

Radio Tanzania Dar es Salaam:
State control, broadcasting and national development

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Declaration

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation focuses on mainstream development media theory, a small sector of a larger discussion of the role of democracy in development and nation-building. Orthodox thinking contends that a causal relationship exists between democratic, competitive media and sustained social and economic development. In **Part One** of this paper I examine that theory and critique it. In **Part Two**, I give a brief history of how, in the period following independence, state-controlled radio was instituted in Tanzania for the purpose of national integration and development. In **Part Three**, I highlight the factors I consider crucial to the success the Tanzanian radio campaign, each of which has the potential to be applied in other contexts. I close with a proposal of what the future of radio in development can look like once we deviate from mainstream obsession with one-size fits all, market-driven development.

This paper finds that in addition to being theoretically flawed, mainstream development media theory lacks empirical substantiation. Moreover, The Tanzanian experience-- celebrated in media circles yet largely ignored in development and media circles—teaches us that in some instances it is not only beneficial, but imperative that government control mass communications for development. Media and development theory needs to be expanded to accommodate these more nuanced understandings, and to further the exploration of others.

PART ONE: THE ORIGINS OF ORTHODOX THINKING

“Free press is essential in achieving stable, democratic governments like that enjoyed by Americans.”

- Lorne Cramer, Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (USAID, 2003, p.6)

I. The History

Theories on role of media in development date to the 1960s with texts such as Lucian W. Pye's *Communications and Political Development* (1963) and Wilbur Schramm's *Mass Media and National Development* (1964). Each attempted to put forth a theoretical synthesis of the potential of broadcasting in Third World development. At that point the assumption was that “the media are or should be primarily public service rather than commercially oriented enterprises” (Hallin, 1998, p.155). Echoing modernization theories it was believed that mass media—radio, more specifically-- could accelerate the transition from rigid, archaic cultures of the underdeveloped nations into the open, wealthy societies of the industrialized West. These theories saw their end along with the end of modernization theory in the 1970s, a decade after mass media made such great promises and had produced so little positive change (Stevenson, 1988, pp.2-4).

In the late 1980s, early 90s, democratization and privatization became central to debates over the role of mass communications in the Third world mirroring the overall shift in development thinking. Since the end of the Cold War the media/development discourse was drastically affected by the spread of neo-liberalism under structural adjustment. Democracy, good governance, and human rights are seen as critical elements for economic development. Believing that the “market place of ideas” can only flourish in an open, competitive economic context, this translated in the media context into a call for the strengthening of free, competitive and independent media—or privatization. Price and Krug write, “Increasingly, the growth of private media is seen as a critical aspect of developing a media structure that advances democratic values” (2000, p.7). And it was these market-based democratic values, of course, that were prerequisites for development.

Essentially the existence of a variety of private owners was seen as a guarantee that more views will be expressed, as called for by democracy. Subsequently, state-control over media became the enemy of democracy, commerce and growth. Opponents of state monopoly argued that: 1) the government can use the media to manipulate the public and distort the truth in the government's favor; 2) government- owned enterprises are less responsive to consumer demand; and 3) because there is no competition, quality and efficiency levels are low (World Bank, 2002a, p.6). Inherent to this position is the idea that in the developing world, the state, in general, is not benevolent and that leaders categorically dictate and rule with their own political and economic benefit in mind. The conflict posed by applying such thinking in the development context was that 75% of developing nations have state-controlled media (World Bank, 2003, p.ix). Therefore many mainstream development organizations had to begin media based interventions with the dismantling or discouragement of

state monopolies and the encouragement of privatization. The next section will take a look at some of those organizations' and their neo-liberal positions.

II. The application of an ideology: Neo-liberalism and development media

Today, the World Bank fronts the campaign for a neo-liberal orientation of the media in the South. In its most recent declaration on the media and economic development, *The Right to Tell: The Role of the Mass Media in Economic Development*, the Bank opens with the statement that there is a positive correlation between free media and democracy and between free media and income (2002a, pp.2-3). Policy prescriptions call for independent media systems --independence being measured by the plurality of ownership and the existence of liberal economic structures and regulatory laws that support such plurality. And one of the most emphasized recommendations is for the privatization of all state-owned media in transition countries (2002a, p.8). In Chapter 8, Simeon Djankov reports that "high levels of state ownership reduce the effectiveness of the media in providing checks and balances on public sector behavior and are negatively correlated with economic and social outcomes" (2002a, p. 7).

The same attitude towards state-ownership is expressed again in the Bank's 2002 World Development Report: "[State ownership of the media] translates into more corruption, inferior economic governance, less-developed financial markets, fewer political rights for citizens and poorer social outcomes" (2002b, p.184). The alternative, naturally, is "privatization and relaxation of controls on the media (such as allowing new private entrants) which...enable the media to support markets better" (2002b, p.193). In yet another official publication, Working Paper no. 11 on broadcasting and development the Bank claims that neo-liberal reform in the broadcasting sector "can have a significant development impact" improving everything from "governance and transparency to political rights, higher life expectancy, lower infant mortality and improved schooling outcomes" (2003, pp. ix-x)!

Other mainstream development organizations such as The Department for International Development (DFID) also discourage state-led media: "Supporters of the media should be particularly wary of providing additional legitimacy and credibility to state-controlled media which are effectively government propaganda machines" (DFID, 2002, p.8). As well, The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) resonates with World Bank language: According to the February 2003 edition of its publication *Global Issues*, the US supports free press because "a strong, positive relationship exists between open reporting and free, open, and effective economies" (USAID, 2003, p.6). By 'free' USAID, means 'freedom of the press', but also open, commercial, and competitive reflecting an overall preoccupation in the neo-liberal democracy agenda with generating global markets.

III. Refuting Orthodox Claims

The fact is that the mainstream ideology lacks empirical and theoretical grounding. To begin, the standard to which the World Bank, DFID, USAID and others hold developing nations is not achieved in most modern liberal democracies. Ben Bagdikian, Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky have written at length on how media in developed countries is dictated to by the political and economic elite and thus are

no longer willing to serve as a watchdog of government. Some argue that capitalism itself has led to a system in which “communications have become more monopolized, centralized, less diverse and too close to state power” (O’Neil, 1998, p.2). In the case of USAID, the media free of state domination for which it lobbies, is a fallacy in the American context. Herbert Schiller in *Mass Communications and the American Empire* (1969) exposed the involvement of the American military-industrial complex in mass communications. First, control of the allocation of broadcast frequencies and the creation of telecommunications policy was the responsibility of the US Department of Defense and *not* the Federal Communications Commission. Second, major electronic and media companies had important defense contracts (Reeves, 1993, p.30). The commingling of media and state was so involved that one can only assume that the autonomy from state control was absent yet accepted, if not encouraged.

