Beyond normative dewesternization: examining media culture from the vantage point of the Global South

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Forthcoming in: The Global South,
http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublication?journalCode=globalsouth

ABSTRACT
This article examines five dominant conceptualizations of "the Global South" in the field of media and communication studies, and more specifically in the subfields of (1) comparative media studies, (2) international communication or global media studies, and (3) development communication. Engaging with the broader calls made by a number of scholars since the early 2000s to "dewesternize," "decolonize," or "internationalize" the field, I argue that the Global South continues to be theorized *from* the vantage point of the Global North. Instead of understanding the Global South on its own terms, scholarship frequently appreciates the role of media and communication only insofar as it emerges from, represents the negative imprint of, or features the active intervention of the Global North. Such accounts have failed to acknowledge the agency of the Global South in the production, consumption, and circulation of a much richer spectrum of media culture that is not *a priori* defined in opposition to or in conjunction with media from the Global North. In advocating for a shift from media systems to media cultures, I hope to contribute to an approach that practices media and communication studies *from* the Global South, grounded in the everyday life experiences of ordinary people but always situated against the background of crucial processes such as neoliberalization, which have not only had drastic implications for the division of labor between the state and market in the area of media and communication but have also produced radical changes in the lives of the majority of people living in the Global South.

INTRODUCTION
Despite its limitations, the term "the Global South" offers great potential to relocate debates in the field of media and communication studies from the center to the periphery. In the late 1990s and 2000s, a number of primarily US- and Europe-based scholars raised concern about the Eurocentricity of media and communication studies and called for an "internationalization" or "de-westernization" of the field (Downing; Curran and Park; McMillin; Thussu, *Internationalizing*; Wang). Their primary critique was that the majority of studies in the field of media and communication arose out of a Western context; there was therefore a need to broaden the spectrum of case studies so as to better reflect all regions of the world. However, as I argue elsewhere, these calls did not always challenge the wider, skewed political economy of academic knowledge production that has marginalized existing analyses of media and communication in Asia, Africa, and Latin America (Willems, "Provincializing"). First of all, the calls indirectly assumed that scholars from the Global South had not been involved in producing academic knowledge on media and communication previously, thereby silencing a whole body of knowledge. Secondly, the calls primarily demanded that underrepresented regions of the world be present in media and communication

studies, but in doing so, scholars did not necessarily challenge the way in which these regions had been presented previously or should be represented in future; nor did they deal with the question of epistemology. This led to what I call here "normative dewesternization," which I define as the act of representing "the Other" but from within the prism and norms of "the Self."

Of course, postcolonial scholars have referred to a much longer history of Orientalism in Western knowledge production, which has often depicted "the East" as inferior Other (Said). Such studies have shown how these representations were by no means innocent but intimately tied to, and in service of, the project of European colonialism. V. Y. Mudimbe has invoked the term epistemological ethnocentrism, which for him equals "the belief that scientifically there is nothing to be learned from 'them' unless it is already 'ours' or comes from 'us'" (15). As I argue in this article, the field of media and communication studies continues to be characterized by a degree of Eurocentrism which has tended to sanitize "Western history while patronizing and even demonizing the non-West. It thinks of itself in terms of its noblest achievements—science, progress, humanism—but of the non-West in terms of its deficiencies, real or imagined" (Shohat and Stam 3).

Recent work that proposes to theorize the world *from* the vantage point of the Global South has great potential to enable us to understand media culture in Asia, Africa, and Latin America on its own terms instead of as negative imprints of "the West" (cf. Connell; Comaroff and Comaroff). A number of (primarily Latin American) scholars have advocated for the need to decolonize epistemic perspectives.[1] For Grosfoguel, such a project "requires a broader canon of thought than simply the Western canon" and implies taking "seriously the epistemic perspective/cosmologies/insights of critical thinkers from the Global South thinking *from* and *with* subalternized racial/ethnic/sexual spaces and bodies" ("Decolonizing" 3, emphasis added). These critical interventions configure the Global South not simply as a victim of the North or as a place filled with "raw data" but instead as a part of the world that has agency, a place from which we can start theorizing the human condition.

