves it from the high temperatures and humidity of the tropics.

With a surface area of 739,557 square Kms, it has a small and scattered population of about 6.5 million people. The indigenous population is of Bantu origin and has been classified into seventy three ethnic groups, the vast majority of whom are still engaged in subsistence agriculture. (NRG, 1947; Deane, 1953; Hellen, 1968).

Zambia became a dualistic economy early in its colonial history. In 1938, the excessive dominance of copper mining as the country's main export already provided a "striking commentary on the character of Northern Rhodesia's economic growth to the present." Efforts to build a more balanced economy after World War II proved elusive partly due to Britain's obsession for "strategic" primary products and raw materials and the "poverty of interest" in the more exacting tasks to develop and transform the country in holistic fashion. (Thomson and Woodruff, 1953). This situation did not appreciably alter at the dawn of independence in October 1964:

What could be seen was growth without development. A well established export sector stood unconnected and isolated in the middle of an otherwise archaic economy, a clear oil slick on the water of non-development. (Simonis, 1971, p.8).

In the heady days of "Uhuru", in spite of the "regime's manifest concern for a humanist-oriented strategy" for rural development, considerable disparities in the economic infrastructure remained largely unaltered for three reasons: a genuine development programme for small-scale industries in the rural areas and labour intensive techniques was not set up; vested political and business interests showed an obvious preference for concrete towers and mega schemes in the name of progress; notwithstanding the slogans such as "Back to

the Land", agriculture inputs and ancillary services remained concentrated along the spine-like line-of-rail which cuts the country through the middle. (Quick, 1977; Ollawa, 1978; Katona, 1982). When, in 1972, the collapse of world copper prices knocked the bottom out of the country's economy, the transition from "riches to rags" was immediate and dramatic. Zambia is thus, in many respects, an interesting case of underdevelopment propelled by historical economic distortion and dependency. The rapid industrial and extractive expansion left the local population, by design and default, totally "unassimilated" in a technological and educational sense. The widespread imposition of forced labour fanning migrations and the forced cultivation of export crops on delicate and easily eroded soils caused absolute impoverishment against previous standards of living and "flourishing" levels of medieval technology. (Fagan, 1967; Roberts, 1976; Cunnison, 1966). To the point, Wallerstein has arduously argued that "the history of the peoples of Africa has been one of variety and invention, of skills in art and government" (1961, p.12). To be sure, the crisis period of the slave-trade caravans might not have been the acme of a golden age (Goody, 1971; Baldwin, 1966); DeMe, 1953), but as Samir Amin has so cogently remarked, "it is absurd to draw an analogy between the same mode of production belonging to societies of different ages" and, we might add, of different milieux. (1972, p.507). The point we are making

is simply that monopoly capital under the guise of the "white man's burden" extracted wealth from the usurped land and its bowels, "by force, fraud and fiat." In the case of Zambia, it is evident that a higher agricultural productivity remains the best prospect for survival. But a caveat is in order. Colonialism's *raison d'être* was to obtain cheap exports. By insisting on "cash" crops, today's African rulers are perpetuating the "colonial mode of production" that Amin has aptly called "économie de traite", revealed by the theory of "unequal exchange" and "the development of underdevelopment."

To the extent that most of the rural areas have largely remained untouched, the path is strewn with a number of problematic hypotheses. The first and necessary step towards the larger question of integration is to let an hitherto "uncaptured peasantry" play its full part. Contrary to what Marx thought, the African peasant is not less impervious to revolutionary ferment or more dedicated to "the stupidity of rural life." (Palmer and Parsons, 1977). At issue is the challenge to develop human resources in a country where at independence the majority of the population was either un- schooled or semi-literate with "less than four years of primary education." In fact, out of a population of 3.5 million souls, only 1,200 had finished high school and about 100 were University graduates. (Etheridge, 1967; Kay, 1967; GRZ,

1966). Still elusive is President Kaunda's hope that "we must provide for the people in the villages the know-how through education with the means to produce more" (1968, p.14). In the meanwhile, on the political front, his harried ruling United National Independence Party proscribed the opposition and established a de jure one-party "participatory-democracy" state in 1973.

Pettman's contention then that such a move might not be "a radical and dynamic step to release energies for development" still holds true. Notwithstanding the ideals of a mutual-aid or "man-centered society" embodied in the national ideology of "Humanism", it is not idle to suggest that that self-serving decision has exacerbated rather than diminished the ruling circle's unresponsiveness to the exigencies of the hour, stifled creativity as a result of autocratic tendencies and bureaucratic ossification. (Pettman, 1974; Martin, 1977; Mungazi, 1983).

3. Importance of the Study

In the current and transient state of "pain and suffering" in Africa, it is not amazing that the very basis of political authority - its legitimacy - is increasingly in question. Consequently, the networks of information exchange are under increased pressure to "perform", which means to promote unity and stability and thereby contribute to the process of nation-building. In view of the fact that the

"take-off" predictions of the 1950's and subsequent attempts have miserably aborted, nothing is there to disprove the wisdom in the assumption that the issue of the press and its freedom points to a difficult and troubled future. Yet, very so often, out of weakness strength may come forth. In the Zambian case, this study proposes a fundamental rethinking of the rationale behind the continued existence of the rural newspapers as the mouthpiece of the urbanised civil servant communicator and his employer. In spite of lofty sentiments, the top-down linear model of communication with its sequential centralized chains of production and distribution continues to predominate in the Zambian information system. The paradox is that having identified illiteracy as an important contributing factor to backwardness and impoverishment, we cling to a strategy wherein really "lie the seeds of poverty, unrest, desperation and revolt" because it precisely promotes stupidity. By way of a palliative, this study attempts a reformulation of the communication process embedded in a genuinely democratic and liberating traditional-cum-modernizing matrix. The aim being to initiate "self-knowledge", instill self-confidence and arouse a social and historical consciousness among the disadvantaged rural people whom development just seems to pass by.

In other terms, the peasant/object should enact his own history and not merely be subjected to it. As the certain repository of time tested skills and ancestor-mediated

knowledge, he should be cast in the revival rôle of traditional crafts and folklore.

We dare suggest that only the blending of those positive elements of modern science and technology and the wisdom ensconced in the wealth of practical experience can lead to a lasting and holistic rural development in Africa.

Essentially, the study pleads, over and above any political imperatives, for a New Communication Order at the local or national level between the grass-roots and the centre; for a credible approach in the handling of information power as a pillar of post-literacy learning and agent for change. This entails a deliberate option for confidence-building measures on the part of rulers and a reversal of those manipulative actions only fit for a society "put under political tutelage, depoliticized and hence representing the ideal conditions for the maintenance of the existing political structure of domination and power" (Jorg Huffschmid in Hoffman, 1983, p.13).

Finally, we cannot understand the present if we ignore the past. Marx's principle of "historical specificity" is vital in the field of development communication as against the trend of the mass media which often mainly concern themselves with "what is".

We believe that this work, firmly set against the back-

drop of the continent's "ecological context", presents a welcome advance over the more narrowly focused perspectives in this area. We realize that this is only a stage along the road: our understanding and the problematic choice of possible alternatives must realistically remain open-ended. Davidson has put it admirably:

What we are witnessing today, in all its inevitable contradictory questioning and confusion, is the last great phase in this often tumultuous and always dramatic Age of Transition: the attempt by one means or another, under one guise or another, to establish African society upon the foundations of industry and science, to place Africans upon a footing of manifest equality with all their fellow men, and to finish, once and for all, with the ideological servitudes of our racialist past. (1965, p.19).

4. An Outline of the Study

The first Chapter critically considers the concepts and theories of development as they evolved since World War II to present day's Great Communication Debate.

Contemporary nation-states can no longer live in isolation but we stress the point that the new patterns of communication do not emerge from nor are they propelled into some neutral background. That being the case, development - which in essence is always information-mediated - should "embed traditional channels of contact within a new system of intercourse" (Head, 1977).

The second Chapter evolves around the view that for communication to be people-based and oriented, it must command their active and voluntary participation in all the emancipatory practices of the nation. That is the penultimate condition for an "integrated" development effort. To achieve this goal in the modern age, the adult individual must know something of the printed word and be usefully maintained in this state. At this stage, we enter the process of "conscientization" or the expression of the way in which the "oppressed" relate to their external realities in order to act upon them and transform them into the "instruments of their own humanization" (Freire, 1972 & 1983). A probe into the pertinent literature in Africa and elsewhere will undergird our premise that an interactive loop between the spread of non-formal education and community newspapers is feasible and desirable.

For Zambia, this link will be definable by collapsing the prevailing theories, perceptions and univariate mechanistic models. To put it differently, it will be argued that the leap into "modernity" does not have to be at the expense of local languages, technological experiments, cultural practices and related social behaviour which have sustained the identity of the communities for generations past and within the recent Zambian polity. In the absence of an integrated body of material, a comparative method of

analysis of data in colonial documents, Zambian publications government and other records will be attempted. This will be the burden of Chapter III.

Chapter IV will be devoted to examining how appropriate a rural newspaper medium could be in the dual role as an information conveyor belt and change agent, albeit inevitably swinging like a pendulum in dialectical fashion between theory and praxis.

The conclusion tries to point at some of the policy options that are conducive to achieving the objectives of a fuller human development through the functional literacy conduit.

In sum, measured observations more specific to the Zambian situation will be made. It is hoped that these could, mutatis mutandis, be applied to the rural press landscape on the continent.

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CHAPTER I

LOST PARADIGMS: THE DIALECTICS OF COMMUNICATION AND DEVELOPMENT

1. Tradition versus Modernity

We shall in this chapter briefly review and reflect on key aspects of a growing body of literature attempting to evolve and systematize a variety of conceptual models around the role of communication in the development process of the Less Equipped Countries (LEC's). In the context of this study we believe it is important to make axiomatic the proposition that there can be no "development" without communication and that since the advent of Homo Sapiens, human interaction has been the consequence of information modules, however rudimentary the infrastructure or "passive" the recording and distribution processes.

For most African countries at the threshold of their third decade of nominal political independence, there is disillusion, disenchantment and gnawing bitterness. In the throes of this "unfreedom", is taking root a numbing realization of the power games and the greed of a powerful few who are perceived as inducing massive economic stagnation and in many cases regression.

Ironically, the dual concept of "development" and "modernization" was hatched and pursued with missionary zeal by a cluster of American social scientists. Transposing the "benefits" of the Marshall Plan to devastated Europe, they reasoned the LEC's were equally capable of undergoing an "economic miracle".

But in contrast to fragmented and dehumanized "Third World", Europe, still clutching its colonies, had intact its basis in education, organization and national cohesion. And in particular, African countries, having won their independence through struggle or colonizer's paternalism, failed in the ensuing euphoria to grasp the historical truth that no society had become genuinely free and prosperous by appealing to the sense of justice of the master classes (Novack, 1976).

These observations, rehashed as they may be, are for analytical purposes of what follows. First of all, a parenthesis is in order. In a perceptive essay on "Tradition", Edward Shils has argued that:

In principle, the rational individual might end by accepting very much of what is handed down through traditional transmission, not out of compulsiveness or passivity, not out of awe before a sacred past or because there is nothing else to do, but rather because it turns out on examination to be the most reasonable thing....Traditions are beliefs with a particular social structure; they are a consensus through time. (1976, *passim*). (My emphasis).

Daniel Lerner's (1958) landmark study in the Middle East laid out what was then thought to be a major hypothesis:

Increasing industrialization has raised urbanization; rising urbanization has tended to raise literacy; rising literacy has tended to raise media exposure; increasing media exposure has tended to increase political participation in economic and political life (p.46).

This paradigm, rooted in an idealistic conception of social change and the experiences of the Western industrialized countries, has failed to meet the test of time because through a process of psychic decontextualization it turned logic on its head. It assumed that the communication input was an independent variable in the modernization process of countries in "transition". Foolishly, tradition was seen in zero-sum terms and in oppositional setting to "modernity" as the "entity that had to be broken to ensure the emergence and growth of modern economic, political and social forces" (Eisenstadt, 1973, p.13).

Lerner really obfuscated when he termed traditional society as "non-participant" and focused on a psychological variable he called "empathy" to explain individual change and macro-societal transformations. Furthermore, the individual-blame view, embedded in simplistic qualitative assumptions of modernity such as liberty, rationality and progress failed to place the information system within the broad political and economic structures of domination, both

internal and external, which foster dependency and revolutions.

What Allan Wells has termed the "hoax of premature modernization" foisted upon the emerging countries, may have originated from Max Weber's Credo in the Protestant Ethic or the utilitarian esteem of wealth as a value approach to social change. It was certainly reinforced by such "macro" theorists as Rostow (1960) whose "stages of growth" theory was predicated on the inevitability of universal material progress, Western and American style. According to Walter Rostow, the preconditions for "take-off" in "underdeveloped" countries arise from "some external intrusion by more advanced societies." And the great leap or "watershed" occurs when the "old blocks and resistances to steady growth are finally overcome"; and thus, growth, measured as rising income per capita, becomes their "normal condition".

Reverting to Weber for a moment, it is illuminating to note that his "spirit of capitalism" is above all grounded in a) the coherent unity of personal life, b) hard work and a religious ascetism, c) the appearance of the notion of individualism in the sense that the independent, and valued individual becomes the normative subject of institutions, d) the disappearance of an ethic of brotherliness and the impersonality of relations. "Any excess of emotional feeling for one's fellow man is prohibited as being a deification of

the creaturely" (1964, p.162).

As for Lerner's paradigm, the "need achievement" of McClelland, Rogers' "diffusion model" with its focus on opinion leaders and early adopters, the modern attributes suggested by Schramm (1964), Pye's thesis (1963) that "it was the pressure of communication which brought about the downfall of societies" and the modernization theories of Inkeles and Smith (1974), it can be reasonably held that they assumed a priori conditions, drew overdrawn characterizations and espoused a unilinear, mechanistic and ahistorical manipulation of structural variables.

There is in fact no strong evidence to show that tradition and modernity are conflicting and mutually exclusive. As Erich Fromm has aptly stated: "Even the most radical development must have its continuity with the past" (1968, p.vii). And it is certainly incorrect to assume that once the forces of modernization have impinged upon any society, tradition will disappear. There can be no fixed end-result, rather a variety of responses depending on a broad set of conditions.

We sum up with Inayatullah's stirring words:

The dominant paradigm presupposes that because the "traditional" societies have not risen to the higher level of technological development (since the Industrial Revolution) in comparison to

the Western Society, therefore they are sterile, unproductive, uncreative and hence worth liquidating. It measures the creativity of the "traditional" world with a few limited standards such as urbanization and industrialization, like the person who measures the competence of everyone in terms of his own special competence. It ignores (because it cannot measure it with its available instrument) the possibility of existence or (at least the potentiality) of non-material areas of activity....It presumes that all history is inexorably moving towards the same destiny, same goals, and same value systems as Western man has. It presupposes that the range of combinations of technology and values other than the Western (Judeo-Christian?) one is very limited and insists that modern technology could not be adopted without sacrificing the "traditional" valuesIt shows remarkable ethnocentrism by equating modern society with paradise and fails to take into account the crisis especially in the realm of personality, which the modern society is facing (1967, pp.100-1).

2. The Diffusion of Innovations and Media Effects Theories

Rogers' (1976) attempt to contrast the old concept with emerging alternatives still remained wanting. As he acknowledged later (1978), he did not cast his eyes far enough to analyze the root causes behind the situation of the poorer and smaller farmer. He had presumed the goodwill of the more politically and economically powerful classes, the change agents, in allowing the more impoverished classes to catch up. (Mansell, 1982).

As Brown and Kears (1967) have argued, skillful communication can change a peasant's perception of his situation but it cannot, in isolation, change that situation to a satisfactory extent. In other words, a farmer may be helped to see opportunities he ignores but if these are not actualized, information will not be the magic wand which will create them. McAnany (1978) and others echoed this caution in suggesting communications as an auxiliary variable "subject to the constraints of the rest of the social system."

Thus, the dilemma facing the micro theorists of development has been to strike the right balance between mass and elite focus. Generally should economic or political change be attributed to the many or the few? Indeed the concern with equity in the agricultural sector was premised on the "communications gap effect" theory as it became apparent that higher status individuals stood a better chance to derive greater gains from the mass media systems (Freebairn, 1973).

While Schramm's assertion that "people learn from media participation as indeed they do from all existential experiences" holds true, it seems fair to suggest that diffusionism assumptions ring like an intellectual extension of Darwinism in the social realm, also apparent in the evolutionary determinism of the dominant paradigm.

Beltran (1976) vigorously critiqued the elitist bias of

the diffusionist's "two-step flow" model in which innovations trickle down from leaders or "early adopters" to the less well positioned. Rao (1966), Aurora (1977) in India; Roling, Ascroft and Chege (1976) in Kenya, attempted to specify certain conditions under which the "knowledge gap" could be narrowed and present frameworks of how diffusion strategies might proceed more equitably.

Diaz Bardenave (1976), rejecting the "simplistic transmission mentality", stressed the need to develop approaches of individual awareness akin to Freire's methodology. He asserted:

We no longer put blind faith in the power of the message and the media. We no longer believe that communication is always at the service of innovation and development. The mass media tend to exert an anti-change effect on many people (p.49).

The bottom line remains that what the masses are "induced to want" must be proportionally related to what they can conceivably produce. We should agree with Lerner (1976) that the counterproductive use of communication and personal charisma in the new nations nurtured "rising expectations" which have often led to a "new revolution of rising frustrations" and national stasis.

Given the fact that the earlier notions of traditional agriculture being inefficient have been vigorously challenged

(Schultz, 1964; Wharton, 1976), a new and sensible strategy would entail an investment in raising the farmer's cognitive abilities through non-formal education which would dovetail the strategic use of small scale local media.

3. Technology and Consciousness

A key factor in ensuring the peasant's successful use of technological innovations to increase production and improve living conditions lies in the ability of individuals to rehabilitate their identity in order to assimilate and generate beneficial information and use it effectively "in the face of new elements of risk and uncertainty introduced by new factors of production" (Ashby et al., 1980).