The mainstream doctrine is also inadequate because it does not recognize that power can be centralized under systems other than those that are state-controlled. O’Neil explains: “Control need not be so centralized to limit the power of the media. Ownership of the media may be private, although their owners may be state-run or allied industries in the hands of an economic elite, thus leading to media collusion with those in power” (1998, p.10). As well, a government has at its disposal a myriad of ways to appear neutral and in favor of free media while rendering one entity or group more powerful than others. Price and Krug write, “There are a thousand tricks or devices: discriminatory access to a monopolized distribution scheme, favored accreditation for compliant reporters, costly duty on news print, surprise audits or other forms of harassment (PCMLP, 2000, 12). Nigeria is a perfect example. A federation with very open media guaranteed in the Constitution’s Bill of Rights, the country has had a decentralized media system since before independence. Yet there are very high levels of corruption and the government relies on a host of systems to control journalists. These include harassment, torture, jail terms and economic sanctions against publications (Bourgault, 1995, p.9). It seems there is a) no proven correlation between media openness and good governance and democracy; and b) that media structures themselves do not necessarily indicate the presence either of independent or repressive media.

Yet another problem with the mainstream position is that it rarely discusses the realities of privatization. In Ghana, development has ushered in large-scale privatization of the media, amidst a general international push for the liberalization of African economies. A Constitutional governance in 1992 made privatization legal, opening the market to foreign and national investors, allocating frequencies to commercial and non-profit groups and making the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation a commercial enterprise, independent of the state. The result has been that “the least advantaged segments of the public-- children, the elderly, the handicapped and poor women, who are of little interest to advertisers-- tend to be neglected (rather than specially catered to)” (Heath, 2001, p.11). Many media experts find that the interests of commercial media are generally speaking, incompatible with serving disadvantaged populations, minority cultures, creating public forums for substantive discussions, education and awareness building among citizens (Heath; 2001, p.2).

We must also remember that media and development theory is, in general, based on a western model. It runs the risk, therefore, of prescribing reforms on developing

countries by simply grafting experiences of Western countries with no regard for social, economic and historical legacies. And such are the power dynamics between the countries from which these ideas emanate and the poor countries to which they are applied; no alternative models are entertained, not because they don't exist but because they are not backed by the economic, political and military might of the North. Reeves writes, "the extremely asymmetrical flow of communications materials between the advanced capitalist countries and those of the Third World is not simply a commercial exchange, but rather a part of the process whereby the latter are dominated by the communications ideologies of the major capitalist countries" (1993, p.31).

Lastly it seems that the ideological legs upon which the orthodox position rests are shaky. There is much unsettled debate about what democracy is; in some camps it is social and economic equality in others political and civil. Complicating the issue, Price and Krug remind us that, "many are the authoritarian regime that mastered the language of openness" (PCMLP, 2000, p.5). That is, it is easy to create the guise of democracy. Also, for as much as it is trumpeted, there has been little evidence of an infallible connection between democracy and economic growth. "It is likely impossible to establish empirically that political democracy conduces toward economic and social well-being or conversely that a country cannot achieve economic and social well-being without democracy," writes Martin (1998, p.72). The connection between open media and democracies is also shaky. Price and Krug in their report of free and independent media write that "existing assumptions about the relationship between free and independent media and the building of stable democratic institutions need clarification. They go on to argue that "because there are democratic societies with different profiles of the media, no specific matrix of press development can be considered essential as a part of the project of democratization" (PCMLP, 2000, p.3).

It seems the issue is more complex than mainstream development theorists would have us believe.¹ Regardless, most policymakers continue to accept that state monopoly of media is categorically wrong and that "the reason why there is such direct repressive intervention in mass communications [in the Third World] is that the ideological state apparatuses are brittle and unable to establish and maintain ideological domination easily" (Reeves, 1993, p.41). Such reductionism has prevented a more sophisticated understanding of the tendency towards state-controlled media in developing countries. Therefore, I offer one example, state-controlled media in Tanzania, as a challenge to the orthodox model but more importantly, in the spirit of deepening our understanding of mass media and development and the approaches that strengthen the link between the two.

IV. Why Tanzania?

Before introducing the Tanzanian Case Study it is necessary to confirm that it is indeed an exceptional case; on the surface, the story of mass communications there mirrors that of many authoritarian African states. In the tumultuous period

¹Evidence suggests that mainstream policies and programs were put in place in the name of democracy but instead promote the spread of free-markets. In Africa, with the exception of South Africa, Namibia and Botswana, since the theoretical move to independent media, reform of existing state-controlled institutions has been less important than getting private stations on the air (Heath, 2001, p.4).

immediately following independence, most African governments sired-up and centralized their communications systems, for fear of ethnic or sectarian factionalism (Heath, 2001, p.3). During the 1960s, an autocratic media model became common. Repressive states censored broadcasting, vetted unsympathetic journalism, and disseminated self-serving propaganda, arguing that these measures were necessary to protect the society against hostile elements. What happened to radio in Tanzania is often misunderstood as the same syndrome. The government took control of broadcasting in 1961 only here it was not to serve party or elite interests, but for decidedly benevolent purposes. The plan was to unite the country through a process whereby broadcasting “binds” populations into national audiences in the “construction of a national public space...addressing man and woman, old an young, educated and poor, urban and rural” (Sreberny, 2001, p.112).

For confirmation that the state’s intentions were truly virtuous, we should turn to those employed by it. Uncharacteristic of journalists working under state-controlled system, broadcasters in Tanzania expressed accord with and respect for the government’s policies. Hadji Konde, a journalist at the time wrote, “Common sense dictates that in a country where the mass media are publicly owned they must serve the public interest; [if they are owned by capitalists] they, of necessity, serve the monopolists, their kith and kin” (Konde, 1984, p.6). Konde admits that there have been problems with free and fair reporting in Tanzania, but that these problems have been with individual leaders who “do not know the meaning of freedom of information,” or problems due to the “complex process of collecting and disseminating news” but not with the publicly-owned media model itself (1984, p.6). And as we will see, many of the recognized characteristics of a healthy communications system- widespread access, promotion of human freedom and interests, awareness raising—were sustained in Tanzania despite exclusive government ownership of media systems.

PART TWO: THE TANZANIAN CASE STUDY

“The character of its long-term objectives directly influences the strategies which a leadership chooses.”

- Cranford Pratt (1978, p.3)

I. The Years Preceding Independence

The United Republic of Tanzania² is a vast country spread out over more than 360,000 square miles in East Africa (Konde, 1984, p.1) Mainland Tanganyika was first a German colony until it was handed over to the British at the end of the First World War. Agitation for independence started in July 1954 with the founding of the nationalist political party, Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), under a visionary named Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere for the “express purpose of liberating the people of Tanganyika” (Konde, 1984, p.1). It was a powerful time in Africa as nationalist movements had begun sweeping the Continent before the Second World War, and then at a more rapid pace in the late 40s and 50s. Describing the era, Hyden and Okigbo write, “Ideas about self determination and democracy were planted in work places and in churches, in dance clubs and in sport stadiums” (2003, p.32).