Such an approach—which promotes an understanding of the Global South on its own terms—relates to more positive appropriations of the terms "the Third World" and "the Global South," which carry different meanings depending on one's geographical, ideological, or intellectual location. Of course, the term "Third World" emerged as a residual category, part of the post-Second World War world order that divided the world into three parts, each aligned or non-aligned with the key ideological positions that emerged during the Cold War: the capitalist First World, the communist Second World, and the non-aligned Third World (Escobar). The term is also a product of modernization theory which considered capitalism the model economic system that all nations of the world had to adopt in order to reach the advanced stage of "development" that the First World had achieved. However, in a more positive sense, as part of what has been referred to as "Third Worldism," the term has been deployed as "both a mobilising idea to complete the tasks of decolonisation, and a means of reorganising global relationships" (Dirlik,"Spectres" 133). Similarly, the term "Global South," which more or less came to replace the term "Third World" in the post-Cold War era, has multiple meanings. As Levander and Mignolo have pointed out, for some (and particularly for those in the Global North),

> [t]he Global South is the location of underdevelopment and emerging nations that needs the "support" of the Global North (G7, IMF, World Bank, and the like). However, from the perspective of the inhabitants (and we say consciously inhabitants rather than "citizens," regional or global), the "Global South" is the location where new visions of the future are emerging and where the global political and decolonial society is at work. (3)

The emancipatory potential of the term "Global South" is again underlined by Dirlik, who has argued that "[w]hile the 'Third World' is no longer a viable concept geo-politically or as political project, it may still provide an inspiration for similar projects presently that may render the Global South into a force in the reconfiguration of global relations" ("Global" 12). Hence, much as the term "Third World" was adopted as a revolutionary notion by African and Asian intellectuals—a political project that would finally bring an end to colonialism—the term "Global South" has for some operated "as a signifier of oppositional subaltern cultures ranging from Africa, Central and Latin America, much of Asia, and even those 'Souths' within a larger perceived North, such as the U.S. South and Mediterranean and Eastern Europe" (López 8). This particular interpretation of the term Global South is not located in any specific geographical area but refers to a more general state of oppression and marginalization that brings together nations and people of the Global South. It refers less to a place or location but is instead associated with a broader progressive political project that seeks to recover the agency of the Global South.

The shared experience of colonialism that could bind nations of the Global South into a common project has, however, also been challenged by some who have argued that the experience of colonialism differed greatly among nations of the Global South. Given their different experiences, it is problematic to invoke the term as a homogenous category, thereby grouping nations which do not necessarily share a common history nor agree on a common future. It could be argued that levels of stratification have increased even further through the success of emerging economies in Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (often called BRICS nations), which has reinforced inequalities *within* the Global South. For example, Patrick Bond points to the growing "sub-imperialism" of the BRICS, whose "agenda of re-legitimising neoliberalism does not just reinforce North American power" but also replicates global imperialist power dynamics at a more local level as these countries take "control of their hinterlands for the sake of regional capitalist hegemony" (252). Hence, on the one hand, the term "Global South" is useful in that it points to "the continuing imbalance of economic and political power between (and not only within) the world's nations" (Randall 52), but on the other hand, it runs the risk of glossing over the growing power differentials *among* nations of the Global South.

Acknowledging both the emancipatory potential and the analytical limitations of the term, this article examines how the Global South has been imagined in three subfields of the broader terrain of media and communication studies: (1) comparative media studies, (2) international communication or global media studies, and (3) development communication. Of course, any attempt to represent involves imposing a "discipline" on what has been said, a silencing of some voices and a selection and seemingly "natural" classification of issues. As John Tomlinson has argued (following from Foucault), "[t]his element of domination in representation is unavoidable: it is a function of academic discourse" (28). Hence, this article should not be read as a fully comprehensive overview of research on media and communication in the Global South but as an attempt to offer a sense of the dominant ways in which the Global South has been framed in the field and also to highlight productive methodological interventions.