We say this because when modernity is divorced from the delicate but strong bonds of the extended family circle expressed through art, language, worship and rituals; when modernity is defined as anti-tradition, then the chain of continuity and change is broken. As a process of humanization for the oppressed, communication's natural task (both as medium and message) should be more often than not to rewrite history, long crystallized in wilful errors. To put it differently, communicologists should be wary of technological determinism, so well expressed in the writings of Marshall McLuhan, which is inevitably accompanied by "a good measure of cognitive tyranny." For, to paraphrase Majid Tehrenian, "it treats its objects of manipulation as things to be

molded into a new and different caste, against their will and against their sense of history and well-being" (Quoted in Graff, 1983, p.110).

Certainly, there are opportunities for various communication systems in the emerging countries to enhance the productive value of human beings and investment in them can be seen as adding to the stock of available human capital. However, there are reasons for less sanguine disposition.

The promise of a "global village" can no longer mask the fact that capitalist expansion has effectively twisted the development of the satellites to the centre's benefit, reinforced exploitative relations within each satellite and their continued dependency on the metropolis. Caught between the capitalist and communist patterns of technocratic development, the new nations tragically stand, to use Tehre-nian's metaphor, "somewhere in the twilight of tradition and modernity, suffering the worst consequences of both without benefiting from their blessings" (1983, p.8).

Today we are all trapped inside the ripples of fast growing and expanding communication technologies whose space biased character seeks to subvert, integrate or submit its users into larger and dominant systems of organized force and of which they have become the mediating tool and expression.

At the industrial level, Africa's precolonial technological development though occasionally impressive, was very unevenly distributed. Innovations in agriculture, metallurgy, mining and architecture were widely dispersed both in time and space. And while there is disagreement on this point, there was little African science, in spite of fairly advanced numerological and other speculative activities. (Gruhn, 1984). We define science as the acquisition of basic knowledge about the natural and human world. Technology is thus the application of this knowledge for the Creator's purposes: to subdue the earth and yet live in harmony with it. We may deduce, as we must, that while some scientific and technological innovations do take on global relevance, others must remain specific, circumscribed, as it were, by time and place.

Unlike in colonial days, when the implanted technological infrastructure was primarily at the service of the metropolis' mercantilist interests, any technological transfer between consenting partners should be designed as to help the LEC's acquire and build their own skills and generate innovations from within.

But the illusion persists among the new élites in the periphery that industrialization entails the compression of three centuries of Western technological evolution into the abrupt transformation of two or three generations. To avoid the trap of assuming an inherent goodness of Western

scientific progress and overcome vulnerability in the face of "inhuman determinisms" from the more developed polities, a more conscious and sustained effort must be exerted in order to pare down the ignorance surrounding valuable traditional resource systems. It clearly follows that the human dimension of resource development becomes crucial before any serious discussion of material improvement can take place. It is the matrix from which will flow other freedoms and the essential reason why the new nation-states cannot jump, leap-frog or catch-up in development because education does not jump. It is a gradual process and with it comes organization which then evolves to fit changing circumstances.

Citing the works of thinkers from Adam Smith through Karl Marx to John Stuart Mill, Streeten (1976) argues that education is fundamental to social peace, self-improvement and economic progress. He stresses that in contradistinction to the alienation and division of labour under capitalism, Marx had in fact called Man: "the most productive force of all."

We must quickly qualify the principle above by insisting on an appropriate education which is not white-collar slanted and does not fly on the wings of a high technology which cannot be digested by the recipients.

A rural-oriented and cost-effective technology befitting

African demographic realities provides the best framework for real development because it minimizes demands upon advanced managerial, technical and financial skills. Basically there may be three steps that can be undertaken to achieve the simple and low-cost techniques needed by people. Firstly, to upgrade and make more productive traditional ways of doing things. Secondly, to make relevant, which means to retain the "tool" element out of the sophisticated western technology and eliminate its expensive labour-saving accretions. The third is by new invention. The expertise and information to do this certainly exists in both the traditional milieu, the North and other countries of the South. This simply needs to be mobilized, systematized for retrieval and presented in useful form. (Schumacher, 1969 and 1974). Put in another form, technology has to be both problem specific and location specific. There can be no quick "technological fix" or purely technology-generated solutions to the problems of grinding poverty and deprivation. Its preferred outcomes cannot be value-neutral or divorced from the social order, both internal and external, in which they emerge. This means that the problem-solving activity of technology must be balanced against its problem creating dynamics. Otherwise any such lack of awareness will inhibit effective monitoring, frustrate indigenization and prevent integration into the technical inventory of the receiving culture (Uchendu, 1975). At the

communication level, information which supports adaptive research needs to be introduced through functional art forms, such as drama, fables, songs, pictures and cartoons in languages understood by the local populations to facilitate assimilation. (Soule, 1985).

These goals indicate that we are arguing for "autonomy" from western frames of reference and saying in effect that properly conceived, "small is beautiful" does not imply the hoe is always better than the tractor. We are merely saying that, with due regard to the real needs and available resources of a society, technology should perform its desired function without unforeseen or anticipated socio-cultural and ecological harm. In advocating "alternative futures" for Africa, it is imperative to bear in mind that there are choices available even in those areas where dependency and interdependence are either feasible or desirable. To the extent that it tends to minimize "muteness" or victimization, the path of self-reliance should point in the direction of specific strategies out of which a new and more hopeful African future can be invented. (Hall, 1982; Gruhn, 1984).

In the context of science and technology, competency, that is the anticipated positive effects, will require radical structural changes, wisdom to learn from mistakes of the more advanced countries and an overall improvement in various

other spheres in which "science has nothing to say." Failing this, the production, selection and dissemination of information (both as medium and message) will inevitably lead to an undifferentiated content, legitimate manipulation and reify domination instead of being the guarantor of a humanizing and liberating societal process.

4. Development and Culture:
An Elusive Dilemma?

Development is a complex and elusive concept. Much of the confusion over goals has arisen because most development spokesmen have persisted in assuming that development is a state rather than a process rooted in dialectical tension in which all countries are involved. No country is standing still and it is misleading to infer that the term "developing" implies a de facto poverty or should only apply to "poor" countries.

The distortion of the "third way" concept seems to be an instrument in the prosecution of an intellectual Cold War designed to glorify the mystique of Race and Nationality. Nature's ordered diversity is thus clumsily fragmented into "high" cultures and peoples without culture who have presumably been bypassed by the soothing balm of "civilization". The obverse use of the term "Third World" has, we submit, trapped the West into insoluble self-contradictions, cleft onto irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to

exorcise. From this perspective, development must subsume a liberation hope, that of:

Freeing men from nature's servitudes, from economic backwardness and oppressive technological institutions, from unjust class structures and political exploiters, from cultural and psychic alienation - in short, from all of life's inhuman agencies. (Goulet, 1978, p.xx).

In Africa, the fundamental problem has been that the colonial systems, modelled on European patterns, were designed to keep the natives "in their place" and certainly not to foster long-term economic and social development. In Griffin's words: "Europe did not discover the underdeveloped countries; on the contrary, she created them" (Quoted in Long, 1977, p.71).

At independence, few countries understood that the West's perceptions of their societies as "primitive" and "in need to be helped out of backwardness" was more than a temporary aberration. Consequently, very few undertook any radical re-organization, except those who attempted a socialist approach to development. The reasons for this are varied and need no retelling here. Rather, the standard approach has required a profound transformation of the entire economic and social structures - with a view to raising the GNP and per capita income - of the so-called rigid and ascriptive traditional societies in order to propel them into dynamic, industrialized and urbanized, secular and rational and socially mobile

nation-states wherein obtains an abundance of "good" life and liberty. (Golding, 1974; Wolf, 1982; Conyers, 1974).

However, Lee (1970) and others have agreed that these "liberal" economic assumptions cannot be taken for granted, as evidence shows that they "by and large created or aggravated the economic inequity across different social sectors." In many emerging countries, the high numbers of "marginals" or "urban villagers" - to use Herbert Gans' designation - have produced a disturbing phenomenon, that of "growth without development." (Lerner, 1976; MacDonald, 1981; Sweezy, 1982; Bernstein, 1982).

The inadequacy of this model lies perhaps in the missing element of "dialectics" whereby the vital distinction between values and facts is denied. Instead all reality is viewed through the prism of predetermined truth predicated on a simple, linear subject-object totality (Goulet, 1978). Freire (1983) radically unmasks this falsity:

It is essential not to confuse modernisation with development....A society which is merely modernized without developing will continue to depend on the outside country. In order to determine whether or not a society is developing, one must go beyond criteria based on indices per capita income.... The basic elementary criterion is whether or not the society is a 'being for itself'. (p.160).

Tragically, the widening gaps between and within North/South countries flow from the fact that power elites "adamantly refuse to alter the rules of the game, except in so far they can domesticate change to their own advantage" (Goulet, 1978, p.106).

In Africa, where this polarization can still be reversed, the path towards achieving "material development and a good society" lies in the human person as point of departure and return in the development process:

by which powerless people everywhere are freed from all forms of dependency - social, cultural, economic and political - so that they can create a personal sense of history for themselves and thereby express their full potential as human beings. (Castel, 1971, p.xv).

In his political philosophy, Nyerere goes a step further:

Man can only liberate himself. He cannot be liberated or developed by another. For Man makes himself. It is his ability to act deliberately, for a self-determined purpose, which distinguishes him from the animals. The expansion of his own consciousness, and therefore of his power over himself, his environment, and his society, must therefore ultimately be what we mean by development. So development is for Man, by Man and of Man. (1976, p.10).

In the application of communication inputs for development, the vertical model is enriched with a horizontal dimension.

The start point becomes the local community which discusses problems and possible solutions. Beyond the political polemics and quantitative economic concepts, the quarrel about Tradition and Modernity becomes a misplaced priority in so far as the fallacy of "catching-up" has often meant bearing transferred burdens with negative impact on quality of life levels. More appropriately, the challenge is, in Tehranian's words:

To disentangle social and economic progress from the structures of domination and dependency and the political neurosis which they tend to generate. In other words, the humanization of the processes of modernisation calls for those measures of social justice, political participation and cultural authentication (i.e. continuity plus change) which are the sine-qua-non of free and unfettered communication. (1980, p.96).

In other words, the emerging countries should strive towards achieving a "modernity of tradition" in which material progress can relate to a corresponding growth in wisdom.

A major catalyst and outcome of a balanced national development effort is the expansion of and accessibility to cultural and value systems by a large segment of the population.

Culture has to do with a people's history, that is to say with their heritage, that culture is the sum total of a people's way of life and it grows as people advance through

history (Ayuk, 1979). Our view of culture is pluralistic. As Pasquali has noted: "Acculturation is not a negative phenomenon in itself. Human progress rests, for the greater part, on the process of transference, fusion and uninterrupted cultural heritage" (1978, p.67). Therefore, culture and group traditions are not something to bottle up or preserve in a glass case.

Our objective in this study will be to attempt an understanding of how culture impacts on the media and vice versa. On one level, our concern is to heed the prudent warning that the effect of global mass media "may, like powdered milk product, bring instant homogenization to all that it touches but is unlikely to convey instant enlightenment" (Matson, 1976).

On the other level, to achieve cultural unity the new nations must address themselves to the uneasy task of "indigenizing what is foreign, idealizing what is indigenous, nationalizing what is sectional and emphasizing what is African" (Mazrui, 1972, p.278). In countries like Zambia, the problem is compounded by the fact that the majority of the rural population is cut off from the light of useful modern knowledge whilst the educated and ruling classes are cut off from the culture of their people. Furthermore, we should stress that it is a serious error to portray high consumption and atomization of society as, absolutely

desirable and to berate their opposites as unmitigated "underdevelopment". Historical evidence has not so far disproved the notion in Natural Law that progress or growth in one area usually entails regression or entropy in related or some other domain.

Ironically, Max Weber had an ambivalent attitude towards Western society in general. No modernization theorist himself, he nevertheless loathed the tragic consequences of Western development patterns:

For the last stage of this cultural development, it might well be truly said: specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart, this nullity imagines that it has attained a level of civilization never before achieved. (1930, p.182).

In conclusion, we have stated in this chapter that there are several "field-forces" that impact the development process. To put it simply, development comes through conflict.

And perhaps less explicitly, we have noted that the liberal bourgeois theory overemphasized the internal factors to explain away the causes of "backwardness", while the Marxian theorists provided us with valuable insights into the international and historical dimensions of the problem. However, our approach is predicated on the premise that - in spite of the encroachments of world-wide capitalist practices - it is possible to ally deeply rooted human concerns in traditional

societies to the more positive elements from both poles of the East/West ideological continuum.

Similarly, we are no Luddites and have welcomed the infusion of alien technology to the extent only that it can relate to local customs in order to produce both qualitative and material advances whilst protecting or enhancing the ecology at the same time.

We have recognized education, broadly conceived, as the nexus of national development. In a similar vein, no nation can in this day and age be an island. But openness to other cultural influences should not lead to people being "blown off their feet" by any.

In the final analysis, we have expressed hope if not faith that the new national states can, to use Sylvia Moore's words, enter modernity while remaining essentially themselves. The only precondition would then seem to be that development will be whatever "conscious men and women" will make of it.

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CHAPTER II

LITERACY, RURAL PRESS AND DEVELOPMENT

1. Literacy, Past and Present

"There is no such thing as absolute ignorance or absolute wisdom" would be a simple truth in a world free from ideological polarizations. But in our contemporary technocratic world, the literacy-information dyad is perceived and internalized as "everything that passes for knowledge in society." (Berger and Luckmann, 1971, p.26).

Our preoccupation throughout this chapter will be to advance the principle that this "immediacy of knowledge"* is not to be found in the minutiae of traditional (i.e. Western) pedagogy only. We argue that knowledge also draws its strength from a wider perception of forces and problems which should motivate people within that environment to direct and assume their own development.

*Means relating an event as and when it occurs, at the same time bringing out its significance. It also means imparting living knowledge whereby he who learns is plunged into a world in process. The conventional school with its rigid curricula and gradation system cannot adequately fulfill this task.

In this study, we shall call this endeavour "formal" when it follows the schematic framework of Western education and "non-formal" when we refer to the transmission of a variety of skills - which often reflected highly complex and elaborate patterns - in the context of African cultural traditions.

For our purpose therefore, literacy will encompass three different but inter-connected concepts: a) literacy as acquisition of skills, values and knowledge in oral societies; b) literacy as an added ability of a person's communicative power, usually geared towards the production of more wealth and better living standards; c) literacy with content designed to mould consciousness against oppressive systems, technological determinisms and external domination. The essential point we are making is that educators should beware not to separate the reading of text from reading the context, in the sense of "lifting the veil" from educatees' horizons.

Without wanting to romanticize the African past, there is now ample evidence to suggest that "traditional" education did afford an opportunity from the cradle to the grave to "read" from the wide and great book of Nature and learn to live in harmony with it. In Indire's lapidary expression, "education was life and life was education" (1974, p.35).

A strong case can then be made that even though the formal

system of education equips people with cognitive skills, through a process of mechanistic literacy, it is misleading to equate illiteracy with lack of intelligence, wisdom or scientific curiosity. Obversely, a critical observation would validate the view that those highly specialized men and women often display a narrow vision of the world and a lack of some human qualities required by society. In this vein, Havelock's point is well taken: "It is a kind of cultural arrogance which presumes to identify human intelligence with literacy" (1981, p.2).

Citing the works of several scholars such as A. Lorenzetto, H.J. Graff and H.S. Bhola, Laini (1985) focuses the debate raging around the "literacy myth" and concludes that it is not possible, presently, to arrive at a universally acceptable definition of literacy and its antithesis, illiteracy. The given notions so far rather tend - perhaps because they have little else to offer - to limit all that is involved in the knowledge process, which really should be seen as a means to an end and not an end in itself.

Certainly Harold Innis predated the current outpouring of research which makes the proposition that written language tends to mystify and fragment knowledge if "some kind of partnership with oralism" is not accepted.*

*See also the stimulating work of Walter J. Ong.

The "African genius" precisely lies prostrate today because the twin carriers of the Faith and the Flag made the absurd and self-serving decision that the African mind was tabula rasa and much worse. (Morel, 1920). Fated to suffer the "glad tidings" of an alien socio-economic system, the "native" who could not "read, write and count for a useful purpose" was deemed to be backward and ignorant. To become fully human, the "heathen" had to accept passively what he/she was taught as rational, real and on occasion divinely inspired. Thus, the overwhelming myth of the written word, detached from the concrete reality and spirituality of the learner, was gradually and psychologically internalized in the form of master-servant relationships, elite-mass dependency syndromes. The word became a symbol and a tool of domination and alienation (Memmi, 1965; Fanon, 1967).

And yet training in African traditional societies was functionally versatile, a symbiosis as it were between reflective action and socialization. The transmission of knowledge, skills and values had an overriding purpose: to let an individual assume a constructive and honorable role in society.

To this end, legends, fables, proverbs and riddles around the evening fire impressed upon youth and adults alike the customs and traditions of the clan and the tribe. Education and professional training, ranging from productive skills such as crop cultivation and animal husbandry to military prowess

were the responsibility of all elders under the extended kinship system of reciprocal rights and obligations.

This formation, at times culminating in a rite de passage, aimed at inculcating good character, emotional balance, sexual morality, strict adherence to taboos and respect for old age. Although certain crafts such as weaving, ironworking, healing, divination, art and state drummer were often hereditary, the transfer of the cultural heritage down the generations and intellectual development were all part of a holistic experience secured through oral experts, observation and practice. These were not however meant to foster intellectual independence or individual material fulfillment. (Davidson, 1969; Mazrui and Wagaw, 1981; Kwamena-Poh, 1975; Richards, 1956; Simiyu, 1973; Crehan, 1985).

It is not our wish to dignify illiteracy in today's complex and shifting world. But we can affirm, not too unfairly, that the written word also leaves itself wide open to risks of manipulation, distortion and selective interpretation to fit the dominant ideologies.

The oral tradition expurgates and "re-writes" reality through group activities in which everyone shares with the performer the experiences of old and the satisfaction of repeating treasured idioms.

Such a culture, confronted by the literate invader, "is a

frail plant which is quickly deprived of nourishment and dies" (Havelock, 1981, p.24). The technologized word is indeed incapable to completely record it.*

It should not come as a surprise therefore that the rubric of "functional" literacy gained widespread currency in the 1960's in efforts to transcend the previous narrow economic objectives of the education process.