The final sixteen years of British colonial rule were characterized by flawed judgment, flawed policies and an absence of political sensitivity and imagination (Pratt, 1978, p.3). In the days leading up to independence there was intense competition between the newly formed and widely accepted TANU Party and the colonial power. The terminal days of British rule were characterized by a diarchy in which TANU asserted greater control over the performance of governmental functions at the central and local levels, while the British colonial administration stood in control of the “commanding heights” of the system (Coleman, 1960, p.571). Tanganyika eventually achieved independence when the British folded to the strength of TANU on December 9, 1961. The United Republic of Tanzania would be formed from the union of two formerly sovereign states, Tanganyika and Zanzibar on April 26, 1964.

II. Building A New Nation: The Early Nyerere Years

Julius Nyerere inherited one of the poorest countries in the world when he was elected President of the Republic upon liberation. Life expectancy was 35 years old, schools were almost non-existent and the rural population was at 94% with most surviving on subsistence farming (Moore, 2004, p.2). In addition, the country had over 120 ethnic groups or tribes strewn out over 360,000 square miles (Konde, 1984, p.1). His task was cut out for him. But when Nyerere and his TANU colleagues came to power their immediate concern was how to maintain popular support and augment the loyalty of Tanzanians during the tumultuous transition period. Pratt explains that it “quickly became clear that democracy, at least through Westminster-type political institutions

² Tanzania has had several different names over the course of its history. It was Tanganyika until April 26, 1964, three years after independence, when it united with Zanzibar to become the United Republic of Tanganyika and Zanzibar. The following year it became the United Republic of Tanzania. For simplicity’s sake I will refer to the country as Tanganyika for events occurring before independence, and Tanzania for those occurring after.

which the British had hurriedly created in the last years of their rule, was inappropriate and perhaps incompatible with the transformation in which the leaders hoped Tanzania would be able to achieve” (1978, p.2). Therefore, in 1962, Nyerere went into the rural areas of the country to mobilize support for a single-party Republic government, riding on the socialist orientation citizens had been given during the fight for independence. He gained overwhelming support and during the next elections the opposition party was dissolved making TANU *the* party of Tanzania.

What set Nyerere’s reign apart from other post independence African governments, however, was the fact that he studied the Tanzanian situation and articulated an integrated, long term political strategy for development. Naturally, Nyerere received a great deal of criticism for creating a one-party democracy; and naturally, he had a clever defense. First, he maintained that the post-colonial Tanzanian state was comparable to a wartime coalition government in a constitutional democracy-- the war in Tanzania being against poverty, ignorance and disease. To Nyerere’s mind neither the actions of a coalition government in a national emergency, nor a newly independent African state dominated by a nationalist movement can be thought to be undemocratic. In both circumstances, he argued, a de-facto single-party state system is the only democratic response to the national crisis (Pratt, 1978, p.68). Second, according to Nyerere, a competitive party system is not a prerequisite for democracy. He argued that the Party labels in Britain and other Western democracies were insignificant because members of Parliament, once elected, claim to represent the interests of all constituents, and this is possible only because the Party itself is ultimately of little significance. Nyerere didn’t reject Western ideals of a liberal democracy. He only questioned their relevance in an African context. Newly independent African states’ problems, he felt, were vastly different and more complex than those of established constitutional democracies, thus, they required different institutional expression than normally associated with democracy.

Yet Nyerere was hardly advocating autocracy, arguing that it was somehow acceptable because it was African. Rather he was arguing that an Africanized democracy looked different than the Western form, and that Tanzania would be, in fact, one such African democracy. Nyerere imagined a morally and culturally homogenous state wherein absolute freedom existed not because the state made limited demands on the individual, but because any state impositions would be acceptable as a necessary sacrifice for the pursuit of the common good.³ In June 1960 in the *British Weekly Tribune* he wrote, “

“The notion that democracy requires the existence of an organized opposition to government of the day is false. Democracy requires only freedom for such an opposition, not the existence of it. In the newly-independent countries it is most unlikely that there will be a two-party system for many years. The nationalist movements are going to be very powerful...[and] it will be a long time before any issues arise... on which it will be possible to build a real opposition organization.” Pratt, 1978, p.69)

³ As has been noted by other writers, Nyerere’s position--as that of many African nationalists-- has strong resonance with Jean-Jacques Rousseau (Pratt, 1978, p.73).

And, every five years, TANU held primaries during which at least two candidates were chosen to run for each position in the general election. The elections were often impassioned with candidates freely expressing dissent on issues confronting the country. And the system seems effective: Tanzanian Parliament has had a higher turnover rate than the US Congress (Moore, 2004, p.3).

From 1962- 67, Nyerere's government policies aimed to lessen Tanzanian dependence on Britain by focusing on economic development. A Socialist platform was unveiled in 1965 that Pratt describes as "communitarian in its opposition to private land elites... and private ownership; egalitarian in its wish to limit income differentials between the rich and the poor; democratic in its insistence upon a system in which leaders are electorally responsible to the people; and liberal in its belief in freedom of discussion"(1978, pp.4-5). Concurrently, a metamorphosis took place: Nyerere began a personal journey in which he discovered his African origins and applied them to his political strategy as he moved from an "Anglicized intellectual to a profound African thinker" (Pratt, 1978, p.74).

Nyerere began to define Tanzania's core problem in terms of the need to create the modern and national equivalent to the cohesive, yet extended African family. He invented a sophisticated psychological framework that he offered all Tanzanians based on a concept familiar to them: *ujamaa*. In Swahili, *janaa* means family and thus *ujamaa* means familyhood (Akhahenda, 2004, p.126). Every Tanzanian, simultaneously became responsible to a national family in addition to their nuclear one. Within a year, Nyerere's vision for an ideal democratic society was one that would be so well integrated that the vast majority of Tanzanians would not feel the need for political parties beyond that of a single national movement. Nyerere wrote, "In a society which is united, which is like a family, the only differences will be those between individuals; that is the best starting point from which to reach the most mutually valuable compromise between the good of the individual and that of the community" (Pratt, 1978, p.70).

Finally in 1967, the government presented one of its most important documents, the Arusha Deceleration. In it Nyerere articulated TANU's principals and political strategy for national development: First, the country would work towards absolute self-reliance through socialism; and second, major means of production were placed under state control so as to avoid exploitation by any one group (Konde, 1984, p.2). Third, the Deceleration expressed Nyerere's commitment to cultural preservation, an issue that had been on his mind since independence. In his inaugural address he had said,

"A country which lacks its own culture is no more than a collection of people without the spirit which makes them a nation. Of all the crimes of colonialism, there is none worse than the attempt to make us believe that we had no indigenous culture of our own; or that [it] was worthless" (Mytton, 1983, p.111).