IMAGINING THE "GLOBAL SOUTH" IN MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES

In media and communication studies, we can distinguish a number of ways in which the Global South has been imagined. First of all, in comparative media studies, which has been inspired by comparative politics and mainstream political science, the Global South has largely been understood through the prism of media systems analysis. While the Global North

is largely seen as a beacon of media freedom and liberal democracy, the Global South is presented as a region with an inferior media system characterized by strong state intervention and lack of press freedom (cf. Rantanen, "Critique"). Early studies such as *Four Theories of the Press* constructed Africa and Asia as places where media freedom was absent and authoritarian regimes maintained firm control over media (Siebert et al.). This normative, hierarchical classification of predominantly national media systems—which contrasts libertarian media-state relations in the Global North with authoritarian media-state relations in the Global South—has to a certain extent been reproduced in more recent studies (Curran and Park; Hallin and Mancini) which have claimed to be committed to dewesternizing media studies. The tendency to represent media systems in the Global South as negative imprints of a presumably superior, Western liberal-democratic model of media-state relations is profoundly related to the wider role of geopolitics in creating an ideological division of the world into so-called "superior," "developed" and "inferior," "underdeveloped" regions (cf. Willems, "The Ballot"). Such a division has done little to promote a more grounded understanding of media in the Global South but has instead interpreted media systems through the normative lens of the Global North and has emphasized their lack, their deviation from Western norms.

In the field of international communication or global media studies,[2] a second conceptualization of the Global South emerged in the 1970s through more critical analyses, inspired by Latin American dependency theory scholars such as Andre Gunder-Frank and Immanuel Wallerstein. These framed the Global South (or the "Third World" as it was then known in the context of the Cold War) in a dependent relationship to the West, as recipient of Western media products originating from powerful transnational corporations. Initially, the debate primarily revolved around the disproportionate power of large, transnational news agencies such as Reuters, Agence France Presse (AFP), United Press International (UPI), and Associated Press (AP) to perpetuate highly unequal, global flows of information. Later, emphasis shifted to the dominant role of the United States and Europe in the entertainment industries through their growing export of television programs and films (McPhail). Cheap television drama series and technological goods were dumped in the "Third World," thereby spreading capitalist ideologies and further reproducing an unequal world system in which the Third World was increasingly made dependent on the First World.

Oliver Boyd-Barrett defined media imperialism as "the process whereby the ownership, structure, distribution, or content of the media in any country are singly or together subject to substantial external pressures from the media interests of any other country or countries, without proportionate reciprocation of influence by the country so affected" (117). He emphasized the uneven global circulation of media products—and international news in particular—but other scholars argued that he attributed too much weight to media. They advocated for a broader definition of cultural imperialism (Galtung; Schiller; Tunstall; Tomlinson) and a closer examination of "the relationship of the media to other aspects of culture without assuming its centrality from the outset" (White 4). For example, Schiller considered the domain of culture to be crucial in the reproduction of the wider, unequal global world system. He was not only interested in how the domain of culture in itself was marked by inequalities but also how this helped to perpetuate other economic or political imbalances. For him, cultural imperialism was "the sum of the processes by which a society is brought into the modern world system and how its dominating stratum is attracted, pressured, forced, and sometimes bribed into shaping social institutions to correspond to, or even to promote, the values and structures of the dominant centre of the system" (Schiller 9).

Scholars who raised their concern about media or cultural imperialism often based their arguments on empirical—mostly quantitative—studies, which offered evidence for the

existence of unbalanced, unidirectional flows of TV program material and foreign news from the First to the Third World (e.g. Nordenstreng and Varis; Sreberny-Mohammadi et al.).While both media and cultural imperialism scholars were concerned about the loss of "Third World" culture and identity as a result of the uneven flow of global cultural products, news and information, a rapidly changing and globalizing world provoked a number of critical responses in the field of international communication that began to emphasize the agency of the Global South in the area of media and culture. This resulted in more positive conceptualizations of the Global South, but I argue that these were still largely framed in terms of their response, reaction, and resistance *to* the North.