The UNESCO Review (1976) of the Five Year Experimental World Literacy Programme (EWLP) acknowledged that the creation of rural education centres will not per se increase productivity nor the number of those who retain literacy throughout their lives.

The concept of functionality then came to mean:

not only economic and productivist dimensions (which played too important a role in the operational plans and experimental projects) but also political, social and cultural dimensions. (Bataille, 1976, p.40).

It is our hope that literacy, or the alphabet bequeathed by the Greeks, should not lead to new forms of escape from reality but rather be "a path to treasures of art and wisdom" and a

*Gail G. Valaskakis has assessed the adverse effects of Westernization and Christianity on the Inuit people in her essay: "The Other Side of Empire - Contact and Communication in Southern Baffin Island," (ed) W.H. Melody, 1981.

way of promoting a better understanding of human life and destiny. To be effective and lasting, literacy must be sustained by:

an infrastructure that not only provides literates with abundant reading matter but also maintains their taste for learning and broadening their horizons: information media, stable and mobile libraries, means of producing and disseminating the written work, small museums, cultural clubs, etc. (UNESCO, 1976, p.192).

The right to master the three R's in today's world is unquestionably an individual and collective challenge. But we must insist that "literacy is not a prerequisite for development." It is, as Bhola has said, "a concomitant requisite". One without the other may be akin to "limping on one leg." (1985, p.4).

2. Education and Rural Development

We have stated elsewhere that the education component is crucial for an orderly democratic and balanced development process. We have suggested that for education to be "organic" and effective and signal a truly new beginning, researchers must in earnest help the political heads remedy the glaring deficiencies and distortions in the inherited or deformed educational systems which have only served to aggravate problems by continuing to socialize the populations with inappropriate attitudes.

This assertion could be supported by a good deal of literature and for our purposes by the findings of a 1974 World Bank Report which stated:

Education systems have been irrelevant to the needs of developing countries...because education policies were often keeping company with overall development strategies which were themselves irrelevant to the societies and conditions of developing countries. (See Chifwambwa, 1985, p.29).

Whether the World Bank, a pillar among many of American Foreign Policy, has since then matched its word with action is very much open to debate and beyond the requirements of this study. But first a brief historical, albeit incomplete overview.

In the early days of colonialism at the turn of the century through the 1930's, education in most of Africa was largely a result of private and mainly mission-backed efforts. Gann notes:

As the demand for clerks grew, Africans would trek over large distances to learn how to read and write and education became an effective means of attracting potential converts....The missionaries also found that often the African came to prize education as an end in itself, whilst to the missionary it was only a means to a fuller Christian life (1958, pp.33, 311).

Following Reports of the Phelps-Stokes Commissions in 1925, a Government Memorandum on Educational Policy in British Tropical Africa sought to allocate to the school a dual function: it was to operate as a key mediation towards social change and serve

as the preserver of "acceptable" and "beneficial" aspects of traditional society. This philosophy of "adaptation" by and large failed to take hold due to various pressures and limited resources. The French, Belgians and Portuguese by contrast had an approach of "assimilation" of the few "évolués" that filtered through their metropolis-patterned school system. After the sobering effects of World War II, the concept of "fundamental education", so eagerly embraced by UNESCO, aimed at bridging the gap between the emerging élites and the masses by raising the quality of rural life through mass literacy campaigns. This too failed for a number of reasons such as lack of reading materials, deficient methodology imparting a "vener of literacy" from which people soon lapse and lack of worthwhile motivation (e.g. economic reward). And so schools more and more came to serve a purpose external to their own communities. (Thompson, 1968; Makulu, 1971). The difficulty to find an equilibrium formula that meets the needs of nearly all strata of populations and satisfies national objectives has continued to dog overwhelmed African governments.

Limited resources and uncoordinated planning continue to deprive the honey of "formal education for all" and the people's struggle remains thwarted. (Onwuka, 1973).

Among the foreign aid agencies, the technical-functional theory of education - that is the correlation between economic growth (the perennial per capita GNP) and the level of education

(literacy levels) became highly popular with the onset of modernization prescriptions by economic and communication pundits.

In short, these theories were but a very short step to demonstrating that "a developed education is at least a precondition, and maybe a cause of economic growth". Any wonder that Blaug (1966) and others have contended that "the map of illiteracy and the map of world poverty" are congruent!

Anyway, the desired outcome of this seemingly innocuous approach is to mould the recipient developing countries' compatibility with the tenets of "free-market" capitalism. Philip Coombs has referred to such education as "the fourth dimension of foreign policy" (Dale, 1982, pp.409-11; Fisher, 1982).

Evidence from Africa indicates that education has expanded tremendously in the last 20 years or so (Zuberi, 1982) but national economic growth has not. There is growing unemployment and underemployment (Blaug, 1973; Katona, 1982) and still less democracy.

On the other hand, there is no clear causal connection - at least in so far as England is concerned - between expansion of formal education and the dawn of the Industrial Revolution. The corrolary to this historical fact is that although education may be necessary to the development of a technological

culture, it may not be a sufficient or constant condition for development.

Dependency theorists argue that education as presently structured in many African countries serves the purposes of the local élite, whose interests are allied to those of the rapacious core.

Revolutionaries (a vanishing species!) believe it is possible to establish a system of national education that would assert the paramountcy of local needs and interests against neo-colonialists manoeuvres (implicit in aid and cultural programmes) and overt international imperialism. (Walters, 1981).

Nyerere has expressed his views with great clarity:

It (education) must encourage the development of a proud, independent, and free citizenry which relies upon itself for its own development and which knows the advantages and the problems of cooperation. It must ensure that the educated know themselves to be an integral part of the nation and recognize the responsibility to give greater service....Let our students be educated to be members and servants of the kind of just and egalitarian future to which this country aspires (1967, pp.25-26).

Significantly, there is a school of thought which believes that school systems that are not transformed by "national revolutions" perpetuate the class structures of the economy and society. Education thus serves to reinforce dependency and is not a force for "breaking-out" (Freire, 1981; Cardenal and Miller, 1981; Bowers, 1983).

Zambia's attempt at reform fits this structural theory well and is quite illuminating.

After independence, Zambia had embarked on an ambitious extension programme of its primary and secondary school network. Contrary to its humanist-socialist ideology, the school increasingly became the only avenue for success for a few "lucky" urban students. Due to rapid population growth, deteriorating economic conditions, the educational budget eventually sought to merely strain itself along to keep abreast of numbers gone amok. In absolute terms, it can be said that the number of school-age illiterates has steadily increased.

To remedy an alarming situation, a 1976 Draft Statement on Educational Reform* dubbed "Education for Development" advocated a combination of manual work and study in schools together with a "dramatic change in direction and content" that would also blend the educational needs of adult persons in both urban and rural areas.

Surprisingly but predictably, the Government endorsed, after a nation-wide debate, a "Final Document" in 1977 which "resoundingly rejected" innovations designed to equalize opportunity, to give schooling right to all, to make students and school leavers committed productive members of society.

*Ministry of Education, Rep. of Zambia.

Dan O'Brien has given four reasons for this remarkable about-turn as: a) sectoral interests: b) ideological (Humanism versus doctrinaire Socialism); c) practical (mobilization difficulties and d) economic (no matching resources). He concludes that "the final plan represents the interests of the emerging middle-class and those who had an interest in retaining the status-quo" (1982, p.229) and that included high echelon apparatchik members.

Like Zambia, many desperately poor countries are thus stuck in the ironic position of craving for imported education but unable to control the relevance of it and thereby minimize its side effects such as inflated unemployment, cultural brainwashing and the brain drain of badly needed professionals.

Perhaps it is appropriate at this juncture to advance the contention that schooling may not be irrelevant to the goals of greater economic and social equality but at most it is one of the many ingredients. In similar vein, there is reasonable evidence to support the view that cross-cultural literacy-information as a unique skill of communicating new techniques in agriculture, in health or home practices, is a powerful, durable and unobtrusive force if carefully integrated in the overall development effort. (Mirie, 1980; Kerr, 1981).

We must caution however that there is no standardized flight to the stars. Areas differ widely even within the same border confines. Therefore there can be no single formula for

the types of education needed to promote rural development. Research and theory testing are part of an ongoing process. But, as Coombs and Ahmed have stressed:

the architects and managers of educational programs - particularly work-oriented programs - must anticipate and respond to new skill demands and knowledge requirements and prepare both young people and adults to meet them. It is here that the great flexibility and adaptability of non-formal education become so important. (1974, p.15).

At this point, we should reconceptualize, as we must, the often slippery term of non-formal education. It is, we suggest, when a situation arises whereby persons with no position to reach or benefit from the formal school system establish a horizontal working rapport with educators and media specialists and jointly plan a low-cost learning programme which focuses on their personal and material development; fosters creativity, that is, alternate non-dependent forms of consciousness; and stimulates genuine democratic participation for its success in contrast to rigid centralized control. (Qamar, 1979).

In a larger world context, at the risk of belabouring the obvious but to avoid being buried in excessive delusions of past grandeur, we give credit to Bhola's (1981) assertion that scientific progress is illusory without literacy and the print methods to disseminate it. Indeed an orderly social organization that would underpin a caring State cannot emerge without an innovation and production-prone education.

3. Freire's Dialogue

Paulo Freire's dialogue ethic is firmly grounded in the historical and concrete reality of his native Brazil's brutal colonial neo-colonial experiences.

Colonization is a strongly predatory and dehumanizing commercial enterprise, he reflects in Education for Critical Consciousness (1973).

On the other hand, education as "a cultural action for freedom" must be conceived as a dialogue between the adult learner and the literacy educator. More than that, to be an act of knowing, the adult literacy process "must engage the learners in constant problematizing of their existential situations" (1970, p.18).

Freire's educational theory and methodology is thus elevated to the practice of liberty because its objective is to free the educator and educatee from the "twin thralldom of silence and monologue." For Freire, "only dialogue truly communicates" (1973, p.45). Thus, he denounces the "present-day sorcerers", the stewards of the "culture of silence", the result of structural relations between the dominated and dominators. Simultaneously, he announces that education is "an act of love and thus an act of courage It cannot fear the analysis of reality or avoid creative discussion" (1973, p.38), but not before warning us against a self-indulgent solipsistic idealism.

The unifying thread in Freire's message which we merely try to highlight here, is student "conscientizacao". A critical consciousness whose liberating effects are constituted in the dialectic of man's objectivation of and transforming action upon the world. Freire cautions that this approach is not prescriptive but must grow out of the rationale and essential ingredients of specific historical conditions and the challenges of the environment.

In order to "dynamize, to master and to humanize reality", people must make their own choice by intervention in and integration with their own context. The "integrated" person is as Subject in contrast to the "adaptive" person who is an object. Adaptation, according to Freire, is "at most a weak form of self-defense". (1973, p.4).

The awakening of critical awareness appears when dialogical educational programmes "concerned with social and political responsibility" are conducted in the adult's own language and not in the language of an alien culture and revolve around daily experiences and familiar symbols.

Acquiring literacy does not involve memorizing sentences, words or syllables - lifeless objects unconnected to an existential universe - but rather an attitude of creation and recreation, a self-transformation producing a stance of intervention in one's context. (1973, p.48).

Hence Freire's mistrust of primers which cast the illiterate in

the role of the object rather than the Subject. Instead his methodology uses "generative words", those whose syllabic elements offer, through recombination, the creation of new words. He marvels that this phase of research led him to discover "the often unsuspected exuberance and beauty in the people's language" (1973, p.49).

To the point, Freire argues that the average rural worker is not an empty vessel into which facts can be poured, a "bank" for receiving and storing "deposits", but a knowing being. The task of the educator therefore is to mobilize and organize people to express their needs, pinpoint problems and formulate solutions. This pedagogy clearly includes a political dimension which requires informing the people about problems relating to the nation's destiny "rather than pacifying them or sloganizing."

Indeed Freire affirms that "learning to read and write is a political as well as an intellectual act for adults." At a deeper level, education becomes an act of subversion against omnipresent oppression. In this light, the problem of defining one's own cultural identity "without naively rejecting the contribution of other cultures" becomes a liberation process. (1981, p.29).

At this juncture we may suggest that Freire's merit lies in the fact that he gives pride of place to the dynamism and recreative role of traditional cultures and folk media in the

literacy training process and widens just as he strengthens the practice of functionality in the emerging countries.

Participative education thus moves away from the mark of a persuasive art - an often more insidious form of propaganda - into an ability to dialogue and learn from each other.

However, in spite of the "predominantly critical, loving, humble and communicative" radicalization he advocated, Freire's ideas went far enough to trouble the nation's "usurpers of power" for they flowed from a mind that could not abide the status quo, not even its own. The April 1, 1964 military coup resulted in his exile. Enshrined in Cultural Action for Freedom and Pedagogy of the Oppressed in the early 1970's, these revolutionary ideas have created a ripple effect among the marginalized classes and peoples of the world finally enabled to apprehend the enormity of their oppression resulting in increased capacity for self determination.

For instance, in his Letters to Guinea Bissau, his study on Sao Tome and Principe and Extension or Communication? essay, Freire stresses the need to be receptive to the "empirical techniques of the peasants", which means essentially their wisdom as tillers of the land for generations.

Consequently, he insists that most methodological failings can be traced back to ideological errors. That is when

peasants are "reified" by empty verbalism or by technocratic activism both of which are enemies of true praxis, a meld of reflective action and critical theorizing. Rural extension as an expedient way for "domestication" fails as communication because it "violates the dialectic of reciprocity".

From the perspective of "aid", Freire sees behind the practice of rural extension services an "implicit ideology of paternalism, social control and dependency", unless those who have the resources and some specialized knowledge are committed to equality and are willing to learn, together with the peasants, "how to apply their common partial knowledge to the totality of the problematized rural situation" (1973, p.xi).

Sadly, it is a truism to state that the imposed communication/education projects in Africa have done little to combat the many unfortunate side effects of what we may term a "hybrid development", such as the drift into towns and the constant impoverishment of rural life. The urgent imperative of the Less Equipped Countries, now the "object" world par excellence, is to resist "prefabricated solutions" and set up instead communication systems through which the communities can explore the problems of the village and the farm and thereafter move to improve conditions in ways that do not contradict fundamentally their sense of being in the world.

Underlying this revolutionary stimulus must be the rise of an authentic people's power which will become a counter-

veiling force against the bureaucracy which always threatens to "dominate the people in the very name of their freedom."

Secondly, such a movement emerging as it does from an actively participating democratization struggle will ab initio overcome hopelessness and is antagonistic to apathy and fatalism which characterize those left behind "while the rest of the world moves forward" (Berrigan, 1981).

Thirdly, embedded in vitality and the rejection of "inert ideas", it will resist "massification" whereby thinking becomes standardized and acting flows from the daily diet of "big media" prescriptions.

Nyerere's own views bear witness to Freire's positive stance:

Its purpose (education) is the liberation of Man from the restraints and limitations of ignorance and dependency. To increase men's physical and mental freedom, their control over themselves, their own lives, and the environment in which they live. The ideas imparted by education, should therefore be liberating ideas; the skills acquired by education should be liberating skills. Nothing else can properly be called education. (1976, p.10).

This model cannot obviously yield short-term results. It is a lengthy process and no panacea for the many and varied problems that afflict developing countries.

Critics have pointed out that there is still not enough evidence that this approach will be in any way more successful than the "tried and tested" methods of centralized planning.

Gleeson (1973) and others who do not "have the Third World inside them" have voiced skepticism about Freire's belief that educational processes are crucial in developing a revolutionary consciousness among the masses. They have further questioned the extent to which knowledge can be anything other than ideological and how sure can Freire be that conscientized revolutionaries will not become oppressors themselves. These arguments are a recipe for inaction.

To be sure, Freire does not appear to minimize nor simplify the complexities of the problems involved. On the contrary, he has strenuously stressed the fact that one "cannot profile abstractively out from history and from culture and from concrete reality" (Costigan, 1983, p.34). As his theory evolves, Freire constantly struggles against the twin dangers of mechanistic objectivism and unrealistic idealism.

It is his essential humanism, his faith in Man as an historical being which transcends the unavoidable Utopian character of his pedagogy as it seeks out and attempts to come to terms with the inherent dualism of the human condition. Also, we see little ground to dismiss as naive his contention that the exploration and "problem-posing" thesis against the technocrat's

"problem-solving" stance is a more humanizing way towards understanding and undermining conditions of oppression. This kind of experience and historic commitment implies a transforming action and not a fraud.

On the other hand, there are countless and painful monuments of failure that have robbed the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America of their dignity and freedom. Massive development projects which have only benefitted a few; failed social programmes inspite of vast amounts expended on them; aborted "green revolutions" because they advanced the financial interests of the foreign capitalists and their local acolytes.

When Freire proclaims on behalf of the oppressed:

The Third World is beginning to understand that the much publicised need for development cannot be realized under the continuing conditions of silence or of an illusory voice (1970, p.4).

the Western World's acts of hubris are being unmasked and challenged.

To sum up, we have recognized in the preceding pages that literacy is a life-long process. That for the adult learner, the magic moment when there happens a cross-over into the post-literacy phase may be easy to pinpoint but difficult to assess. Such a state is perhaps attained when the communication effects gap is steadily narrowed in relation to those materials and significations the neo-literate is able to act upon in order to

keep up, use and develop the knowledge acquired and abilities generated.

It is a central thread in this study that communications media in general and the rural press in particular can be an effective operational arm of a participative approach to development.

As Bowers has said:

Our greatest task will be to reverse and diversify the flow of communication so that the media can be understood and used by non-literates and new literates as channels for expression as well as reception (1983, p.4).

On a continent where books are still few, mostly foreign in origin and too expensive, the rural newspaper may help to fill the gap and stem regression into illiteracy.

To this analysis we now turn.

4. The Rural Press in Africa

As we already have had occasion to note, the heaviest legacy of colonialism before the court of history has precisely been the enormous rates of illiteracy to be found in Africa, country after country.