The Declaration marked the start of a transformative process under which Tanzania was "move from race-conscious nationalism which carried [it] to independence to a new, state-conscious patriotism as a basis of sovereign identity" (Mazuri, 1972, p.5). In essence, Tanzanian nation-building would require the socialization of Tanzanians

to a new, Tanzanian culture. The primary weapon in that battle was the most far-reaching, democratic form of communication known in Africa: the radio.

III. Nyerere, TANU and Radio Tanzania Dar es Salaam: Transforming a People

Radio broadcasting began in Tanganyika in July 1951 in an unused attic of a house in Dar es Salaam. Aimed at city residents, the unit was called the Dar es Salaam Broadcasting Station (DBS). One year later the colonial government invested 10,000 GBP to upgrade the radio service realizing the importance of broadcasting in the territory to further the colonial process. Another 55,000 GBP was invested from the colonial fund in 1954. Then on May 8, 1956, the colonial authorities inaugurated the new and improved Tanganyika Broadcasting Service (TBS) with a 20-kilowatt transmitter that increased broadcasting capability to reach as far as Johannesburg. In July of the same year, the government consolidated their national broadcasting and established the Tanganyika Broadcasting Corporation (TBC) officially as an independent broadcasting body that took over the functions of the TBS. The colonial government closely monitored programming and the Governor had absolute power to prohibit the broadcast of any programme deemed inappropriate.

By 1956, however, agitation for independence was well under way and as the dawn of liberation approached, so increased the nationalist interest in the activities of the TBC. TANU members reasoned that broadcasting should become the primary aim of government information dissemination. Idris Wakil, future Minister of Information and Tourism said, "Radio is an important basis for the country's progress. In Tanzania, where most people are illiterate... or don't understand what is happening in their own country, it is the radio alone that can educate" (Mytton, 1983, p.110). The full potential of the medium, TANU members felt, could best be achieved with greater state control of the inadequately funded TBC after independence (Reeves, 1993, p.79). Recognizing the imminent shift in power, in one of its final acts of control, the colonial government blocked the TBC from giving support to TANU (Konde, 1984, p.226). As the date of independence was established it became clear that it was too little too late.

In the early days following independence TANU and the government wanted to cool the political climate which had flared-up in the previous three years. Radio was seen as being fundamental to that goal and at one of the first post-colonial parliamentary meetings the government articulated its plans to take control over the TBC. Mytton writes that "the view was that radio should always speak with the same voice as the government... An image of national unity should be portrayed even if this was not a true reflection of reality" (1983, p.97). In fact the faith in radio was such that as the clamor began for the establishment of television in early 1962, it was rejected definitively. Minister George Kahama believed it was against Tanzanians best interests and should only come after radio reception was clear throughout the country (Konde, 1984, p.228).

It was in 1964 following an army mutiny that the government decided definitively to make broadcasting publicly owned. Fears were raised about the country's stability and forced Nyerere to centralize even further the armed services, trade unions and cooperatives, and to increase control over radio. He worried, in particular, about the power of independent media to report viewpoints different from those the government

espoused. The Minister of Information and Tourism explained to Parliament: “We are fighting a war to raise our people’s standard of living... for this reason we cannot leave the studios in the hands of a group of wealthy people who could use it as a shop for business” (Mytton, 1983, p.98). Shortly thereafter legislation was introduced in Parliament for the government to effect control over radio services. The Tanganyika Broadcasting (Dissolution) Bill was passed with unanimous support from the members of the National Assembly and on July 1, 1965 Radio Tanzania, Dar es Salaam (RTD) was established, and the Board of Directors dissolved placing RTD under the absolute control of Ministry of Information.⁴

Immediately the government launched an ambitious Five Year Plan to extend radio services into rural areas. The Plan provided for: the creation of community listening points; the building of regional and satellites stations, the replacement of transmitters and the provision of a tape transcription service for the better preservation and use of recorded material (Bourgault, 1978, p.76). In addition, a radio factory was built in the capital with foreign aid to make more receivers available. Although not all of the goals were met by the end of the five years, RTD under Nyerere’s control was more successful than the TBS. Many of the goals set by the Governor at the TBS inauguration in 1961 were not fulfilled until after independence such as the construction of several booster stations, increased reception, technical improvement, professionalization of broadcasts and staff recruitment which under TANU reached 400 by 1981 (compared to the 82 workers who ran the TBC in 1956). As well broadcasting increased from 3 hours per week in 1951 to 6AM to midnight in 1981 (Konde, 1984, pp.230-1).

What really marked RTD’s success, however, was the unique way it was designed to assist in national inclusion, cultural revolution and sustained development. TANU viewed RTD as the most effective tool in the project to create national glory and pride post-independence. In 1965, after the state-takeover, the Information Minister said, “The duty of the service is to help and sometimes even to bring about a direct ideological and attitudinal change revolution among the millions of Tanzanians” (Katz and Wedell, 1977, p.30). Radio had been established by foreigners and now had to be given a specifically Tanzanian bent. Nyerere issued a Cultural Preservation Mandate, ordering the recording and collection of traditional and contemporary Tanzanian music for broadcast.⁵ To professionalize announcers and journalists and familiarize them with the radio/development scheme, the government held seminars and study groups on mass communications and how it serves socialism, nation-building and development. A high proportion of broadcasts were dedicated to covering issues concerning liberation and freedom in Tanzania as well as in Africa and in the developing world in general. Stevenson describes a form of “development news” developed by Nyerere, which constantly promoted and reflected the country’s development. He writes,

⁴ Nyerere’s government had a near Marxist view of the freedom of the press rejecting the notion that it was a necessary aspect of freedom of speech. Rather, freedom of the press was a privilege that could, in actuality, be used to infringe upon the freedoms which were the property of all citizens (Mytton, 1983, p.107).

⁵ UNESCO figures put at less than 15% the percentage of programming that traditionally focuses on cultural issues in developing countries; Tanzania was well above that average (Bourgault, 1995, pp.86-87).

“Why did the president’s picture appear on the front page day after day? Why did his routine public appearances lead off every newscast? Why was there never a hint of corruption, incompetence, or other shortcoming? Because political development demanded that the symbol of nationhood be shown in a light that would inspire trust and confidence. Because ribbon-cutting and cornerstone laying were important symbols of nation building.” (1988, p.13)

And concurrent with these broadcasting practices, the campaign to bring the more radios, further into the rural areas charged ahead. Mytton estimates that the number of radio sets in Tanzania in 1967 was at least 500,000; and figures from audience surveys in 1960, 1967 and 1973 revealed that the number of households with radio sets was growing at an average rate of more than 100,000 annually (1983, p.109). But just how effective had their media programmes been at realizing their goals, at improving the quality of life of Tanzanians, at capturing the potential of radio?