The third conceptualization that can be distinguished contended that Third World populations were by no means passive in their encounter with Western cultural products. Inspired by the emergence of qualitative active audience studies in the late 1980s and early 1990s,[3] this strand offered a more complicated picture of culture, engaging with concepts such as hybridity and heterogeneity. For example, in their research, Tamar Liebes and Elihu Katz highlighted the polysemic ways in which the television drama *Dallas* was interpreted by viewers from different cultural backgrounds. Similarly, John Fiske described the oppositional way in which young urban Aborigines in Australia made sense of old Westerns shown on television. He found that they would "ally themselves with the Indians, cheer them on as they attack the wagon train or homestead, killing the white men and carrying off the white women." In essence, Fiske discovered that the young Aborigines "evade the white colonialist ideology of the Western to make their popular culture out of it" (*Understanding* 25). In this third conceptualization, Third World audiences watching Western television products were not passive in their engagement with these but were actively making sense of content, imbuing it with their own meaning.

These divergent interpretations of media/cultural imperialisms resulted largely from the different ways in which scholars constructed their object of study or unit of analysis. Scholars tracking the imbalance between sites where cultural products were produced and consumed utilized a macro-level, political-economy approach that drew attention to issues around ownership and import and export figures. Audience scholars, on the other hand, adopted a micro-perspective that started from the way in which individual audience members made sense of cultural products. The contrast between the two approaches has been summed up well by Sreberny-Mohammadi as follows:

> One position is that of the happy postmodernist who sees that many kinds of cultural texts circulate internationally and that people adopt them playfully and readily integrate them in creative ways into their own lives, and that cultural bricolage is the prevailing experience as we enter the twenty-first century. Another is the melancholy political economist who sees the all-persuasive reach of the multinationals and wonders how long distinctive cultures can outlast the onslaught of the western culture industries. (199)

In addition to work that began to highlight the agency of Third World audiences in media *reception*, a fourth conceptualization of the Global South emerged which emphasized the growing role of Asia, Latin America, and Africa in the *production* of news and entertainment. This body of work primarily critiqued the direction and intensity of cultural flows identified by media and cultural imperialism scholars, and argued that the Global South was no longer merely a recipient of cultural products but was increasingly gaining a place for itself as part of the global cultural industries. New regional cultural production hubs emerged, such as India's Bollywood and Latin America's *telenovela* industry, which for some represented a "contraflow" to dominant flows of cultural products from First World to Third World, from North to South (Straubhaar; Boyd-Barrett and Thussu; Sinclair, Jacka,

and Cunningham; Thussu, *Electronic, Media*). Similarly, and more recently, scholars have pointed to the rise of new global broadcasting channels such as Qatar-based Al Jazeera, which for some have challenged hegemonic news agendas of "the West" and are "reshaping world politics" (Seib), "talking back" (Ustad Figenschou), "challenging the world" (Miles), "rattling governments and redefining modern journalism" (El-Nawawy and Iskander), and representing "new Arab media" (Zayani) or a "new Arab public" (Lynch). According to this body of research, new media industries in the Global South are not only producing content for their own domestic markets but also exporting products back to the North—or other parts of the South (cf. Larkin, "Indian Films")—thereby to a certain extent challenging the power of Western media and cultural industries.

This perspective is related to other accounts that describe the process of cultural globalization as resulting in a world no longer characterized by a clear center and a distinct periphery. These scholars now see a complex patchwork of interconnected and overlapping deterritorialized spheres, what Appadurai calls "scapes." Cultural flows are no longer unidirectional from North to South but multidirectional and more complicated. A key problem of this conceptualization, however, is that it still largely frames the Global South through the prism of a predefined relationship to the Global North instead of understanding it on its own terms. While the third and fourth conceptualizations acknowledge the agency of the Global South in terms of media reception and production, the agency ascribed is largely reactive and residual, always defined in response to the Global North rather than treated as a self-reliant driving force on its own. Of course, the Global North continues to play a crucial role in media landscapes of the Global South, but this role should not be considered *a priori*, as such an assumption ends up underplaying the agency of the Global South. Moreover, it also runs the risk of masking other types of power relationships such as those among nations of the Global South or intra-national power relations defined by race, ethnicity, or language.