Unshackled from colonial bondage, these countries pinned their faith in a revolution of rising hopes through mass literacy as the following account attests:

Kibaru...Kibaru! The cry is taken up by several voices from among the group of villagers standing in the gathering dusk. There is a concerted rush towards the stall in the market place in Kita, a small township some hundred and twenty miles from Bamako, capital of Mali a West African country. But the scene might have been the same at any of the literacy centres scattered throughout the country, for "Kibaru" in Bambara - the most widely spoken of national languages - means "The News". Soon there are small groups listening to someone reading the latest information from the small newspapers. In no time they are in deep discussion on new suggestions for the improvement of agricultural techniques contained in one of the articles. Other groups are vigorously debating themes on their health and life conditions in general. (UNESCO, 1974, p.1).

In point of fact, the term "rural press" in Africa is akin to a neologism which underscores the fact that: a) up until the appearance of "rural" newspapers and magazines, the African Urban press was never intended to reach the isolated rural folks, whose majority was illiterate; b) the movement for rural

newspapers originated from various city-based ministries in accordance with such criteria as: rural information (ministry of Information), functional literacy or continuing education (ministry of Education), rural development (ministry of Agriculture, Lands, etc.), promotion and development of the national heritage, languages, etc. (ministry of Culture, Tourism, National Guidance).

Thus it can be said, at least in spirit if not in letter, that African leaders have shied away from treating their illiterates as "dumb cattle serving the needs of the élite classes and unable to contribute to their history and heritage" (Bhola, 1981, p.15). Rather, we think, they have recognized the useful and important role information can play especially in those social projects where the need to catalyze development efforts is greatest and actual participation of the community is weakest because of illiteracy.

However the irony of the situation has been too often that the languages spoken in everyday life by the major strata of the population are seldom, if ever, used in education, administration and economic life.

Indeed, as Dumont has correctly remarked:

a dichotomy is created between people taught in schools in an official language, who get salaried posts in the public or private sector, and adults who have taken literacy courses, who can read and write only in their native tongue (1979, p.150).

This truth, in Ouane's words, is illustrated by the country reader who in 1976 wanted to know whether the President of the Republic read "Kibaru".

Therefore, it is essential that community edicts, road signs, certain administrative documents be written in two or more languages with the dual aim of extending their use to state functionaries and encourage those who can learn the official language.

But we hasten to recognize that in the main this anomaly is the result of a complex geo-political situation. Very often ethnic and language entities straddle the colonial and artificial frontiers. This poses crucial challenges to the concepts of State and Nation. There is equally the difficulty of encoding traditional oral languages into written form and constructing simple messages that can be easily grasped. Finally, there is the problem of poor communication infrastructure (roads, airstrips, telecommunications) that gives any rural oriented print activity the stamp of a bad if not impossible dream.

Nevertheless, the stakes are high: mass participation in literacy efforts gave at least a minimum threshold of authority and legitimacy to dubious government systems and a sense of national identity to the populace. Coupled with this was the will at the time to slow down a "runaway equilibrium" between

pauperism in the rural and urban slum areas and the bureaucratic bourgeoisie that compelled governments to act. And it was precisely the fear of letting neo-literate adults relapse into illiteracy which prompted the first attempts at the rural press medium in such pioneer countries as Liberia and Niger where mimeographed news sheets were first used in the early 1960's in those areas undergoing a literacy revolution in order to provide easily available and accessible reading material.

This was but a stepping stone to the realization that the battle for rural transformation would not be fought unless the rural press tool sought also to establish a dialogue "between the technocrats who plan development programmes and the traditional societies whom they so often know little about" (Schreyer, 1976).

Here now follows a limited and, we believe, representative review of the rural press situation in Africa, the uses and benefits as well as some of the problems faced.

BENIN

There are four rural papers, Kparo, Eunbuke, Imole and Mi Se Nu, monthly with some irregularity and written in local languages. A National Commission of the Rural Press (representation from the Ministries of Information, Education and Agriculture) oversees their organization. They generally aim at literacy retention, further education, economic socio-political

mobilization. Established between 1972-74 with a circulation of 1,000 to 2,500 copies each.

BURUNDI

Published by the Ministry of Information, Ubumwe is a tabloid weekly in Kirundi with a circulation of 3,000 copies. It is sold at a modest price commensurate with rural buying power. It is offset printed by Imprimerie Nationale Burundaise (INABU).

CAMEROON

Official bilingualism (French and English), ethnical complexities and low literacy levels have constrained government's ability to launch rural newspapers. An evangelical Church Group, FEMEC, publishes a rural news letter in simple French, with articles and illustrations of a practical nature to help rural folks solve agricultural and a few daily problems.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Linga is a monthly multicopied newspaper with about 1,000 copies in Sengo language. Set up by the Ministry of Functional Literacy in 1976 with UNESCO/UNDP help. Civil servants have all publication responsibilities. Articles are development and literacy oriented.

CONGO

Sengo in French, begun in 1972 by the Department of

Permanent Education and Literacy. Although highly popular, the paper has faced constant printing and distribution bottlenecks. It is printed on offset with monthly circulation of 3,000 copies. Sold at nominal price. La Forêt was started in April 1975. Also in French, "the language of the decision makers." Objective: literacy, education and general rural development. Same 21 cm x 31 cm format with Sengo and similar organizational problems.

GHANA

A four-page paper Kpodoga in Ewé language founded in 1976; monthly circulation of 5,000 copies for sale; it is attached to the Institute of Adult Education (IAE). It aims at cultivating reading habits among new literates and improving agricultural production. It is run by a fully trained editor assisted by a local coordinator and school teachers; there is also evidence of substantial involvement by various personalities of the community, agricultural officers and general readers. The newspaper uses government printing facilities and does not break even from sales.

In 1975, Neff Smart established the Densu Times project to measure the effect of a school/community newspaper on reading skills of teenagers in Ghana villages. Prepared and edited by a team of six journalists from the Ghana Institute of Journalism, the weekly paper organizers formed a Readers' Club in various localities to "maintain and sustain the members'

interest in reading." It was then hoped that its salutary messages would percolate down to illiterate parents and "serve as a breakthrough for a country-wide literacy program."

IVORY COAST

Because of languages' multiplicity, French is the language for Education and Literacy. There are no rural newspapers but the State maintains two sophisticated publications with a rural bias. Terre et Progrès (1973) run by the Ministry of Agriculture and Agripomo (also started in 1973) by the African Institute for Economic and Social Development (INADES). These magazines are "well written, illustrated with photographs and professionally designed." Terre et Progrès appears every two months at 60,000 copies with each containing 32 pages. Agripomo is bi-monthly with 24 pages and a circulation of 5,000. Their impact is hard to gauge for lack of feedback. Although meant for rural education, they are more readily read by extension agricultural officers. Sales are good, mainly through subscriptions and adequately meet the costs of production.

KENYA

Bumanyati, was launched in 1976 as a fortnightly in Swahili and as a project geared towards finding solutions to communication problems in rural areas. A kind of a Mobile Communication Laboratory, its future is uncertain at the expiry of a joint agreement between the Kenyan and Dutch governments.

Kisomo (The act of Reading) made its apparition in 1975 as a four-page paper with a monthly circulation of 5,000 copies. Assistance was given by UNESCO. A unique feature is that it grew out of spontaneous demand by the community for a local paper. Its approach to problems of the rural areas is holistic encompassing issues such as youth development; women's role; effective grass-roots communication; teaching and promoting national languages; traditional lore; explaining government policies. It carries some advertisement and sales take place in shops, markets, schools and individual agents. The newspaper has good growth potential.

LIBERIA

The country has the distinct honour of being first in experimenting with a village press, initiated by a church mission for post-literacy purposes. The first issue of Gbarnga Gbele News appeared in April 1963. From a peak of 30 only 8 papers are in existence today. In spite of low literacy levels of 10 to 15 per cent and because of languages' diversity these papers use English. The aim is to stimulate the literacy program, improve communication between government agencies and rural populations. Staff members under the Liberian Information Service with no formal training ensure publication with basic equipment comprising a standard typewriter, a stapler, a crank mimeograph machine, a battery powered short-wave radio to gather news from a thirty-minute radio newscast from the capital

city.

The papers present good balance between information and entertainment relying heavily on traditional legends, folklore proverbs and other cultural manifestations. Long-term perspectives are dimmed due to organizational shortcomings, distribution problems, financial constraints and personnel mobility.

MALI

Under the aegis of the Malian Ministry of Information and with UNESCO help, Kibaru saw the light of day in March 1972 with a monthly circulation of 8,000 copies in Bambara language spoken by 60% of the population. Although produced only at the national level, its contents are from the local, regional and national scenes and include large segments of the mail-in responses and comments of readers who are direct beneficiaries of the literacy program. It appears monthly as an 8-page paper with a print run of 12,000 copies and is distributed throughout the literacy zones as requested by literacy classes in both rural and urban areas. Kibaru's success is also closely linked to its close association with the Malian Radio Rural Broadcasting Program. Besides international and national news, it covers education information for improving agriculture, health, family life, fishing and handicraft techniques with copious illustrations and cartoon strips.

Kibaru's Chief Editor comes from the Department of Functional Literacy but it relies on a network of communicators who are not professional reporters. They are chosen from among community development workers, primary school teachers, literacy educators who live the daily life of rural people. In this way an exchange of views between rural and urban dwellers increases civic consciousness and strengthens cultural identity. Production costs are partly offset through sales and subscriptions.

NIGER

Created in 1963, the Literacy and Continuing Education Department quickly rejected the process of a mere elementary school program for adults "in favour of a more dynamic outlook". The aim was to "sensitize a nucleus of adults" who would bring the rest of the village community to "become aware of the realities prevailing in their environment, to analyze them, tackle problems they faced, and to participate voluntarily in their own development." To this end, the nucleus of newly literate adults needed an injection of vitality, a chance to organize for concrete action. This is what led to the idea of "making the village the dynamo of the rural press" by proposing newspapers centered in a group of villages, or round a co-operative and asking new adult literates to write in their own style.

This resulted in the creation of Gangaa (Tam-Tam) in 1964,

as a mimeographed monthly in three languages: Hausa, Zarma and French. Edited and printed at the National Printing House on the offset system and with a 25 x 32 cm. format, the newspaper has a circulation of about 3,000 copies of four to twenty pages. Since 1974 three more local languages have been added and there has been a proliferation of multicopied sheets sponsored by various departments involved in rural work. A good step towards decentralization! All newspapers are sold and proceeds are handled by the respective local editorial committees.

RWANDA

With a density of 160 inhabitants per square kilometre, a literacy rate of 50% and one national language (Kinyarwanda), the country combines the most ideal conditions for the development of rural communication. The Rwanda Office of Information (ORINFOR) in conjunction with the UNDP, is preparing to develop a network of village communicators and information resources. Three rural oriented newspapers are in circulation.

Kinyamateka: originated in 1933 by the Catholic Church to enlighten the public about local culture, government policies, development projects, national and international events; to promote agriculture, youth and civic education. With a circulation of 9,500 copies, it appears to command considerable support in the rural areas even though, it has to contend with continuous financial and staffing problems.

Hobe: Another Catholic monthly paper founded in 1955 and catering for a special audience, that of school pupils and dropouts and those unable to find a place in the formal system. Contents range from articles on education, religion and history to answers to children's questions. Illustrated stories taken from Rwanda's rich folklore abound. The 8-page newspaper with a 19 x 28 cm. format is printed by the Catholic Printing Press and is sold by subscription. In spite of its high circulation figure at 57,000, it is dependent to a great extent on external funding and in that sense its future may be uncertain.

Imvaho: Launched by the Rwanda Information Office in 1962 to "demarginalize the rural dweller" through a dialogic exchange of information. An 8-12 page paper with a 22 x 31 cm. format and a 6,000 circulation figure. Published weekly by the National Printing Press. Development and cultural questions feature prominently.

SENEGAL

Kaddu (The Spoken Word); launched in 1971 by private efforts of intellectuals and others; aimed at the part of population not yet literate in French and which speaks Wolof (spoken by 78% of the population). Content varies greatly but includes social, cultural and political news; historical articles on country, Africa. Articles are written in simple language which can be understood by the general public. Lack of official logistic support hampers distribution.

Demb ak Tey (Yesterday and Today) is published by the Centre for the Study of Civilizations in Dakar. It appears in Wolof and Peul and contains about 60 pages. Its main task is to translate and study some elements of the cultural heritage - tales, proverbs, popular philosophy and make them widely available. Supported by the Ministry of Culture, its didactic function is apparent. Cartoon strips serve as visual supports for the various tales. An evaluation of its impact may enhance its model value for other countries.

TANZANIA

This socialist country has experimented with the most ambitious and largest rural newspaper project in East and Southern Africa. The Rural Press Project was mooted in 1974 under the UNDP-UNESCO's "Functional Literacy Curriculum, Programmes and Materials Development Project" and financed by NORAD (The Norwegian Aid Agency) in the sum of US \$375,000 for three years. It is intended to promote literacy through radio education, rural libraries and post-literacy workshops in an integrated rural communication effort. Equally, it placed emphasis on the production of a monthly newspaper Elimu Haina Mwisho (Education has no End) in Swahili. Circulation has grown from 25,000 to 100,000 and is concentrated in the districts of the lake regions. News in the four-page tabloid generally falls under the rubrics of farming, health, education and social services. An interpretative bias creeps into the presentation of national and

international news events. This is to assist readers become more effective and responsible citizens, aware of their rights and obligations. The paper is headed by a Chief Editor in Mwanza, with a staff of thirty and accountable to the Assistant Director of Adult Education within the Ministry of National Education. Training workshops provide the rudiments of journalism to field communicators/reporters who in reality may be teachers, heads of farm cooperatives or any person able to narrate incidents or events deemed relevant to the village or region. A system of feedback is maintained through the "Letters to the Editor" column, announcements of a personal nature (births, marriages, deaths, etc.); service articles, photographs and illustrations.

Distribution is assured by Party volunteers and through the educational infrastructure in spite of poor communications conditions. Initially the paper was distributed to literacy classes but is now sold at a token fee. Because of its socialist principles and the great financial poverty of the people, the government faces a pricing policy dilemma on which the future of the paper depends.

TOGO

Game Su in Ewe language came to light in 1972 followed by Tew Fema in the Kabye tongue on 1977.

are
These papers/under the editorial management of the Literacy

Section of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. They initially served as a means of retaining literacy in the aftermath of a vigorous campaign begun in 1969. The objectives were later widened to include economic, social and cultural development in the rural areas; create awareness of the existing conditions and the motivation to improve them. Printed by a privately owned firm on offset, distributed and sold at designated points, both papers continue to face financial difficulties, not only because of low circulation of 2,500 copies but also because of apathy among representatives on the interministerial committee responsible for the selection of news content. The other constraints are similar to those faced by this type of project throughout Africa, namely difficult physical distances, inadequate transportation and communication loops, lack of appropriate and self-owned printing presses; low subsidies, sales and advertising incomes; city editorial staff's indifference to rural realities. (Bourges, 1978; Barton, 1979; Hachten, 1971; Ansah, 1981; Smart, 1975; Ouane, 1982; Sine, 1975; Schreyer, 1976; AFROLIT, 1979 and 1981; UNESCO, 1974; Lawrence, 1965).*

*In light of the acute conditions of flux pertaining in the politico-economic sphere in Africa, some of this information may be dated. Therefore there is need for a constant up-date and in-depth research on rural newspapers' status in each country. That may be the only way to avoid situations whereby worthwhile efforts and goodwill are ultimately simply dissipated.

There is no denying the fact that the case studies presented above reveal the enormity of the task and the limited resources at hand to respond effectively to the challenges posed.

The lessons to be gleaned from this information are many but we can briefly outline what we perceive to be the most striking aspects:

- Due to uneven demographic patterns and historical experiences there can be no universal model of what a rural newspaper should be.

- We have here represented at least five different kinds of rural press: a) a subsidized village level non-governmental press in Liberia; b) a decentralized government press in Niger; c) a centralized but highly effective governmental press in Mali; d) a church-owned press in Rwanda, and e) a privately initiated press in Senegal.

- We have established the primary goals and multipurpose role of the rural press as a whole as an instrument for literacy retention; a catalyst for self-development and rural transformation; a unique and versatile medium in the recording and preservation of authentic traditions and folklore; a didactic tool in popularizing newly transcribed languages and enhancing the general development of national languages.

- The rural newspaper can help reverse and balance out the trend of news flow between the urban and rural environments. From this perspective print and electronic media can and should complement each other.

- To the extent that its pages are filled with information from, for and by the rural readers and not the literacy commissions, the rural newspaper in whatever shape or form offers tremendous opportunities for participative action in rural policy formulation. And when we say participation we mean more than the "window-dress attempt" to reach the grass-roots and certainly suggest the total exclusion of manipulation, a connotation often implicit under the cloak of righteous ideologies.

- The one major problem pertains to the lack of proficiency by the coordinating editorial staff. Rural journalism training, hitherto an adjunct to urban and elitist oriented reporting, requires a different track approach and above all a deeply rooted comprehension of the real rural life whose cultural mosaics shape the sum total and form the common denominator of the national cultural identity.

All in all, a process of study and evaluation of the on-going experiments remains an essential step to ensure long-term impact and viability of the projects.

At this stage of the continent's growth, our considered inclination is for a non-political, income generating but

government blessed system of rural community newspapers.
Conversely, to be successful and enduring, the new knowledge
these papers convey must mean a practical pay off for the
peasant.

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CHAPTER III

THE RURAL PRESS IN ZAMBIA: ROLE AND CONTROL

1. The Rural Newspapers: Genesis and Growth

It is just to recall that the first journal in a vernacular language made its appearance in April 1904 in Barotseland (now the Western Province of Zambia). Mafube a Bo-Rotse (The Dawn) of quarto size was printed by François Coillard at the Paris Evangelical Society Mission at Sefula on the first printing press ever installed in Northern Rhodesia. (Graham, 1964).

Missionary endeavours in this field over the years are certainly worthy of sustained research which holds the promise of fascinating perspectives. However, this study is not concerned with the journalistic activities of Political Parties, Churches and their agencies, and private enterprises in Zambia.