IV. Outcomes

By the end of his reign in 1986, Nyerere had realized most of his humanitarian goals--goals that had seemed nearly impossible when he took office. By 1986 Tanzania enjoyed near universal primary school enrollment, 90% adult literacy, and life expectancy had almost doubled (Moore, 2004, p.5). Unfortunately, his economic policies did not have as much success. He had been unable to produce the foreign exchange needed to stimulate development. As well, Tanzania had developed a large trade deficit and had become the highest per-capita recipient of foreign aid and loans in Sub Saharan Africa (Moore, 2004, p.5). Mwakawago offers a useful explanation for this mixed record,

“Perhaps [the] development of a national consciousness is a much easier exercise than that of mobilizing the people to raise their living standards... [That] is a much more complicated business for it attacks tradition and well-tested ideas and practices.” (1986, p.83)

Nyerere would have to resign himself to the fact that only one-half-- albeit an important one—of his political strategy succeed. In fact, when he resigned and was asked what he wanted to be remembered for “Trying”, was all he could respond (Moore, 2004, p.6).

Yet perhaps if Nyerere could imagine that shortly after his term ended, a new, neo-liberal set of media doctrines would emerge that would undermine all state-controlled communications systems in developing countries, he would have rethought his answer. For surely he would want us to remember what public ownership of radio did for Tanzania so that the model could be replicated by other African nations. But given that his model has yet to be examined first as a refutation of the widely accepted orthodox view, and second, as an implication for other contexts, in the next and final section, I aim to do just that.

PART THREE: LESSONS LEARNED

“The media structure that results in any society is usually not an accident. It can be a matter of evolution or it can be a purposive, significant element of design.”
- Monroe Price and Peter Krug (PCCMLP, 2000, p.13)

I. Factors of Success

An analysis of radio in Tanzania reveals a number of factors mitigating the success of state-controlled radio. It is not enough that the model worked in Tanzania; to serve development we must understand how and why so that the experience might be replicated in other contexts. One of the short-comings of development theory is that, too often-- as in the case with the present orthodox media model-- it is based more on untested ideology than experience. To that end, the following section will outline what I deem to be the five most salient issues contributing to RTD's success: The leader, the language of broadcasting; the medium; programming; and timing. Some of these elements will, of course, be beyond practitioners' control; however, if we know what to look for during planning, we might do better at anticipating systemic weaknesses, increasing the chances that mass communication spurs sustained development

The Leader

Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere was an exceptional leader and is perhaps, the single most important factor in the success of radio-driven nation building in Tanzania. He was a consummate intellectual and political visionary who had a remarkable ability to unite. Of course, he benefited from the fact that Tanzanian nationalists unified under his leadership after independence giving him as the national leader, enormous influence over his people (Pratt, 1978, p.6). But he also carefully crafted his character and his innovative political beliefs. He espoused equality, democracy and socialism and benefited from a rich education (including Fabian Socialism), his religious faith and his reflections on British Colonial rule. And as all great leaders, he had a particular way of speaking to his constituents that appealed to the popular mood; he was unpretentious and drew heavily upon example, using humorous and simple allegories (Pratt, 1978, p.63). A leader that can connect with an entire population and mobilize them behind a constructive vision of nation-building is an indispensable in a development context.

Nyerere's capacity to invent the perfect hybrid Tanzanian media model was another factor in RTD's success. After independence, most African nations embraced either a Western capitalist or Soviet-Communist model of totalitarian media. Nyerere, by contrast, developed a socialist media policy that aimed to protect the country from Western and Soviet cultural influences as well as to establish cultural autonomy (Grosswiler, 1998, p.102).⁶ But, again, Nyerere's socialism was not textbook socialism: RTD used commercial advertising to support itself financially as well as to

⁶ Nyerere maintained that capitalism placed undue emphasis on the individual at the expense of the collective, and that communism was guilty of the exact opposite.

create a local market for domestic products. The Commercial Service was established to "bring about a revolutionary attitude so that [Tanzanians] appreciate and buy more of what are our own products so that the nation as a whole moves towards self-reliance" (Katz and Wedell, 1977, p.30). Moore explains, "[Advertising] created a demand and helped make the country more self-reliant. In fact, some of RTD's most popular entertainment programs were scheduled when they would attract [foreign] audiences who will hear ads for Tanzanian products" (2004, p.5).

Nyerere made shrewd observations of Tanzania's realities and a sensitive appraisal of her needs. He showed uncharacteristic concern over the moral consequences of the techniques chosen to achieve socialism. In one of his most reflective published pieces, for example, he envisions a socialist society of men who care for one another, a society based on the "ethics of love" and *ujamaa* (Pratt, 1983, p.71). His was a uniquely crafted form of socialism for Tanzanians made on moral, not necessarily economic grounds. Rather, his dominant consideration was the effect that any economic system would have on the individual and the society, not on GDP growth. Although this may not have made Nyerere the best economist, it made him the best humanist, which turned out to serve human development through broadcasting.

Nyerere also displayed a form of nationalism that had at its core a love for his people the protection of whom, for him, was fundamental. Much of that nationalism comes from a reaction to the brutal colonial experience. This would qualify a powerful breed of anti-colonial nationalism that Chatterjee posits is specific to Africa and Asia:

"Anti-colonial nationalism creates its own domain of sovereignty within colonial society... by dividing the world of social institutions and practices into two domains—the material and the spiritual... The material is the domain of the "outside", of the economy and of the state-craft; the spiritual, on the other hand, is an inner domain bearing the essential marks of cultural identity" (1983, p.6)

Any nationalist journey begins by proclaiming sovereignty over the "inner" domain, Chatterjee goes on to explain, and then moving to the "outer" (1983, p.10). This explains Nyerere's priority first with reversing the effects of colonialism by establishing a cultural and spiritual core for Tanzanians before managing economic systems and the mechanics of state building. One such example, was overcoming the distance that existed between postcolonial governments and their constituents, a reality left by the British. Laasko and Olukoshi write, "The character of the bureaucracy... and the persistence of the language of colonial governance exacerbated this cultural distance between governors and governed" (1996, p.15). The radio, combined with Nyerere's aforementioned oratory gifts served to break down that distance.

Nyerere also negotiated with uncommon brilliance the issue of creating a sense of national identity and cohesion by "creating national symbols [that] bind the various ethnic groups and define the nation's aspirations in the form of a plan and publicize that plan" (Ansah, 1986, p.47). Tanzania's plan would be based upon a combination of his ideal democratic state as a moral community, and the traditional model of an African village. "The village, whether it had a chief or not", he once said, "and many, like my own did not--was a society of equals and it conducted business through

discussion” (Pratt, 1978, 74). In his model society, the African was a free individual, very much a member of his community, but seeing no conflict between his own interest and those of his community. By giving his theories this African reference, Nyerere was able to sell this ideal to Tanzanians with success. Tanzania would, from independence onwards, be a network of villages living under a novel combination of socialist and traditional African principals such as democracy, self-reliance, sharing and work (Gosswiler, 1998, 104).