In UNESCO circles, Zambia has acquired the unique distinction in East, Central and Southern Africa of being the only country that can boast of a government sanctioned and funded network of six "rural" - officially known as provincial - papers meant to reach all four corners of the country. These are of tabloid type, offset printed with high quality photographic work and a good professional touch in lay-out and design. Each contains twelve to sixteen pages with a combined monthly circu-

lation of about 63,500 copies.

On our part, for reasons that have already been developed within this study's framework, we are inclined to show reticence in writing a post-scriptum for success or self-congratulations. Rather, we advance the view that the inception of rural newspapers by the colonial administration had much less than altruistic motives. In maintaining the status quo, the rural press ethos in modern Zambia continues to be embedded in the paradox of a propaganda-cum-development paradigm devoid of any real dialogue.

Indeed Zambia owes its leading role - much more in form than content and function - to colonial guile. In March 1936, the Northern Rhodesian Government through the Secretary of Native Affairs published the first "penny" newspaper Mutende (broadly meaning Peace but specifically Greetings) which had a monthly circulation of 5,000 copies. It later turned to be a fortnightly and in 1949 a weekly newspaper until its demise in 1952 due to "low advertisement revenue" and resulting high losses." Editorially, the newspaper had gradually sounded its death knell because of its unrelenting pro government bias contrary to emerging African nationalist aspirations.

Furthermore, in addition to simple English, the paper carried news in four widely spoken local languages: Bemba, Lozi,

Nyanja and Tonga.*

This arrangement too contributed to the paper's unpopularity from those other language groups that felt slighted and the small nucleus of educated Africans who, in the peculiar circumstances of colonial domination, considered the vernacular to be inferior to the white man's English newspapers.

Besides its propagandistic role, Mutende's objectives were to inform the African public about government regulations and (mal) practices; to influence the readers' world outlook to conform to the "mother" country's; to provide new literates with reading matter; to publicize improved agricultural methods, tips on hygiene, health, nutrition, etc. Oddly enough, the paper had no African reporter. It mainly relied on the readers' courier which was translated into English by four transcribers and edited for publication. (Mwaura, 1977; Kasoma, 1979).

For most of the war period, in concert with Radio and the Colonial Film Unit, the newspaper was extensively used to get across information and propaganda material about the course of the war "given the necessity for mobilizing the whole manpower of the Empire for war purposes." (Smyth, 1984, p. 351).

*Unlike the other three tongues, Nyanja does not relate to any particular tribal community. It is rather an offshoot medium borrowing in various ways from the idioms of Eastern Zambian Tribes, mainly the Chewa, Ngoni, Nsenga and Tumbuka. It was the lingua franca of the Colonial Police and Defence Forces.

As already noted, the newspaper relied for its local news on correspondents who wrote in a vein acceptable to colonial authority and strategy.

It was a delightful irony however, when more educated Africans such as Harry Nkumbula and David Yamba sought and succeeded in using Mutende to mount a challenge to colonial policies and falsehoods.

In a 1943 letter, Nkumbula argued that "Europeans, covetous of the wealth of Africa, had seized part of the continent and reduced its inhabitants to slavery." (Smyth, 1984, p.353). He suggested that this behaviour gave the impression "they were Gods whom Africans were expected to serve for ever."

Information Officer Franklin, without mentioning Nkumbula by name, refuted the argument thus:

The British had come to Africa at great cost and hardship to free Africans from slavery. Livingstone had given his life to help Africans and to stop the Arab slave trade. Europeans had not extracted wealth, they had brought wealth.

Admonishing "a Copperbelt school teacher" for not playing the role expected by Government from educated Africans, Franklin continued:

It is the role of the educated African to lead his less educated brethren. African schoolmasters and pastors must be careful in such matters. If they do not know what is true, they should learn it rather than go and twist the minds of their friends and misdirect them. (Smyth, 1984, p.353).

Nkumbula was unrepentant. Turning his attention to the colonizer's slogan "This War is Your War Too," he questioned why the Africans should continue to be discriminated against if they were fighting for the same cause. On the political front, he opposed the idea of amalgamating Northern with Southern Rhodesia calling it a plot designed to entrench African subjugation by a band of settlers alienating themselves from the Crown. And so did Yamba who challenged the Europeans with the fact that under their rule, Africans were "living in a state of servitude." (Smyth, 1984, p.356).

After initial opposition, procrastination and the Governor's intervention even, these letters by the two leading nationalists eventually got published in Mutende and the Bantu Mirror of Southern Rhodesia. But this was not before the Acting Chief Secretary for Native Affairs had sarcastically commented:

Africans have at the back of their minds that there should be freedom of speech and freedom of the Press and they think they have just as much right to express their ideas as we have.
(Smyth, *ibid.*)

Nevertheless, the essential point is that the emerging and articulate African opinion leaders had clearly managed to use the weapon of the conqueror to their own advantage. As Smyth has observed:

In effect the administration had opened up a dialogue with the African population.

The African voice was now being heard loud and clear in the political discourse of Northern Rhodesia. (1984, p.358).

Mutende was superceded by the African Eagle, under the management of African Newspapers Ltd., a private company based in Salisbury. In 1959, The Eagle dropped Lozi and Tonga prior to ceasing publication in 1962.

In 1957, the Federal Government owned and controlled Central African Broadcasting Station in Lusaka started a fortnightly national magazine in five languages (English, Bemba, Lozi, Nyanja and Tonga), The African Listener for background information to radio programs. The name changed to Nshila (the Way) in February 1958 until it ceased publication in September 1968 as a rural vehicle for "publicizing information and development projects."

It is noteworthy that Government decided on the introduction of District newsletters and the forerunners of Zambia's provincial papers between 1954 and 1962 at the height of African opposition to Federation, with the aim "to supplement the service in the rural areas, where distribution costs are high to commercial publishers". (Colonial Reports, 1960 & 1962; Rau, 1978).

Our search for a more coherent objective or a broadly defined communication policy with regard to the rural press has yielded no positive results.

Be that as it may a pattern was quickly established whereby

Lyashi (in English and Bemba) was from August 1953 to January 1966 to serve the Northern, Luapula, Copperbelt and parts of the Central Province and was being printed by the Lake Press in Abercorn (now Mbala). Nkhani za Kum'mawa (English and Nyanja) to serve the Eastern Province remained from September 1958 to January 1965 plagued by low sales. The South-Western Star which incorporated Intanda in Tonga and Zwelopili in Lozi was to serve the Southern Province and Barotseland and printed by the Livingstone Mail printing press. (Rau, 1978; Graham, 1964).

It is within this framework that the new government of independent Zambia inherited and largely maintained the rural press. Save for a few changes of names, no basic review of the whole philosophy, infrastructure and future development appears to have been initiated and carried through. The Government Public Relations wing, the Zambian Information Services, continue to be the sole appointed collector and disseminator of rural news. Provincial and District Information Officers relay the items to the Editors in Lusaka and Ndola for possible publication.

In January 1965 Nkhani was superceded by Tsopano; Liseli la Zambia (The Light of Zambia) replaced Zwelopili and the South-Western Star was dissolved in favour of Intanda (Stars) which originally included Lozi besides Tonga and English. Finally, in 1965, Ngoma News was introduced solely in English as the best way of serving the multilingual North Western Province.

In 1966, Imbila (broadly means Announcement) superceded

Lyashi (News) and Lukanga in English, Bemba and Lenje became the mouthpiece for the Central Province (GRZ Annual Reports 1965 & 1971).

This study's central concern does not get enhanced in any particular way by a detailed analysis of these papers' news content. Suffice it to say, as Hachten reminds us, that:

These papers, amply illustrated, and full of local government news as well as the activities and pronouncements of President Kaunda and other national leaders, were important if only because they reached the literate Zambians in rural areas who rarely saw the Times or Zambia Mail... (1971, p.229). (Emphasis added).

At this point, a brief digression to acquaint ourselves with a few agriculture-oriented national magazines may be in order.

Conceived as a prestige high gloss magazine, covering the country's progress in the social, cultural and political fields, Zambia made its apparition in 1965 under the auspices of the Zambia Information Services and was earmarked for distribution overseas through the Zambian Missions. It became 'Z' Magazine in June 1969 with a format change from 15 x 21 cm to 21 x 30 cm. With a circulation of 10,000 copies, it is sold on the streets and by subscription, and offers advertising space at "generous rates." Alluding to this publication and other vehicles of information, the Minister of Information and Postal Services, Mr. Lewis Changufu envisaged the Department's objectives as:

explaining Government Policy, actions and activities to the people, particularly to those in the rural areas, to foster a favourable and informed climate of opinion in the country, to interest the people in the villages and towns in the economic, cultural and social development of the country and to project a true and favourable image of Zambia abroad.

Fired by the backbenchers' shouts of "Hear, Hear", Minister Changufu continued:

There is need to keep all the population informed about what the policy objectives are and what is being done to meet them. The importance of the information effort, not in helping to strengthen the national unity, but also as a means of improving educational and farming standards, is already fully acknowledged by the Government. (Hansard, 1965 Verbatim Report, p.849).

This was a loaded statement, but once again we have found no reasonably ordered records to verify in a satisfactory manner the basis of the commitment and orientation proffered in this statement. More on this subject matter in the following section.

Farming in Zambia dubbed as "The Voice of Zambian Agriculture" appeared in October 1965. Published by the Department of Agriculture in the same ministry, it was aimed at the "progressive" commercial farmer to provide him with technical information. This quarterly publication later fell under the Ministry of Rural Development. The Zambian Commercial Farming was another quarterly begun in December 1965 for "the farmer who means business" and published by the Associated Reviews Ltd., a private concern.

It was later incorporated by Zambia Farmer appearing on a monthly basis.

Productive Farming: a monthly edition begun in March 1973 by the Commercial Farmers' Bureau for the benefit of the big league farming fraternity and at times used as a platform to challenge government policy or actions. All these publications were in the exclusive English medium and highly technical. Happily, the Ministry of Rural Development was able to wake up to the redeeming fact that the peasant farmer too was in need of guidance. A monthly magazine Progress started in January 1970 in English, Bemba, Lozi, Nyanja and Tonga. Sadly, Mytton observed about this publication that "its circulation was very low; although intended for peasant farmers, it was almost impossible for them to obtain (it)" (1983, p.75).

Finally, the Lusaka National Food and Nutrition Commission, an agency created in 1976 by an Act (No.41) of Parliament, exerted considerable efforts in its early years towards reinforcing agriculture, health and community development programs. Its Public Relations Unit, under the able direction of Mr. Andreas Fuglesang, produced teaching aids, information and nutrition material for teaching illiterates and newly taught literates in both English and several vernacular languages. The commendable activities appear to have considerably waned in recent years due to severe financial strains.

Reverting to the unique experiment set by Zambia in

managing rural news, we recapitulate a few salient features. Imbila has the largest print run of about 27,000 copies per issue. A Ministry Report (1970) suggests that Imbila "plays an important role" in that it "brings publicity to development projects, and covers such subjects as campaigns, visits" in its designated area. It lamented that the public was not satisfied as "coverage is inadequate" and concluded "increased circulation is required but due to lack of funds the print order could not be increased" (p.9).

Tsopano comes second with a circulation of 12,000 copies. The 1970 Report states that "the newspaper continued to keep people informed not only about events in the province but also about developments on both territorial and world level." (p.7).

Liseli-la-Zambia, distributed in the Western and Southern provinces commands a circulation of almost 9,000 copies whereas its close counterpart Intanda in Tonga for the Southern Province has close to 6,000 copies.

Lukanga in Lenje in the Central Province has a print run of 6,500. The smallest is Ngoma with a circulation of 3,000 copies. Initially published in English only, the newspaper now carries the Lunda, Luvale and Kaonde languages of the North-Western Province.

These newspapers are sold through subscriptions and off-the-shelf through agents, most of whom fail to remit sales money

regularly. Extra income is derived through classified advertising, always in English, from small business licence applicants.

It can be said that the practice of avoiding free distribution but at the same time encourage readership by keeping the sales price very low, has been a sound one.

But, caveat emptor! The glowing circulation figures are really difficult to gauge, even less the impact on audience at least in so far as a press mediated rural transformation is concerned. It is a widely known fact that Ministry Officials do turn a blind eye to the many bundles of newspapers from the printers that never quite leave the offices at both headquarters and provincial levels. Thus it is difficult to subscribe to the view that the experiment has been "remarkably successful".

This difficulty, in our view, partly arises out of excessive centralization and bureaucratic control. Indeed, save for Mbila, which is edited and printed in the Copperbelt town of Ndola (the 3rd largest), all the others are edited and printed in Lusaka at a government-owned facility, the Zambia Printing Company. The finished product is then airfreighted, railed or bused to provincial capitals for distribution as best as is possible.

Even though the mode of transport we have just mentioned falls under State control, it is obvious that the production and distribution processes are far too heavily subsidized. No

specific breakdowns of costs were given nor queried in successive estimates of expenditure tabled by the Ministry of Information in Parliament. But as Mwaura has noted, the essential point for the sponsor is that these papers "are used more as vehicles for government messages than as truly community newspapers in which members of the community find their identity, a market place of information, ideas and entertainment" (1977, p.7),

Nonetheless, it can be said, without throwing caution to the wind, that in the absence of a commercialized or truly grass-roots rural press, these serve a useful, if no other function: that of promoting a national identity image through a vertical, top-down link between the urbanised élites and the rural masses.

2. Practice and Ideology in Conflict?

Our analysis posits that the six vernacular newspapers which run features written and news collected by government civil servants, often with little journalistic training, have tended to marginalize the very people who are meant to be their *raison d'être*.

To be sure, these papers maintain a letter to the Editor column which is so bland that it makes no practical difference to the underlying premise that the rural folks have remained voiceless and powerless to shape and direct change. From a

communication perspective, we are witnessing a broader distribution of domination or what the semanticists would qualify as the use of a "wrong" map to the actual territory.

The reason for this appears to be that the need and importance to articulate a comprehensive policy or flexible strategy through a public debate has not been fully recognized.

With specific regard to the present or future orientation, the provincial newspapers seem to be merely drifting along under the push of some curiously invisible political diktat.

Against the background of official pronouncements to "develop from below" in accordance with the precepts of the nation's ideology of Humanism, it becomes even more difficult to pinpoint some overriding factor which may subsume the incongruity. (Faber, 1968).

In a country so appallingly lacking in media trained personnel, President Kaunda was certainly well meaning and realistic when he declared at the Opening of the Fourth Session of the First National Assembly:

During the last year, the ZIS progressively stepped up its efforts to get the Government's message to the last man in the village but the scarcity of skilled manpower is a difficulty and various training courses have been arranged to improve the situation. More District Information Officers are being trained.... (Hansard, No.10, 1967).

No reasonable person can take umbrage if we suggest that we see in this stance an emphasis - unavoidable perhaps at this stage - on elitist training, and if we detect the early "process of inner colonialism" between the urbanite and country dweller. Needless to say, we already sense the existence of two worlds in Zambia: the world of power where news is made and decisions taken to shape the other world, that of the ordinary, unlettered man and woman (Martin, 1972).

Our impressions are reinforced if we cast our eyes back in 1965 when Mr. Jethro Mutti, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Information and Postal Services made a startling statement in the National Assembly:

We have plans of expanding information services from what we have at present in the provincial level to district level. Not only that, our schemes are much more ambitious, we are in fact examining the prospects of regular news sheets circulated throughout our rural areas for information to our people there.

This confusing assertion clearly rested on no validly and scientifically assessed policy thrust. Mutti went on giving the one reason this could not be done. He singled out Tsopano which:

is not printed in the Eastern Province for the simple reason that we may not have people in the Eastern Province to buy expensive machinery for printing... (and) may not have very good communications for importing the equipment to print a newspaper. (Hansard, September 1965, p.1511).

On October 20, 1967, the President appointed a Committee of Inquiry:

to inquire into, and report on, the objectives, organisation, administration and effectiveness of all Government information and publicity media, and to recommend where necessary, possible methods of improving them.

(Government Gazette Notice,
No.1705).

With regard to Provincial Newspapers, the Siyomunji Report (after its Chairman) commented rather lamely that they were "serving a useful purpose in that the circulation has increased steadily since their inception."

The Committee quickly added however that "it would need a scientific enquiry into readership to determine the real effectiveness of these newspapers." From an economic and political angle, the Committee strongly felt that "long-term Government policy" should be of eventually "abolishing them and replacing them with a centrally produced magazine." It argued that:

the publication of provincial newspapers in fact tends to defeat Government's avowed policy of arousing national consciousness and patriotism in the people of Zambia, in that these newspapers mostly cater for the respective needs of provinces and they therefore have no national outlook; this tends to encourage parochialism which Government is determined to fight vigilantly.

(1968, pp.46-47).

In 1972, in his vote of thanks speech, a backbencher Mr. Rajah Kunda petulantly echoed the Committee's views as he picked on Ngoma and Lukanga:

These local papers, Sir, contain little more than local gossip and since they bear mainly provincial news are nothing but spearheads of provincialism. Since the provincial papers do not serve much useful purpose, they should be replaced by a mass medium with a national outlook and rural news readable by a man in the rural as well as urban areas....

(Hansard, 1972, pp.325-6).

If this intervention amounted to an impressive display of stilted rhetoric, the Cabinet caucus took no notice of it. In 1978, Unia Mwila, Minister of Information, Broadcasting and Tourism during a House debate issued a kind of ministerial statement but carefully sidestepped the core issue regarding the essence of Rural Newspapers in the country:

...ZIS officers deployed throughout the country actively cover all rural events and pass on the news to radio, TV and newspapers in order to facilitate quick communication of rural news.

(Hansard, 1978, p.4848).

The quagmire is unmistakable and lives on to this day. And yet at the other end of the political continuum the President has often declared:

I do not want the Government of Zambia to think of our people as if they were pawns in a game. I want them to participate fully in everything that we are planning

and doing. To be effective we must think in terms of the smallest unit in our social and political organisation - the village (Faber, 1968, p.25).

The President's faith in the power of common humanity and egalitarian principles has remained basically unshaken over the years. But in the field of community/rural/provincial newspapers, we have shown the irreducible validity of our argument that a truly participative process geared towards a careful nurturing of the seedling values present in the population has so far been passed up.

We can only mitigate this dichotomy between theory and praxis by conceding the point that Zambia's analysis and definition of its challenges has lacked the clarity, consistency and rigour that its early development dynamism required.

On October 19, 1982, speaking at the Commissioning of the Mass Media Complex in Lusaka which brought under one roof the ZIS, Zambia Broadcasting Services (ZBS) and the Zambia News Agency (ZANA) and was built by Japanese technological and financial assistance at the cost of 44 million Kwacha*, President Kaunda justified its forbidding cost thus:

the expenditure of this amount of money by the Party is a demonstration of the priority role journalism has to play in the

*Zambian Kwacha = 0.96 U.S. dollar.
Source: Africa Research Bulletin (Economic, Financial, Technical Series), Oct.15-Nov.14, 1982, p.6620.

construction of Humanism. We cannot build Humanism silently. We cannot undertake a revolutionary reconstruction of society through whispers Everyone of us has a right to speak and a right to be heard.... We want everybody to strive after their personal goals with the full knowledge of our collective goals as a nation.... Humanism is what we have chosen to unite us as a people, to unite us as a country, to unite us as a nation. To unite all our diverse endeavours.... The Complex ... is a cardinal instrument in this vital process of rebuilding our personal lives, and our national life along our chosen path of Humanism.... Through (it) we shall all participate in the joint effort to influence the thought, word and action of one another from one corner of Zambia to another....

Turning to the role of Journalism in Humanist Zambia, the President contended:

Journalism plays a central part in the processes of One-Party-Participatory Democracy under Humanism.... Those who practise it must do so as experts controlled and guided by the standards and vigours of their specialised profession. I want to see journalism develop as a free, competent and effective profession fully committed to the Revolutionary humanist transformation of the six million people of this country.

Having stressed at length the need for high standard through rigorous training, an awareness of Humanism and the fact that journalism does not operate in a vacuum "outside the population", Dr. Kaunda integrated this process to the central role of the Party on which falls:

the burden to provide training facilities for all aspects of journalism. The Party has at all times to offer good political leadership and advice to journalists....Today the Party and its Government have supervision over all these key areas of journalism in the nation. The way is now wide open for the Party to build journalism as a free art under Humanism. The Party will have to continue in its tradition of providing a free people's Press. A Press which is at all times alert, open, objective, free, frank and fearless. A Press which is mindful of the national interest at all times. A Press which is an ally of the people and not a stooge of factions and personalities.

He summed up with fluent veracity:

We must...work to make our journalism genuine and creditable to the people at all times and in all situations. Our journalism is not for social and political entertainment. It has a serious national task to perform.

(Times of Zambia, Oct. 21
and 22, 1982, p.4).

This was not the first time the President had, in Barton's words, "waved his big stick" at Zambia's journalists whilst dangling the carrot, diagnosed perceived illnesses and prescribed shock treatment.*

But perhaps indicative of the mood of disarray, a helpless sense of a lack of direction, the Party owned Times of

*In 1972, at the First National Mass Media Seminar, President Kaunda made three speeches on the role of the Press in twenty-four hours each lasting more than one hour long.

Zambia newspaper hailed, without any need to worry about analysis and reasoning, the declaratory statements as "the Magna Carta" of the Press in Zambia. (Times of Zambia, Nov. 10, 1982, p.1).*

Certainly, some elementary concepts in the speech could form a basis whence might spring a measured consensus that took into account the different views of the led. As indeed the Polis, to paraphrase Plato, needs "nobler lies" to secure belief.

In our view, the undercurrents of emotions and ambiguities that inevitably lead to an open political sesame, underscore the problematic realities of nation-building efforts in Africa, the frailties of the socio-political institutions in place and the often false and unreal choices facing the journalism profession in such a milieu.

Still, the challenge to the pen foot soldiers in young countries is, to use Hilary Ng'weno's expression and Kenya's foremost journalist, to actively attempt "to lay down the foundations upon which future freedoms will thrive." (Quoted in Mytton, 1983, p.59).

*The Times Newspapers (including the Sunday Times) were formerly privately owned by Lonrho for 18 years although control lay with the political leadership which appointed the Editor-in-Chief. They passed under total Party ownership on October 1, 1982.

In light of their uncritical, reactive and lyricist commitment, the difficulty for Zambian journalists may be that they have finally and absolutely interiorised the existential conditions of their impotence and the reciprocal and anticipatory Shakespearean postulate that "All the World's a stage."

3. The Literacy Effort in a Bind

"To make haste in literacy is simply to make waste." Thus spoke in prophetic fashion John Oxenham, a Literacy expert in the new Zambia. He correctly posited that once people became interested in reading and could lay their hands on something interesting to read, "then those with ideas to communicate have an audience which is willing, receptive, able to choose its own time to absorb what it wants." Rightly, he perceived literacy to be worthwhile only when it would "satisfy the needs of the person and at the same time open his mind to ideas of social and economic betterment" (Zambia Magazine, Feb., 1965, pp.8-13).

As we have already noted, Christian Missions at the turn of the century vied with each other in establishing schools primarily to train catechists, capable to teach the Scriptures, to read and write in the vernacular. Other enlightened missionaries, it is true, sought not only to make Africans good Christians but also "to provide them with training in practical skills such as bricklaying, carpentry, masonry, etc...(so that) they would return to their villages and develop African individual life" (Bond, 1976, pp.16-17).

In 1927, a more or less aloof Government passed an Ordinance requiring these schools to teach secular subjects. In point of fact, the schools admitted students of all ages since there were only a few children being released for education by parents "who saw little value in it." Indeed some parents believed they were doing the Missions a good turn and therefore saw little justice in having to pay school fees. The rationale was that the contribution these children made to the family subsistence economy through their labour had now been taken over by the missionaries.

The fact of adult students in lower and upper primary schools in Northern Rhodesia continued for some time after World War II. The practice, opposed by the colonial administration for tax reasons, in effect obscured the need to establish a separate adult education system.

The first Mass Literacy Campaign (1945-1950) codenamed "Wake-Up" or "Shibukeni" in Bemba language, started among miners at Mindolo. That endeavour, led by Mrs. Hay of Mindolo Mission Station, soon spread to other parts of the country. By 1948 there were estimated 10,835 new literates, about 4,000 of whom were rural dwellers. In the meanwhile, the 1947 Ten Year Development Plan provided for full participation by Government in adult education work. In 1954, a new national plan was finally drawn up, which led to the inception of evening classes and the extension of the school system to junior secondary level with a

corresponding streamlining of the external examinations procedures away from the South African educational set-up.

Following independence in 1964, government policy was to extend night school facilities to all rural areas and give "a balanced distribution of classes between the rural and urban areas." (Adult Education Report, 1974, pp.44-46).

Parallel to these efforts, the colonial government and local authorities had agreed in 1953 to share the costs of the Group Welfare Services - the Community Development forerunner - whose objectives were never clearly defined. Their programs merely played the role of safety valves by providing leisurely activities, recreational and entertainment facilities to the deprived African population. These were later expanded to include occupational skills such as carpentry, pottery and through Women's Homecraft classes.

But, due to the forced migratory patterns of African labour at the time:

no attempts were made to build up permanent social institutions within the communities and there was no tradition of consultation with the people leading to their involvement in social progress. (Silavwe, 1984, p.168).

Originally under the Ministry of Rural Development, the principles of Community Development work fall under the Ministry of Labour and Social Services since 1974 and, according to Silavwe, "elements of active participation and the initiative of the

community are hardly to be found." (Ibid.).

As early as 1967, the Department of Community Development saw the need to reorient the basic literacy program which rested on the teaching of the 3 R's towards the "boosting of social and economic development." Functional literacy was consequently initiated in 1971 to train students in "self-reliance through participation in self-help schemes" such as maize and groundnut growing whilst they were being taught "how to read and write in vernacular languages" (Community Development Annual Report, 1972, p.2).

Predictably one of the major problems the program had to face was the exigency to sustain literacy levels of new literates "most of whom stayed in isolated parts of the country to obtain reading materials. . . . and found themselves lapsing into illiteracy" (Community Development Annual Report, 1975, p.6).

A corollary to this, was the difficulty, for financial reasons, of printing the primers. The Department reports that it hit on a solution by introducing a rural literacy service to be run with the help of Ward Development and Village Productivity Committees. Ten of the initially planned forty library centers were established in 1975 alone.

In its 1976 Annual Report, the Department of Community Development (DCD) observed that "unless great importance is attached to mass media, literacy campaigns can hardly prove a

success." It commended the "important role which the literacy broadcasting section has been playing in instructing, educating, informing and disseminating new ideas through the radio and other mass media for the benefit of our Literacy Instructors as well as students." Radio was singled out as very successful due to "an efficient feedback system developed ensuring an effective two-way communication pattern." There were at this period in time 272 listening clubs throughout the country boasting an active enrolment of 4,973 members. (p.7).

Unhappily, from 1973, it became increasingly difficult to build on this success owing to a lack of batteries and spare parts for the maintenance of radio sets on the one hand and insufficient funds to procure tapes and tape recorders on the other.

Still, there was some satisfaction in that the rural library centers experienced "a growing demand for more textbooks covering a wide range of subjects." In addition to textbooks and in spite of a worsening funding situation, the DCD embarked on "printing supplementary reading materials for the benefit of the new literates" and each province was supplied with "its own newsletter written in a local language spoken and understood by the majority of the people. (Annual Report, 1976, p.8).

A careful reading of this overview certainly reinforces our thesis that at the present stage of its development, Zambia has need of a vibrant rural press to assist the literacy drive

because it can be low cost and can emanate from the concrete situation and experiences of a hitherto marginalized community. The reading above strongly suggests it can be an ideal instrument to:

- a) generate new ideas and dialogue
- b) help encode and decode the written word
- c) combat ignorance and its effects of prejudice and servitude
- d) understand and take pride in the national heritage
- e) assist self-reliance efforts through an increased agricultural production

It is significant that the document on "Educational Reform" (see p.76), devotes some thought to this question:

Newspapers and magazines have great potential in exerting an educative influence generally and, therefore, may act as media in continuing education,* apart from their conventional role of disseminating news. Their role in continuing education is, however, reduced because of the limited circulation....With regard to rural Zambia, the situation is even worse...due to communication difficulties. The shortage of newsprint and other problems also add to the difficulty....If radio, television, newspapers and magazines are to play a positive role in

*The term "adult" was changed to "continuing" to emphasize adult education as the second main arm of the national education system alongside full-time education.

continuing education, there should be improvements in all areas, otherwise it is idle talk to regard these media as being the chief instruments of raising the educational and technical levels of the Zambian people. (1977, p.60).

This recommendation raises points of great significance for the well-being of Zambia's Revolution, but one cannot help being struck by its cautious approach pivoting on abstraction and ambiguity. It can only be recalled here that it was crafted by an élite class of civil servants, the gravity center of the nascent national bourgeoisie. To be fair, it should be recorded that Zambia's Education Act of 1966 had tremendously expanded access opportunities. But it also created serious problems. It empowered the government to take over Mission schools, desegregate all schools, abrogate fees in all government aided institutions and do away with the sixth Form at senior secondary school level, thus enabling Ordinary level Certificate holders to pass through the portals of the only University in the country opened that same year.

During the next decade, a tremendous increase in school enrolments took place along with a lion's share for Education from the national budget and this "achievement" was reason for endless self-congratulatory homilies by the national leadership. (Mwanakatwe, 1968; Small, 1977; Central Statistical Office, 1984).

By 1975, however, the cracks in the wall could no longer be ignored. Only about twenty per cent of primary school

leavers found places in secondary schools and just half that number would be selected to proceed to senior Forms. Overall, only ten per cent of high school graduates found a place at University and other Vocational Institutions. (Lungu, 1985).

Reacting to this danger signal, the General Secretary of the Zambia National Union of Teachers wearily remarked that "the school-drop outs who are left school-less and jobless will continue to constitute an unbearable burden and a source of social turmoil" (Zambia Adult Education, May 1979, p.8).

The Ministry of Education and Culture reckons about 84 per cent of the school age population, 7-14 years old, are enrolled in primary school but concedes there are "sharp differences" in progression rates "between rural and urban areas, the lack of completed schools being a rural problem" (Zambia Profile, CSO, 1984, p.87).

The problem also persists about the lack of reliable data on literacy education levels regarding those above 15 years of age who never completed or never entered the formal education system. And while South Magazine (Sept., 1985, p. 207) claimed an adult literacy rate of 60%, a careful reading of literature on the subject suggests that in fact Zambia has had to run in order to keep in the same place. In other terms, the changes of structure and content have been "more quantitative than qualitative", more anodyne than radical.

Dr. Gatian Lungu of the University of Zambia contends that "about 70 per cent of the entire population is illiterate and of the 30 per cent fewer still are functionally literate" (1985, pp.13-14). If this assertion is valid, then the fatal flaw in Zambia's valiant but dispersed and overlapping efforts to wipe out illiteracy, "the cancer eating away the nation's hopes and aspirations for rapid social and economic progress," may very well lie at the very core of the system and its purpose.

Indeed any keen and sympathetic observer will be baffled by the rigidity and stymieing contradictions of Zambia's development strategies, willy-nilly carried out by a bloated bureaucracy whilst those privileged to wield political power continue to proffer socialist rhetoric to an increasingly stratified and alienated society. (Shaw, 1976; Quick, 1978; Scarrit, 1983; Woldring, 1983; Parpart and Shaw, 1983). This matter is complex and far beyond the scope of this study but the nexus of the problem seems to be that the highly centralized institutional structures of the State and the ambivalence of its reformist expressions have actually prevented mass participation in the decision-making process and fundamental changes among the urban poor and peasants in the countryside to take form and shape.

Evident has been the dearth of consistent low-key efforts at grass-roots level, i.e. a process of the people's promotion through their own action, in the vein of what Diaz Bordenave

defined as "popular animation". The masses have been teased out of incentives which would induce popular participation in education and development, through an effectual decentralization rather than a deconcentration of power which simply implies a broader distribution of political control by an oligarchy. (Tordoff, 1980; Ollawa, 1978; Poewe, 1979; Bates, 1976).

In sum, the claim of a "classless" or "egalitarian" society under a Humanism rooted in African familism remains a very "elusive" concept and promised land.

As Martin has painfully observed:

The weakness of Humanism, and it is a serious one, is that...it is extremely vague and lacking in determinate application to concrete situations. The humanist umbrella is so wide as to leave very few specific policy alternatives out in the rain. (1972, p.107).

To reverse the trend or at least slow down the slide, the government should "supply the needs" by encouraging the people to "reach out" to the point that each program and each medium is used to complement the effectiveness of the others so that an interrelated whole of the communication process operates not for its own sake but in function of the social, psychological and political health and will of all the nation's segments. In 1966, a Government Policy document on Community Development emphatically stressed that:

The people through their own community organizations should identify their own problems, should plan how to overcome them and should take concerted action to achieve this end. (p.2).

With predicted hyperbole and customary flourish, at a Party Convention in 1976, the Zambian leader added another jewel to the crown:

In the Second Republic the Party must move swiftly to vest and entrench power in the peasants and workers.... The social value of the message of Humanism is the sharing of wealth on the basis of equality and the prevention of the creation of classes. Communocracy...provides a basis for waging a struggle against class distinctions in any shape or form. (Kaunda, 1976, pp.12,20).

But Tordoff has lucidly argued that in light of President Kaunda's firm assertion in 1968 to "decentralise in centralism . . . while retaining effective control of the Party and Government machinery in the interests of unity . . . (and) to avoid regionalism", popular participation effectively "remains something of a myth." (1970, p.27; 1980, p.205).

Given its present disastrous economic crisis, the end to Zambia's stagnation dilemma, to the phenomenon of firm central control and local impotence and a growing rural-urban income gap is nowhere in sight.

And could it be that our early literacy expert was right after all, that you cannot export literacy post-haste, for, to

use Freire's metaphor, to educate is not to extend something from the "seat of wisdom" to the "seat of ignorance".

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CHAPTER IV

THE RURAL NEWSPAPER AS AGENT OF SOCIAL CHANGE

1. Where to Now?

The apparent failure of the literacy drive in Zambia might unfortunately give some credence to charges of unwitting bureaucratic manipulation.

But above all, we have confronted the unpleasant reality that, everything being equal, neo-literate reading materials are scarce and, therefore, that regression into illiteracy becomes unavoidable.

This evidence lends support to our central concern that literacy, like everything else, cannot develop in a vacuum, just because some élites at the top do so will. An old Asante proverb says "anyone who wants to climb a tree begins at the bottom and not at the top." It means that the causal force must flow upwards and this implies that the educator, the primer or newsletter which do not speak with the common man in "his language, his idiom and dealing with problems of direct relevance to his situation" have little chance of lasting success.

The literacy campaigns undertaken by many emerging nation-states, often with UNESCO's felicitous push and with an eye on a catching-up type of development, have largely had less than

anticipated impact because they were not plotted with the participation of their intended unlettered users.

The position to-day, according to Müller, is that "the effectiveness of intensive, functional programmes is being questioned" (1984, p.43).

On the other hand, Bruchhaus (1984) has seriously asked the frustrating question pertaining to both North and South, "who is an illiterate?" Reviewing the data and literature from an African perspective, one is struck by the occurrence of apparent contradictions in approaches, methodologies and claims of success.

Perhaps because of these sublime delusions, illiteracy is "generously" tolerated by the ruling classes and consequently the conveniently conspicuous "massive efforts" continue ad infinitum, making as they say a virtue of necessity.

To paraphrase Davidson (1969), so traumatic and ensnaring was the impact of colonialism that the educated few found it sensible to turn their backs on historical Africa, village Africa as though it had passed away with independence celebrations (p.309).

And yet, as early as 1944, a missionary educationist in Northern Rhodesia had foreseen the need for an indigenous literature as a prelude to meaningful development:

In the production of literature, as in every other sphere of their life, it is obviously a sound policy to encourage Africans to help themselves rather than to depend on Europeans. It is important however to remember that the goal of an indigenous literature written for Africans by Africans in African languages is one that we can only hope to attain after a very long period of gradual and carefully directed development.

(Hopgood, 1944, p.9).