Finally what contributed to Nyerere’s success was his Pan Africanist vision. During and after the struggle for independence, he always viewed the freedom of Tanzanians as bound up with the freedom of other Africans so much so that he was quoted as saying that the freedom of Tanzanians was meaningless if other Africans were in bondage. This mentality transferred into radio broadcasts that promoted liberation struggles in neighboring countries where its signal reached. One example was RTD’s support of the overthrow of Ugandan dictator Idi Amin in September 1979 for which the Director of Radio Broadcasting at RTD was given a medal by Ugandans. In addition to having a team of journalists accompany freedom fighters, RTD launched a verbal campaign to discredit Amin and his troops. Again, in 1968, the government created the external service of the radio to aid in the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa. Nyerere wrote, “This machinery for effective propaganda is bound to succeed since its main objective is the education of the masses to imbue them with a higher standard of political consciousness” (Konde, 1984, p.233).

Uncharacteristic of many Presidents, rather than wait to lose popularity and be forced from power, Nyerere resigned in 1985 at height of his popularity. The nation, by all accounts, was stunned. He explained that he felt his work was complete and that the country now needed new leaders with new ideas (Moore, 2004, p.6). And to underscore the rarity of such a leader his successor, Vice President Ali Hassan Muinyi came to power only roll back many of Nyerere’s successes, including a move away from the ideals of ‘ujamaa’, choosing instead to move towards economic and political liberalization.⁷ Mass communications has followed the same pattern, with the introduction of private companies to compete with those of the government. These changes culminated, so to speak, with the launch of multi-partyism bringing an end to decades of one-party-rule.

Language

Language is an important issue in the African media context because, in general, to reach a wide audience, radio must employ a range of vernaculars. This would require monumental programming efforts to ration broadcasting hours in proportion with the size of minority populations. In Tanzania in 1957, over one hundred language groups were identified (Mytton, 1983, p.114) with no one spoken by more than 15% of the population (Moore, 2004, p.3). Plural broadcasting was an impossibility for RTD yet to broadcast in one language would have meant the alienation of the speakers of the other 119. The government found an ingenious solution: to broadcast exclusively⁸ in

⁷ While in office, Nyerere led a seven-year standoff with the IMF over the institutions austere policies, including devaluation of the shilling by two-thirds. By 1986, Muinyi had signed a three-year agreement with them (Gosswiler, 1998, p.107).

⁸ The national service was exclusively in Swahili; the external service also employed English.

Swahili.⁹ Paul Sozigwa, one TBC worker who became Director of RTD said in an interview, “When I first joined the TBC in July 1959 there were only ten Swahili announcers here... It did not take much time for our leaders to realize that TBC was a misfit in free Tanganyika” (Wakati, 1986, p. 200)

TANU launched a Swahili campaign in the early days of independence that gave the language a new status. It was seen not only as an administrative tool but also as a cultural revival and a uniting force for the members of the different tribes. The language was adopted remarkably easily as the Bantu languages of East Africa are all closely related to Swahili sharing a large vocabulary. In 1969 a survey revealed that although only one million Tanzanians (and Kenyans) were mother-tongue speakers of Swahili, it was the second language of 90% of Tanzanians (Mytton, 1983, p.114). It quickly became the language of Parliament, the Cabinet and the civil service and radio. Mazrui describes,

“A combination of cultural nationalism and socialistic egalitarianism has been thrusting Swahili forward in Tanzania as a strong rival to English... Cultural nationalism embraces Swahili in romantic terms of loyalty to African culture; socialistic egalitarianism is thankful to Swahili for widening the area of elite recruitment. By relying increasingly on Swahili... Tanzania has greatly increased the number of potential civic leaders and functionaries... the first vice president of Tanzania, Abeid Karume of Zanzibar, spoke no English.” (1972, p.45)

Moreover the language had the ability to mitigate all of the divisions in Tanzania—urban, rural, tribal, educational and economic. It became a nationalist form of expression. Mytton writes: “The use of a widely understood and increasingly popular language which was neither identified with any one tribal group nor with the colonial power was a great asset to the nationalists” (1983, p.114).

Broadcasting in Swahili helped promote its spread, as did the spread of the language help make broadcasting a more effective tool for national development. Although this experience seems too specific to Tanzania to be of use elsewhere, the fact is that the demographics of many African nations lend themselves to the same model. Due to movements and settlements there is a lot of bilingualism and multilingualism in Africa. Local languages tend to be spoken by small communities and are not understood by outsiders, but there are usually other languages that are spoken over extensive areas with some local variations. Thus the problem posed by linguistic pluralism in broadcasting can be easily negotiated in most contexts.

The Medium

In the South, radio lends itself to national development more than any other form of mass communications. On a practical level, radio receivers are cheap (\$10 plus batteries, or \$70 for a non-battery operated, wind-up model) (World Bank, 2003, p.3); and they do not need to be plugged in. Also, receivers are widespread in developing

⁹ Swahili is a trade language with Arabic traces, it had developed over centuries through commerce between tribal fiefdoms and Arab merchants along the East African Coast (Moore, 2004, p.3).

nations¹⁰; according to World Bank statistics, only 4% of the world has access to the internet, while 77% of the world has access to radio (World Bank, 2003, p.4). In addition, given that functional literacy rates in Africa are only 50%, radio, not print, is the primary medium to reach the people. In the 1997 UNESCO World Communication report it is noted,

“The radio is the most widespread branch of media on every continent... It is a branch whose use has become most commonplace, in particular in developing countries, on the one hand because of the relative marginality of the difficulty for most of the population in gaining access to the written press. In addition, group listening provides radio with a wider audience and thus enhances the introduction of new social practices.” (UNESCO, 1997, p.134)

Programming

To exploit the potential of the medium for development, it is crucial that radio programming be created with that goal in mind. RTD was specifically concerned with national identity development-- the import of which will be discussed shortly—as was reflected in their mandate. Three years after the Arusha Declaration, RTD was charged with: 1) Defending national independence and dignity; 2) enhancing the construction of socialism; 3) participating in the liberation of Africa; 4) maintaining African unity; 5) following a non-aligned policy in ideological struggles; and 6) maintaining peace and justice (Wakati, 1986, p.173). It is this potent mix of using the media to promote liberation struggles against colonial rule, coupled with theoretical support for media-driven development that garnered high levels of public support and listenership, as well as guaranteed that state control over broadcasting would be unchallenged (van de Veur, 2003, p.86).