Arguing that rather than attempts at translation, "original work in the vernacular should perhaps be encouraged", Hopgood mused with unusual and remarkable candour in those days:

There must be amongst the Africans a good deal of latent literary talent that needs only to be discovered and developed.... A great deal of useful literary work might be done by carefully selected Africans trained for the purpose (p.10).

Given the growing importance of English, Hopgood was concerned with the stagnation and eventual extinction of many vernacular languages. Thus, as Laini has correctly stated, it would not be amiss to suggest that the key question is not whether there is need for literacy but:

rather than asking whether literacy is needed for education, we should inquire how literacy should be introduced within the context of developing countries. (Original emphasis)
(1985, p.154).

In most LEC's, the gospel according to Lerner's "Dominant Paradigm" prompted costly investments in Radio and Television networks ostensibly to promote literacy and development. These

capitalist inspired business practices have led to failures and frustrations which, if we can learn the lesson, have shattered the "myth of the mighty big media".

We set forth instead the case of "little media" with appropriate technologies and locally available resources. As a concomitant, the citizens have a sacred right to use, learn in and about their native language to every extent possible.

To-day an increasingly sophisticated literature has exploded the myth of the lexical poverty of African languages especially in the teaching of modern sciences (Okpala, 1979; Diop, 1974).

Hermes Rwantabagu, a Burundian scholar has argued:

Linguists agree that all languages are in a perpetual process of growth and adaptation, through borrowing and integration. It all depends on the function which society assigns them to perform. English, which was once relegated to lower classes and menial activities, has risen to become a world language. Latin, the former language of the learned and the gentry, has fallen to the level of a dead language. Therefore, there is nothing in the nature of African languages which could prevent them from embracing all aspects of modern knowledge.
(1984, p. 51).

The rural press as envisioned in this study will essentially and fundamentally be the antithesis of a "sterile, shapeless and colourless society having the elements of neither a tribe nor a nation (Ibid.). It will simultaneously be a derivative of and

a contributor to the emergence of an enduring literacy effort, culture and endogenous national identity.

In this context, a second thought must be given to the hypothesis that:

The communication needs of Third World countries cannot be met by national broadcasting or other large scale media alone. Political and educational development need communications support that will arouse response and action at the local level by groups and individuals. For this, the wide area transmissions, characteristic of a national broadcasting system are unsuitable and need to be complemented by small systems that take into account different requirements and interests - climatic, language, culture and environment. (Development Communication Report, October 1979, No. 28, p.1).

We are of course mindful of the apparent dichotomy in attempting to synchronize the time-biased and dialectical qualities of the aural-oral and visual traditions within the constraining parameters of a space-biased mode of communication.

We enjoin here, if we may, Innis' thought in stressing that an overemphasis or monopoly of knowledge or authority of either time or space-biased communication is a catalysis in producing instability in society. Like him, we believe that a stable society is possible only with the perfection of mechanisms that preserve a balance between the time and space orientations.

To sum up, we believe that the growth of traditional values, which means the reshaping of African civilization, and

the genuine concerns for national integration are better facilitated by a process - to use Plato's words - that does not "create forgetfulness in the learners' souls" than the display of National Dance Troupes and quaint tourist exhibitions.

2. Encoding Indigenous Culture

"Man has in fact no past unless he is conscious of having one, for only such consciousness makes dialogue and choice possible" (Raymond Aron quoted in Mazrui, 1972, p.9).

We must on the other hand guard against "false consciousness" - promoted by the media nowadays and the phosphorescence of consumer culture - which induces a spurious sense of good feeling and catharsis and ultimately abets oppression.

And if colonialism induced in the colonized a paroxysm of self-doubt by berating or destroying the local culture, we make the assertion that only the torch of self-confidence in the cultural values and originality of the people can light Africa's development path.

The terms "folk", "traditional" and "indigenous" culture are here used interchangeably and refer to such basic tenets as group solidarity and homogeneity, interpersonal communication, traditional law, lifestyles and social organisation (Colletta, 1977).

Unlike the wave of "popular culture" or "kitsch" which

strives on the widest mass appeal to the urban dweller and whose attempts at creativity are often stifled by its "cultivated patrons", "folk culture" entails a participatory process which records the peasants' parochial experiences in which there is no conflict between freedom and collective identity. (McCormack, 1969).

For our purposes, we define African culture as the embodiment of belief systems, crafts and artifacts in constant "fission, fusion" and collision.

These are expressed through religious activities; mystical or ceremonial ritual performances; the myths and symbolisms attached to them on various occasions such as royal celebrations, weddings, funeral dirges, name inheritance, specific life cycles and crises, healing, etc. Songs, dances, plays, manners of clothing and cooking, body language in, say, greeting rites, the creative use of language in poetry, oral literature, folktales, proverbs and riddles do form the rich and varied texture of African cultural values, wisdom and knowledge that have sustained generations upon generations.

The significance of this complex web of behaviour, the careful balance between spirit and matter and the integration of all sensory experiences in most traditional practices lies in the fact that they "say" something, have a communicative function and are a true manifestation of life in its horizontal and vertical dimensions. (Miller, 1980; Finnegan, 1970; Davidson,

1969; Doob, 1961; Prins, 1980; Richards, 1956; La Fontaine, 1972; Gluckman, 1945; Ugboajah, 1985; Gabel and Bennett, 1967).

In suggesting the use of traditional forms of expression for purposes of social and national development, Dissanayake points out that:

When talking of traditional media it is important to remind ourselves that they are not mere quaint relics of the past, but vigorous and highly functional cultural institutions performing functions vital to the well-being of society: they provide entertainment, disseminate information, inculcate socially accepted norms and values, and perform a general socializing function.

In this regard, different though they may be in techniques and degrees of sophistication, traditional and modern media of communication share a common identity of interest. (1977, p.123).

The calamity facing Zambia and other African nations is that much of the oral traditions are being lost as the diviners, tribal historians, village criers, praise singers, old men and women who are the repositories of early history are becoming an extinct species, often passing away without imparting their knowledge and secrets to their descendants. The effects of urbanization and the processes of detribalization are obviously responsible for this deplorable state of affairs.

Governments, academic institutions, media networks and individuals must be sensitized to the urgent need to save these unwritten archives for posterity before it is too late.

The wealth of information has barely been tapped and as Vansina observes, "there is little doubt that for the history of the latter half of the 19th century, oral traditions are the most valuable, diverse, and complete sources of all those available." (In Gabel and Bennett, 1967, p.81).

Fagan presses the point further and reassures both the scholar and the amateur:

"In the age of the tape recorder it should be an easy matter to collect stories and accounts both in English and the vernacular which could be deposited for later critical study by ethnohistorians. The pressing need is for the recording of data rather than critical examination of available texts and a great deal of valuable material could be collected without vast expenditure. (1965, p.33).

We are inclined to believe that this task can be eased tremendously with the cooperation of governments if only they would let the people tell themselves because "as soon as the people realize that their folk songs, poems and art are being used for subliminal propaganda they will let them die." (Diaz Bordenave quoted in Lent, 1982, p.10).

In Art, style is generally culture and time-bound. Equally a communication attempt through the use of a community newspaper must identify, mobilize and utilise the language, symbols and styles familiar to the intended receiver. (Lent, 1982; Colletta, 1975). Wang and Dissenayake have also contended that "a people's culture acts as a mediating force in the process of development

and change", and asserted that "changes do not occur in a vacuum, they must be mediated by the culture throughout the whole process" (1982; 1984, p.257-8).

In a broad sense, the holistic-contextual framework we have proposed nullifies or greatly reduces the paradox of cultural integrity versus cultural change because it is embedded in developmental consciousness which naturally must discriminate between desirable and undesirable change.

We thus go a step further beyond the "convergence approach" which simply blends "essentialism", a set of indigenous traditions and mythologies and "epochalism", the combination of foreign ideological and technological influences.

3. Two Empirical Illustrations

Earlier in this study we argued that the learning process will eventually flounder if divorced from the social and ecological experience of the people.

With reference to Africa, we have posited that indigenous folklore can facilitate education because it integrates both verbal and kinesic cultural elements that are meant for all the senses.

And if we agree, as we should, that language is what distinguishes man from the forest primates and is therefore the bedrock of any culture, we can see little point in disagreeing with Kolade's assertion that:

Although much of what appears in English may be impressive and respectable, the works so far published in indigenous languages have demonstrated the advantages of expressing a culture in its original and authentic form.

(1975, p.383).

Budd Hall et al. (1979) report that in Tanzania "work is going on to record and transcribe indigenous stories, legends, songs and events." They point out that folk media are a means to introduce the printed word to illiterates, and they are a source for printed reading material, interesting and engaging.

Thus, the program of "books by the people" relies on tribal elders "with reputations as storytellers" who are invited to taperecord their stories which "are then translated in the national language of Kiswahili and printed in simple form."

According to Simoni Malya of the Adult Education Institute these materials have been successful because they are brief, they contain humour, they crossfertilize dialects between tribes and instill a sense of pride in one's country:

Such materials contain the type of education that our forefathers practised. These are learning and teaching situations which, if we are prepared to study, we may even find from them ways of serving adults better. By collecting and printing these materials, we are, in fact, perpetuating adult education as it was known by our fore-runners but not recorded and formalized. (Malya quoted in Hall et al., 1979, p. 133).

In Zambia, a bold and genuinely unique experiment at raising

consciousness on both sides of the spectrum into social action, expanding community education and literacy, enhancing local participation through feedback, is being carried out by the Africa Literature Centre (ALC), a charitable and inter-denominational institution, as part of its rural journalism teaching program.

Each year since 1979, ALC's Art and Journalism students have been going into neighbouring rural villages of the Copperbelt and Central provinces for a two to four-week internship to live with and teach the villagers how to use a silk-screen duplicator (see Appendix) and produce their own newsletters which one headman described as "a weapon against illiteracy in the ever challenging task of rural development." A chairman of a rural council commented: "This is the most effective means of rural communication" as he handed over the duplicator to the council for use by the local people. (Rural Drumbeat, Dec. 1980, p.1-2).

The production process is a community's collective and cooperative effort involving the schooled and the new literates, from the school teacher to the village chief, the Church, local political leaders down to ordinary citizens and women's club.

Simultaneously the students try to sharpen their awareness of rural reality by working on a rural newspaper that carries localized information, e.g. news on current events; health, welfare and development issues including feature-type articles

on cultural and historical aspects and of general human interest.

The 16 to 24 page offset printed copy is abundantly illustrated with news pictures about people, their ways of living and the arts. It is later delivered free to areas as reading material in simple English.

The response to this experiment has been overwhelming and there are plans, depending on availability of funds, to extend the period of villageisation and mutual learning.

Although in-depth research and analysis needs to be done in order to evaluate the costs on both sides, literacy effectiveness and organisational problems, this pilot project presents compelling evidence that there are in Zambia possible alternative ways which need recognition and support because they truly enable the voiceless rural people to be restored to speech without the need of a government imprimatur.

To this end, one of the guiding principles was spelt out to the trainees by a College Principal:

If journalists were to play their role in development, they must change their present approach to the problems of rural areas. They must meet, talk and live with the peasants; only in this way will they come to understand the peasants' problems, hopes and aspirations.

(Rural Drumbeat, Dec. 1980, p.2).

4. The Tale of Two Worlds

In non-literate societies, skilled individuals with the ability "to read the intestines of the sacrificial animal to see if all will be well for the coming season" (La Fontaine, 1972, p.123), were, like their medieval counterparts, powerful persons having a stake in ordering society. This validated fact confirms Freire's assertion that "learning to read is a political act." From this perspective, the dichotomy of most literacy campaigns seems to lie in the fact that they fail to integrate new goals for the participants, namely "freedom, self-realization and redistribution of power."

Put in another way, abolishing illiteracy is possible only in the broader framework of dealing with the local and global root causes of hunger, poverty and oppression.

Unfortunately the pressing concerns are elsewhere!

Northrop Frye has stated:

...Print has a unique power of staying around to be read again, presenting, with unparalleled patience, the same works again however often it is consulted. It is therefore public access to printed and written documents that is the primary safeguard of an open society. (Quoted in Hall et al, 1979, p.132).

And yet, in an ironic twist, the noted Kenyan radical playwright, novelist and critic Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o has lamented in the introductory notes to his book, Decolonizing the Mind:

If...I criticize the Afro-European or (Euro-African) choice of linguistic praxis, it is not to take away from the talent and genius of those who have written in English, French or Portuguese. On the contrary I am lamenting a neo-colonial situation which has meant the European bourgeoisie once again stealing our talents and geniuses as they have stolen our economies. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries Europe stole art treasures from Africa to decorate their houses and museums; in the twentieth century Europe is stealing the treasures of the mind to enrich their languages and cultures. (1986).

This may be strong - or to use a paternalistic term in western academic milieux, emotional-language but it is no arrogant falsehood. The bitterness is not new, either. But in to-day's hypothetical "global village", no man or nation can afford to be an island.

In the face of external and internal pressures therefore, the "cultural engineering" that Mazrui so eloquently spoke about cannot remain an afterthought if we are committed to a liberating emancipation which wells up from the wisdom of the only true guardians and defenders of indigenous culture: the villagers.

A Zambian proverb in Tonga says: Mulonga watakozyolwa wakabula makoba (The river which did not meander had no steep banks). It means there must be willingness and wisdom to be derived from one's course, like a river, to meet new circumstances without sacrificing genuine values and principles. (Lane, 1980).

There is a degree of paradox here and our path has thus come full circle.

But to the extent that paradox is inherent in any process of social change, it bears emphasizing here that we have been concerned in this study as much with the forms and consequences as with the locus of change, wherein the endogenous and exogenous inputs become interactive. This understanding, in our view, is pivotal for the practice of change which takes account of the important contributions of a community's traditions and the values of its members while at the same time providing a referent point against which creative initiatives can be measured.

This model, which Professor Anthony D. Smith has examined with great clarity in his Social Change, Social Theory and Historical Processes (1976), allows greater openness and revolutionary consciousness in dealing with contradictions and deviant behaviour. The process of differentiation-cum-integration, it needs to be said, often seems irrational but so is the creativity of genius.

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CONCLUSION

In spite of Antonio Gramsci's (1971) provocative statement that ". . . the mass of the peasantry, although it performs an essential function in the world of production, does not elaborate its own organic intellectuals" (p. 6), we feel a particular twinge of conscience that this entire exercise has been conducted without the benefit of the villagers' wise counsel.

For this reason, we have proposed no specific models, organigrams or structures that would underpin viable grassroots press networks. These should emerge and evolve according to context and the wishes of specific communities, although we would strongly favour such set-ups as co-operatives or small-scale self-help projects.

In all these efforts, we must not lose sight of the key point that the health and wealth of most African countries lie in the villages in which the majority of the people live. If these villages decay, the nations too will decay.

Our subject matter is complex and this study does not claim to be exhaustive. But we believe we have been made more aware of the duality of the problems raised and the difficult

task to formulate suitable solutions at both macro and micro levels.

Essentially our argument, resting on a wide range of studies and data, posits, contrary to Gramsci's premise, that the peasantry, if properly stimulated, can generate its own world view by recreating and perpetuating its traditional folklore; recapture for itself the organic mood of its and the national transformation; help encode for posterity those truly civilizing and humanizing practices of the past and thus add to the general fund of knowledge and skills needed for a holistic development.

Concomitantly, this study is premised on three main assumptions: that development cannot happen within an historical or political vacuum; that literacy/education is a necessary but not an overriding condition of development; and that communication media can be genuinely supportive of rural development goals only in the context of cultural regeneration, individual freedom and motivated participation.

Surveying the general African situation, we would hold with Elihu Katz (1977) that even allowing for the need, or assumed need, for a period of stability uninterrupted by political opposition, and the immense problems of nation-building:

...there are strong grounds for believing that there is much unjustified control (in broadcasting media) and that this is bound to defeat the objectives of national development in the medium term. (p. 106).

Obviously this process of "political acculturation" muzzles the creative thought and expression of the artist or communicator. His/her state of total dependency to the State compels him/her to walk a razor's edge and nurture any national myth, however irrational, and always project his/her political god-fathers in a positive light.

If we should broaden this troubling phenomenon in logical fashion, we face the bare truth that Africa is at the cross-roads whereby the syncretism of traditional values, colonial alienation and modern cult of technology could either help "reconstruct the African personality", energetic and responsible for its fate; shape a uniquely African and liberating "socialist" ideology or induce a "modernization" of the black world that will turn out to be an Icarus flight "purchased at the cost of a monstrous betrayal" (Balandier, 1966).

If we may turn to another front and take the Zambian case as a model, it seems obvious that adult literacy programs serve only a minute fraction of the rural adult population.

The programs in place for basic and functional literacy and community development are exceedingly fragmented, limited

in scale and weak. These are operated by different public and private agencies for the same audience with little, if any, coordination and cooperation.

Worse still, they appear to contradict the Addis-Ababa Report's (1961) recommendation that:

adult literacy campaigns should not be launched until there is an adequate and continuous output of reading matter available to those who have attained different levels of literacy. (p.60).

As for the perceived benefit of education, there is increasing evidence to suggest that democracy and illiteracy are incompatible.

But there are painful contradictions in the entire cycle of education in many developing countries in the way its elitist aspects augment and create new patterns of social and economic stratification in contrast to the traditional egalitarian way of life.

On the other hand, we witness a dialectical cycle of supply and demand which ultimately will peak at some critical stage when "lack of support for the system is transformed into attacks on the system" (Murphree, 1976, p.20).

We also believe, from lessons of western history, that the current "qualificationism disease" in Africa is bound to ebb away with time and give way to a better appreciation

of the intrinsic value of knowledge which, to use Freire's words, is the process of "becoming critically aware of one's reality in a manner which leads to effective action upon it." (Quoted in Murphree, 1976, p.12).

If the assessments above are valid, we can deduce that education, contrary to earlier optimistic views as the ultimate solution, is only one of the many ingredients in the search for greater economic and social justice.

Stabler's (1969) proposition that:

it can provide the practical know-how that a small holder needs to move beyond the level of subsistence farming. It can ease tensions of tribalism and contribute to the development of a national identity (p.176).

is basically sound, although care must be taken to stress the fact that traditional systems of agriculture are "less a device of barbarism than a concession to the character of the soil." (Lord Hailey quoted in Allen, 1945, p.19).

Against this background, our proposition is to create a world, to use Ivan Illich's metaphor, "made transparent by true communication webs." Our thesis is predicated on amply validated empirical experiences that only when used with the printed word can electronic media be "adequate and safe." As Neff Smart (1967) points out: "history seems to show that the circulation of newspapers is not only an index to literacy

levels in a society but also an agent of literacy" (italics in text, p.19).

Carried to its logical conclusion, this argument suggests that to induce veritable and positive change a community newspaper should ideally be owned and run by the people themselves. At this juncture the question of language becomes very crucial. Granted this is a complicated problem where there are many languages but as Professor Joseph Ki-Zerbo has incisively stated, "to accept the death of the African languages would mean cultural suicide" (UNESCO, 1961, Annex IV, p.57).

In Zambia, parliamentary and other official pronouncements do not seem to imply that Government has been aware of the deeper values - apart from their propagandistic function - the rural papers' contents can carry.

It follows that in proposing a broadly defined model, there are three aspects we can immediately look at, viz., location, content and ownership.

a) Location: Rural newspapers should be based outside the major urban centres, preferably in villages or district capitals.

b) Content: As stressed in Chapter IV, they should be the prime carriers of a traditional culture threatened with extinction, besides stories of human interest and development.

c) Ownership: The editor/publisher and his group of activists should live in the community. The moot point is that to be credible a rural newspaper must to the greatest extent possible be of, for and by the rural people. In other terms, it must be an extension of the people themselves.

But as the Third Rural Press Development Seminar in Bangalore, India (1983) acknowledged, this still remains an ideal in many developing countries. What may be more true is that there are rural papers for the rural people. Rural papers by the people could be the next step. The third and final step would be rural papers of the rural people, where the local communities own these papers through cooperatives or other forms of ownership structures divorced from the government bureaucratic system or ruling party strictures.

However, even if this is a valid and desirable profile, the weak state of development and infrastructure in the countryside militates against the establishment of rural newspapers as commercial ventures and impels the government to at least provide initial assistance and support.

The Nairobi Seminar on Rural Press Development identified some of the areas as:

- Capital towards equipment and machinery in the form of low interest loans.
- Concessions on Duties and Rates.

- Rural newspapers to be considered for Government notifications and publicity.
- Performance through sales should attract a corresponding subsidy that should be gradually reduced and eventually stopped.

Great stress was put by the Seminar on the fact that it "would be unwise to insist that rural newspapers everywhere, regardless of widely varying conditions and circumstances, should conform to a pattern and wait for the ideal conditions to evolve" (1980, p.40).

Regarding the Zambian model, as a first step we suggest a phased decentralization of and divestment from the Government controlled provincial papers. This responsibility should be taken over by Village Committees or the District Councils and the newspapers run by local Boards consisting of open-minded, respected and responsible citizens.

This approach, apart from providing an opportunity to the participants to develop printing skills, enables the community which produces its own newspaper - as the Africa Literature Centre pilot project has shown - to pose a truly emancipatory act and reverse the experience of being for so long at the receiving end of a one-way flow of information. In their manuals Low Cost Printing for Development and Rural Mimeo Newspapers, Jonathan Zeitlyn and Robert Lawrence actually provide us in

graphic details with examples on how systems of "self-supporting small scale print shops could be established" using simpler technology than the large centralized high technology printing plants in big urban centres.

As for costs, facts indicate that the usual excuse of "lack of funds" is a false problem. The Focus column in the Times of Zambia (Nov. 11, 1982, p.4) reports that the Zambia Information Services failed in 1981 to utilize K88,038 of the "paltry" sum of K410,000 allocated. Simply put, the money was sent back to the Treasury. The tabulation reads as follows: K129,846 returned in 1980; K59,162 in 1979; K59,780 in 1975 and K117,122 unused in 1974.

What might be lacking is the willingness to shift the production locus and empower the peasants in the process.

A growing body of literature argues that despite avowals to the contrary, development initiatives in Zambia are taken for rather than by the people. The ambiguity mentioned in Chapter III appears to correlate to the heaviness of a two-level bureaucratic system (Party and Government) and has its genesis in the "paternalistic and welfare-oriented" tradition espoused at independence.

Communication planning in the absence of a coherent communication policy has been difficult to determine. As a result, an odd situation has developed where what are perceived as

policy declarations are never challenged but merely danced around.

Finally, appropriate training, comprehensive research and constant evaluation remain the linchpins of any rural newspaper project.

Presently, the existing press training is urban-oriented. Special training courses should therefore be developed for those who show a "pioneer" spirit to practice at the grass-roots level in the rural areas and combine as trainers of the budding village "journalists". In addition relevant instruction materials on the economic and management of small-scale newspapers should be devised.

Research is a vital component in the planning and implementation processes. In 1974, Sydney Head remarked: "the truth is that in some political contexts, nobody really wants to know the facts that would be uncovered by an audience research" (p.321). One would hope we have overgrown this trait and that the performances of all rural papers - as envisioned - should be monitored. The data so collected could provide helpful lessons to scholars and those others who might want to launch their own community newspapers.

A key element in this effort is the need for a "participative mode" of research whereby a feedback channel exists between the project and the committed researcher. The other

urgent need in many developing countries is for formative research which can determine if the objectives are being met and, if not, modify the project's direction to ensure that they are. Summative research usually tells us what has happened and is certainly valuable. In Africa, experience tends to show that it does not attempt to deal in depth with the underlying causes of any actual imbalances or conditions of oppression. Summative research has thus the potential to foster a degree of muteness especially within those autocratic regimes which look upon the media as one instrument among many to help perpetuate themselves in power.

We believe firmly that Africa's long range stability depends on striking a new deal for the voiceless populaces. Within nations and regions a new commitment to a two-way communication flow is long overdue. This new order might not bring about "freedom of the press" as it historically evolved elsewhere but it will certainly usher in a second "wind of change" able to move people from their subject and powerless status to that of initiating "cultural actions".

After all, which sane peasant has ever begged the powers that lord over him that he be allowed to play the role of a straw man?

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APPENDIX I

POPULATION IN ZAMBIA, 1963 AND PROJECTED ESTIMATES FOR 1968, 1975 AND 1980.

	<u>1963</u> <u>Census</u>	<u>1968</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1980</u>
Africans: Urban	684.5	996.5	1,386.4	1,733.0
Rural	2,722.4	3,005.4	3,647.9	4,182.3
Total	3,406.9	4,001.9	5,034.3	5,915.3
Europeans: Total	76.0	67.0	65.0	65.0
Asians & Others: Total	10.9	13.3	17.5	21.3
<u>Total Population of Zambia</u>	<u>3,493.8</u>	<u>4,082.2</u>	<u>5,116.8</u>	<u>6,001.6</u>

Source: Adapted from the First National Development Plan 1966-1970, Annexure XXXI, p. 284.

APPENDIX IIADULT LITERACY PROGRAM1. Basic Literacy

<u>Total No. of Classes</u>		<u>Total No. of Students</u>	
<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>
204	69	3,572	958

2. Functional Literacy

150	275	2,689	4,952
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Source: Annual Report for 1975, Ministry of Labour and Social Services, Republic of Zambia, Department of Community Development, p.16, Appendix VI.

N.B. According to the Report "the year 1975 saw a gradual phasing out of the basic literacy programme (launched in 1966) by the successful introduction of functional literacy" (p.6).

APPENDIX II (Cont'd)ADULT EDUCATION ENROLMENTS, 1970

<u>Lower Primary</u>	<u>Upper Primary</u>	<u>Junior Secondary</u>		
8,248	15,389	10,739		
<u>GCE*</u>	<u>Commercial</u>	<u>Domestic Sc.</u>	<u>Other</u>	
1,806	625	306	49	
<u>Total</u>				
37,162				

*GCE = General Certificate of Education at end of Form V or Grade 12

Source: Ministry of Education, Republic of Zambia Annual Report, 1970, p. 42, Table 5.2.

APPENDIX III

1. PRIMARY SCHOOLS ENROLMENT, 1970: ALL SCHOOLS

Grade I	II	III	IV
127,359	122,974	119,962	112,902
Grade V	VI	VII	Total
75,741	68,402	67,222	694,670

2. SECONDARY SCHOOLS ENROLMENT, 1970: ALL SCHOOLS

Form I	II	III	IV
15,175	15,418	8,578	7,792
V	Total		
5,509	52,472		

Source: Ministry of Education, Republic of Zambia
Annual Report, 1970, p. 32, Table 2.1,
p. 37, Table 3.1.

APPENDIX III (Cont'd)TOTAL ENROLMENT BY TYPE OF INSTITUTION 1975 & 1980

Year	Primary Schools	Secondary Schools
1975	872,392	73,049
1980	1,041,938	94,595
	Teacher Training	Vocational & Technical
1975	3,070	5,421
1980	4,445	5,338
	Univ. of Zambia	
1975	2,354	
1980	3,425	

Source: Central Statistics Office, Lusaka, 1984, p.83,
Table 82.

APPENDIX III (Cont'd)

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION

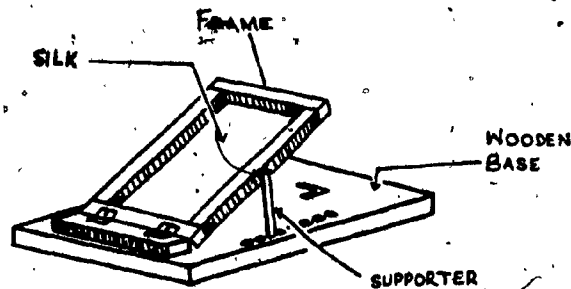
Year	<u>Recurrent</u>	% of Total Govt. Current Expenditure
	(K'000)	
1975	75,406	12
1980	120,377	11
	<u>Capital</u>	
	(K'000)	% of Total Govt. Capital Expenditure
1975	18,553	8
1980	6,260	1
	<u>Total</u>	
	K'000	% of Total Govt. Expenditure
1975	93,959	11
1980	126,637	8

Source: CSO, Monthly Digest of Statistics, Vol. XIX,
Nos. 1 to 3, Jan/Mar., 1983, Table 98.

APPENDIX IV

Many people have been informed and entertained by the amazing performance of the small, portable and easily-operated machine — the silk-screen duplicator.

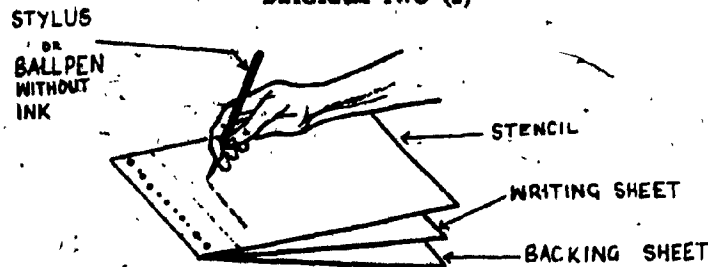
DIAGRAM ONE (1)
SILK SCREEN DUPLICATOR



ANATOMY OF THE SILK-SCREEN DUPLICATOR

1. The silk-screen duplicator is a wooden frame stretched with silk attached to a flat wooden base. The frame is attached by two hinges (see diagram 1). In this frame there are nails to hold the stencil. The wooden base is used for placing the paper for printing.

DIAGRAM TWO (2)



2. Two different types of stencil can be used. The first type is the normal white stencil used for typing and printing on the automatic machine; the other is blue in colour and very much recommended for the silk-screen. As you write on the stencil use a stylus or ball point which has no ink. Do not press too much while you are writing on the stencil otherwise the stencil will tear. So too when drawing illustrations — you need to press lightly in order to get excellent results.

For correcting use correcting fluid, remove the backing sheet and paint the written error. Wait for a few minutes until it is dry again. Rewrite on the painted spot the correct word.

APPENDIX IV (Cont'd)

3. The stencil is ready for use on the silk-screen. Remove the backing sheet from the stencil. Lift the silk-screen frame and then put the stencil between the frame and wooden base. You will notice that it has nails, which fit in the stencil's holes for adjustment. Also use drawing pins in order to avoid movement of the stencil.

DIAGRAM THREE (3)

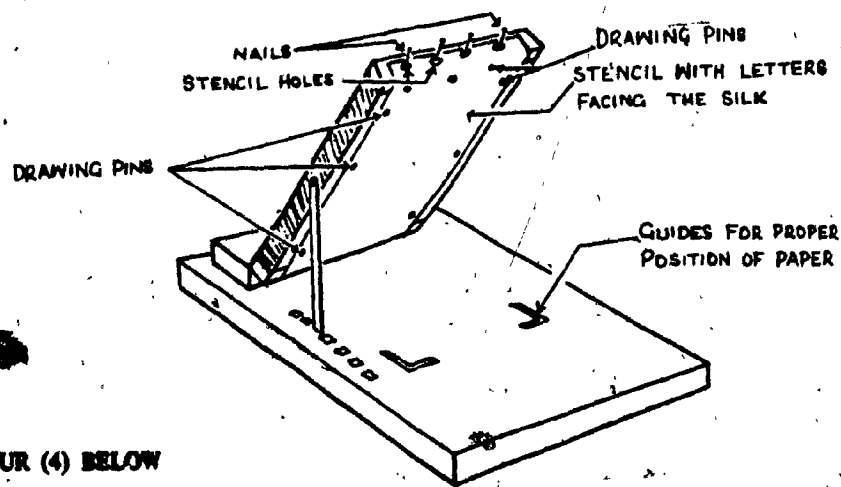
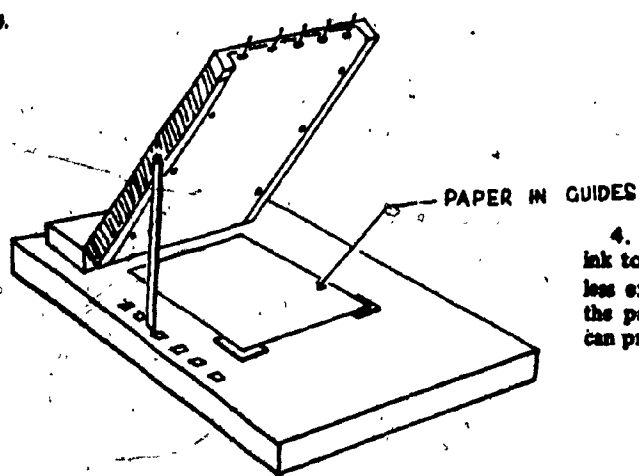


DIAGRAM FOUR (4) BELOW



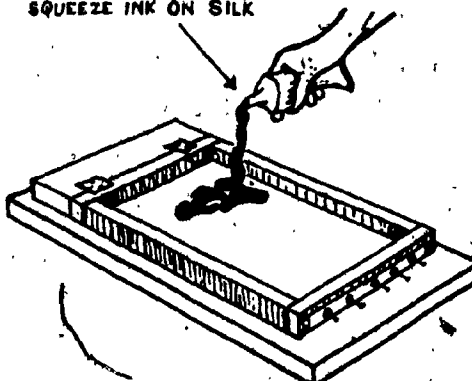
4. Duplicating paper is absorbant and helps the ink to dry quickly. Newsprint can also be used and is less expensive. While you are printing, do not turn the paper over - wait until it is dry. Later on you can print the other side too.

APPENDIX IV (Cont'd)

DIAGRAM FIVE (5)

For repair and further information contact Africa Literature Centre
P.O. Box 21319
Kitwe, Zambia.

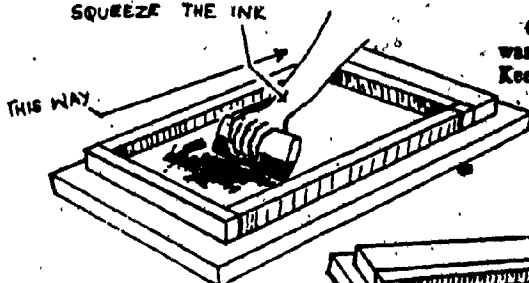
SQUEEZE INK ON SILK



5. Use duplicator ink only, and always draw the squeeze in one direction or towards the loose side of the stencil.

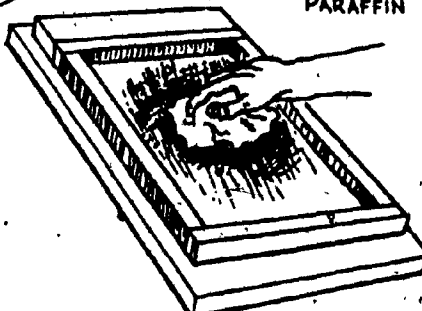
DIAGRAM SIX (6) AND (7)

SQUEEZE THE INK



6. Remove the stencil from the duplicator and wash lightly the silk with paraffin, using a soft cloth. Keeping the silk clean makes it last longer.

AFTER USING EACH STENCIL REMOVE AND CLEAN THE SILK USING PARAFFIN



APPENDIX V

The image displays several hand-drawn community newsheets, each with a central illustration and surrounding handwritten text in Swahili. The newsheets include:

- ONGONYA JIMBA BAKAKISI ISWI LYA CHIBOMI**: Features a drawing of a person sitting at a desk. Text includes "Mimi ni chiumbe" and "Kwa Hevry Murepe".
- MUSOFU**: Includes a drawing of a person and text such as "Kwa Hevry Murepe" and "Bendeleshi Bawozudi".
- IZWI YACHWANA**: Features a drawing of a person and text including "Bendeleshi Bawozudi" and "Kumimo Mabatoota".
- UKU CHINDILA ICHISUNGU**: Includes a drawing of a building and text like "Umuume nrom" and "Chalala chifima".
- ABASAMBI BA SHIBUKENI BALONDOLOLA IFYA KULIMA AMATABA**: Features a drawing of a person and text including "Mita Takulima" and "Intanguluchi".
- LU-SUMPUKO KWA CHIBOMBO**: Includes a drawing of two people sitting at a table and text such as "Ba Chakia" and "Wazi ali, ep".

Other visible text includes "NO 1 NOV", "KUMIMO MABATOOTA", "LU-SUMPUKO KWA CHIBOMBO", and "CHINDILA CHU GAMB B-Y CHISUNGU GAMB-TAMBA CHU NOV 1978".

Samples of Community Newsheets produced by villagers after initial training by ALC students.