Effective development programming must be buttressed by other human and economic development schemes. The kind of changes that result from a media system are not direct but are informed by the wider institutional environment such as existing political, cultural and market patterns (O’Neil, 1998, p.7). If citizens don’t see a connection between the government’s message and their actions, confidence will be lost. In Tanzania when the government launched a major project to build schools in villages, RTD participated with several hours of educational programs daily for children and adults. In addition to basic education, villagers were instructed on eliminating mosquitoes, building latrines, and basic sanitation (Moore, 2004, p.4). What’s more, President Nyerere established the Ministry of National Culture and Youth as “a vital instrument in the recovery and construction of a national cultural heritage”; and a national dancing troupe that traveled inland performing traditional dances (Reeves, 1993, p.80).

Programming was also geared toward cultural education. To further interest in Tanzanian culture, as mentioned earlier, in the mid-1960s foreign music was restricted and recording missions were sent into the interior to register regional music to fill airtime. Interest in native music grew such that a local commercial recording industry was born and even today foreign music can only be played upon request, and

¹⁰ On the transmission side as well, radio can be relatively cheap: a low power transmission unit can cost only \$100 (World Bank, 2003, p.3).

then it is not to exceed 30% of all music played (Grosswiler, 1998). RTD also benefited from a high proportion of programming devoted to news, current events, information and adult education. More than 50% of radio programming is dedicated to serious broadcasts, well above the 40% average in other developing countries (Katz and Wedell, 1977, p.152). The Commercial Service even devoted 40% of its programming to information. As well, around the mid-sixties, the government issued a policy that broadcasts-- which had previously focused on the activities of government officials-- would begin to cover the common Tanzania. The thinking was to give broadcasts less of an elitist and centralist take on the country.

Yet, the most important thing that the Tanzanian experience teaches about well-structured radio programming is that lends itself perfectly to national identity development and national inclusion. First, the effect of a mass of people receiving the same message simultaneously is a powerful one.¹¹ Cantril and Allport write, "When a million or more people hear the same subject matter... when their attention is held in the same way and at the same time, it is psychologically inevitable that they should acquire in some degree common interests, common tasks, and common attitudes" (Ansah, 1986, p.48). Lucian Pye writes of the psychological influence of radio that make it indispensable for national integration and nation-building: "Traditional patterns of communication tend to reinforce sub national identities. Word of mouth communications are basic to sub national identities such as local and regional ones and ethnic groups. It is the emergence of the mass media that opens the way for formulating larger collective identities which become the national identity" (Pye, 2004, p.50). But why is this important?

The answer is, for long-term peace and sustained development. Multiethnic societies without a cohesive national identity, tend to suffer from unrest that poses grave threats to the capacities and structures of the state. Amienyi explains: "A social system lacking some measure of integration will undoubtedly spend more of the human and material resources needed to raise living standards on coping with the centrifugal forces of regional disaffection and rebellion" (2004, p.108). And in Africa, such multiethnic societies and such regional rebellions are common. One Organization of African Unity (OAU) report revealed that Africa experienced 26 conflicts between 1963 and 1998 affecting 62% of the population; of the 26 conflicts, 19 were classified as intrastate (Akhahenda, 2004, p.122.) Ethnic conflict frustrates development in many ways such as the hoarding of natural resources by the ruling group, or obsessing over racial and ethnic hegemony which can lead to exile or massacres. Or it can simply stunt economic growth by scaring away investment and destroying infrastructure. Angola, for example, is one of the wealthiest countries in Africa possessing as much as 11% of the world's diamond deposits. Yet, despite its wealth Angolans have been unsuccessful at exploiting the country's natural resources to improve living standards because violent conflict has led to the destruction of

¹¹ In his seminal essay "Encoding/decoding" Stuart Hall's puts forth an interesting challenge to common perceptions of how media messages are received. He argues that the "preferred dominant reading" of the broadcasters message is not automatically adopted by listeners. Rather different communities react to the same message for different reasons based on their social, political and economic standing. That is, Tanzanians could have united for reasons other than a desire for national unity but because they saw in it opportunities for group, or personal advancement (Hall, 1980, p.135). This does not change the fact that Tanzanians all accepted RTD's politics but begs the question of how messages can be constructed so as to have the maximum possible appeal to the maximum number of social, economic and political interests.

human capital and wasted investment opportunities for almost 25 years (Akhahenda, 2004, p.121).

By contrast, Nyerere knew he had to navigate the inherent contradiction between the idea of a united Tanzania and the reality that the country was multi-lingual, multi-cultural, and multi-religious. With so many disparate groups Nyerere used nationalism to create an “imagined community” as articulated by Benedict Anderson - an invented nation, a perceived political community-- that post-colonialism, the country so desperately needed (Anderson, 1983, p.6). As Laasko and Adebayo explain, any “viable nation-state project in Africa must involve the negotiation of a new social and national bargain which takes full cognizance of... diversity” (1996, p.11). To that end TANU created a “supra-tribal national movement” (Pratt, 1978, p.77) that would unite Tanganyikans in pursuit of a common goal. Citizens would have a national identity in addition to their tribal one, one that could rival or overtake it in importance during the crucial early stages of nation-building. Akhahenda refers to this as a “meta-ethnic identity” that allows the ethno-cultural community to imagine a secure universe without considering ethnicity as the primary or only frame of reference” (2004, pp.126-7). As Mwakawago writes,

“The cultivation of a larger consciousness requires the popularization of concepts that cut across narrow ethnic and parochial considerations. Thus our country, our government... The symbolism of statehood need to become the focuses of loyalty in place of the tribal chief and the village headman.” (1986, p.83)

Nyerere’s idea, however, was never to eliminate ethnic difference; Swahili, for example, was proposed as a national language in addition to mother-tongues, not in place of them. Enforced homogeneity was seen as criminal and had been attempted by colonialists.¹² Nyerere’s plan rather was to create one national identity that affirmed the equality, connection and kinship of all Tanzanians. And it worked. Since independence, Tanzania has enjoyed a remarkably high degree of political stability. Forty years later, observers marvel that Tanzanians think of themselves as Tanzanians as often if not more often than as members of an ethnic community. This has enabled the country to undergo processes of democratization since the late 80s much more effectively and peacefully—albeit more slowly—than countries where similar changes have taken place.

Timing

Historical context plays a large role in determining the character and effect of radio-driven development even though it is beyond the control of development practitioners. In Tanzania that determining context was colonialism, which left a legacy of state-control. In most of Africa radio broadcasting began under colonialism and was under complete government control. The state held a monopoly on all mass communications, little freedom of expression existed, the colonial government banned the importation of “inappropriate” publications and most programming was

¹² The idea of a homogenous nation-state was superimposed on Africa in the late 19th to early 20th centuries by colonialists. Driven by economic and political interests they changed the map of the continent resulting in the creation of arbitrary nation-states that were multi-ethnic (Laakso and Olukoshi, 1996, p.12)

relayed from Britain and France. A network of laws and regulations were created to prevent the creation of free mass media and protect the state monopoly. After independence many of these laws and bureaucratic devices used by British to prohibit free expression were upheld—or even upgraded—by new African governments. Martin writes, “The striking characteristic of the coming of independence and the two decades that followed is not the extent to which they represented a break with the colonial past, but rather their remarkable continuity with that past” (1998, p.66). Tanganyika was no different. Nyerere exercised control over newspapers through amendments to the colonial Newspapers Ordinance to suspend publications when he deemed it in the public’s interest. So RTD, it seems, also enjoyed success because Tanzanians were used to state-control over communications. As well, critical to the triumph of state-controlled media was the Cold War context. “When it served East/West interests, financial and moral backing was provided to enhance media services to new-born states” (van der Veur, 2003, p.86) regardless of what form the media services took.

II. Looking Ahead

Once we except that under the right circumstances state-controlled media can be a positive force in development, and that it is critical at the start of independence¹³ then we must ask what comes next. Does a country continue with state-control forever? I argue that state monopoly should be instituted in the period following revolution (or long-term crisis) until some level of national cohesion is achieved. It should be seen, however, as the first in a series of steps towards more evolved forms of media. Price and Krug write, “that each step is a movement from one set of media structures to another. These are windows of opportunity, moments to think through what kind of media that society needs” (2000, p.13). What I am proposing is that after a period wherein communication is manipulated and disseminated from a single benevolent centre, developing nations move through the following three “long term” broadcast models until finding the right model or combination of models for that country:

Community Radio

Since the early 1990s there has been a trend towards the decentralization of national radio services in Africa both in reaction to state-monopolized broadcasting as well as as part of a larger debate on political pluralism and public access to the means of communication. This has resulted in the proliferation of small independent community stations that give voice to local communities, religious groups, ethnic minorities etc. and serves as a virtual public forum announcing births, deaths, emergencies and medical advice. In general, they have very modest budgets and survive on voluntary workers and donations from sponsors (UNESCO, 1997, p.134). Community radio can only flourish when governments are confident that the creation of autonomous regional stations will not serve as focal points for regional or ethnic loyalties to rival national ones. Also, states will have to legalize local radio where it hasn’t, issue spectrum licenses, and open frequencies for new stations to be formed. Community radio stations have the potential to become “innovator private entities” or harbingers of a free market. Price and Krug explain that as these stations mature, they

¹³ Although the scope of this paper does not permit a longer discussion, I argue that this formula holds as well the period immediately following a violent conflict, or dictatorship.

will find themselves in joint ventures with foreign investors and larger media companies (PCMLP, 2000, p.8). This could represent the very organic transition from community radio to privatization.

Privatization

I have criticized rampant privatization in developing nations and would like to distinguish the liberal rhetoric that associates democracy and commercialization, from a form of regulated, developmental privatization that I advocate here. This form grows out of a need to expand the reach and plurality of community stations to make them more sophisticated and better capable of serving communities. Coming off of the Nyerere years, Grosswiler writes, "Tanzania has built a self-reliant foundation that has enabled the emerging private press and the government to proceed gradually toward greater press freedom through a difficult but promising process" (1998, p.101). Thus emerging from the right past, privatization can be a positive force for development.

Some level of commercialization is inevitable in developing nations, given that current broadcasting structures "have shifted from a predominantly national basis to a much more complex system in which regional, national and transnational broadcasting coexist" (Hallin, 1998, p.156). Plus, non-existent advertising base and production and distribution costs make it impossible for community radio to expand without financial assistance. Small-scale commercialization can generate the needed funds as it did for RTD when it became clear that it was necessary to advertise and issue license fees to sustain itself. This is not necessarily a bad thing. There is substantial evidence that the move to plural broadcasting has resulted in the creation of regulatory and legislative bodies that favor a plural media landscape. Sreberny offers that privatization and commercialization alongside state systems may have the effect of forcing the latter to improve its performance and broaden the scope of perspectives represented: "The pressure of the global market might actually offer something new and more open to the regional audience as well as exerting pressure upon states to reform" (2001, p.112). The danger of privatization in an African context is that the airwaves could become inundated with foreign broadcasts. Governments then must privatize with caution and demand guarantees from foreign governments, investors and donors to serve human development.

Public Service Broadcasting

Under a public service monopoly the media is in public hands but the governors of the system are autonomous of the executive and legislative chambers. Many media theorists maintain that public service broadcasting is the only media format that lends itself to the creation of plural societies with genuine human development. Price and Raboy call it "an ideal, more of a consummation of citizen desires and an element of a perfected democracy" (2001, p1). The tendency in contemporary broadcasting has been towards mixed regulatory systems in which there are both private and public broadcasters. In the US, mass media has been market-driven with public broadcasting designed to compensate for "market failures". In Europe, however, public service broadcasting has been a point of departure with the private sector serving as a mechanism for effective competition and opportunities for plurality of voices. This model, or some form of it, is the one to which transitioning societies should be aspiring over time.

Naturally there are several complexities of public service broadcasting namely that “it finds itself in the uneasy perch between state broadcasting (where there is direct dominance) and commercial broadcasting, the seemingly inexorable consequences of widely lauded “market forces” (Price and Raboy, 2001, p.1). Each sector has its own interests, lobbies and consequences. Public service broadcasting must be instituted with care especially in transitioning societies. The state must be willing, for example, to tolerate criticism and stay out of management. Also programming must be able to compete with polished channels of global entertainment. The British Broadcasting Company is an exceptional model. Founded in 1927, it has documented high-listener loyalty and broad-ranging programming including accurate and impartial news. More important is the rare balance struck between state control and independence--its board of governors (appointed by government official) is accountable to the government, however, its charter establishes it as an independent corporation, protecting its freedom from government interference into content, management and timing of broadcasts (World Bank, 2002a, p.7). The long-term prospects for the shift to public service broadcasting depend on the existence of democratic governance and on sustained economic growth (Heath, 2001, p.10). Whether public service broadcasting is decided by a government to be one leg of the journey forward or the destination itself, issues such as standards of independence, impartiality, universal access and special considerations for minorities-- issues that characterize the model-- should be addressed and institutionalized.

III. Conclusion

In discussions of development in the South, little attention has been given to the role of state-controlled media. Instead, practitioners choose to focus on issues of openness, good governance, privatization and economic development impeding a deeper understanding of what kind of broadcasting, in what kind of society, performs what functions in development. If, however, we abandon the one-dimensional mainstream approach, we find evidence that in some cases, it is necessary to advocate state monopoly because it can serve national identity in transition periods, and because national identity development is a fundamental factor of sustained development. From there, development practitioners must work within the context to understand which media model should follow, playing with the three formulas discussed and perhaps even inventing others. Only then will the already recognized potential of radio expand to include more creative uses of the medium that can lead to long term stability and growth.

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