Apart from these four conceptualizations of the Global South, a fifth dominant representation can be distinguished in the subfield of development communication which, I argue, has largely represented the Global South as a site of strategic (often Western-driven and/or funded) "communication for development" (ComDev) interventions. This scholarship aims at "modernizing" and "developing" populations through, for example, the dissemination of health and agricultural information via mass media (Lerner; Pye; Schramm; Lerner and Schramm), or promoting participation of communities in their own development, or political, economic, or social empowerment (Servaes, *Communication for Development: One World*). More recently, studies on media, communication and development have increasingly shifted from a focus on "communication for/and development" to a focus on "communication for/and social change."[4] Both approaches to development communication share a belief in the *potential* role of media and communication in bringing about development and social change. Often cast in the language of social engineering, many studies in this field construct their object of study around a planned communication intervention (not infrequently funded by a Northern non-governmental organization) with the aim of assessing the impact or anticipating the potential effects of such an intervention. This has indirectly, again, drawn our attention to the agency of the Global North in media landscapes of the Global South, thereby neglecting to understand *actually existing* roles of media and communication in processes of development and social change that are taking place outside the context of Western development interventions.

EXAMINING MEDIA CULTURE FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH

So far, I have reviewed five dominant conceptualizations of the Global South in three subfields of media and communication studies: comparative media studies, international

communication or global media studies, and development communication. I have argued that in all of these framings, the analysis tends to start from the center revolving outward to the periphery, thereby viewing the Global South largely *through* the prism and norms of the Global North. While it cannot be denied that the cultural and technological industries of the Global North have impacted and continue to impinge on media landscapes in the Global South, scholars' Euro-/US-centric focus has prevented a fuller appreciation of what media and communication may mean in the context of the Global South, and how media texts, processes of production, and reception link up with local concerns and priorities. Instead of automatically relating all that transpires in the Global South as an effect of the agency or power of the Global North, I propose here that the Global South should function as the starting point of the analysis. In this regard, Kraidy and Murphy have also advocated for

> an approach to the local that ventures beyond prevalent conceptualizations of "the local" [i.e. periphery, Global South] as something that exists in suspended opposition with "the global" [i.e. center, Global North], where the local acts as the global's presumptive victim, its cultural nemesis, or its coerced subordinate. A richer notion of the local should enable the exploration of power relations within the local and not focus exclusively on power as exercised by the global on the local. (346)

A grounded, inductive methodology—as is conventionally associated with ethnographic work—would allow for a less prescriptive, cross-cultural comparison of mediated texts and audience practices that would avoid the normative classification of global media-state relations adopted in comparative media systems analysis.[5] Furthermore, by following the flow of Western cultural products from center to periphery, or in reverse direction, international communication or global media studies scholars have implicitly reproduced a Eurocentric approach which may have, in some instances, overstated the impact of the Global North and framed the agency of the Global South only in so far as it reacts and responds to or resists the Global North. A more grounded approach would start its analysis from the Global South and connect it to the Global North only in so far as this is warranted by empirical findings. In many ways, the emerging subfield of "media anthropology" has already adopted such an approach by shedding light on the role of media and communication from the vantage point of people's everyday lives in different parts of the Global South. Media anthropologists have both highlighted the importance of the social and cultural context of media and communication and have studied their role in people's everyday lives (Ginsburg, Abu-Lughod, and Larkin; Askew and Wilk; Peterson; Rothenbuhler and Coman). They have also pointed to the importance of ethnography in researching the role of media in development and social change (Slater and Miller; Horst and Miller; Slater).

A key strength of an ethnographic focus is that it allows for an examination of the contextual meaning and power of media and communication. For example, media institutions such as public broadcasters do not have the same legitimacy or symbolic power everywhere, nor do they have the same infrastructural reach. Similarly, the practice of going to the cinema may vary quite radically in different settings. In some contexts, it may have disappeared due to the rise of cheap DVD encoders while in other places it may continue to remain part of an important social gathering. Anthropology's concern with meaning and context ensures that we do not presuppose that certain forms of media and communication have the same universal meaning and power everywhere but instead interrogate these in context. While my use of the term "the role of media and communication" in this article may come across as rather imprecise and vague, this open-endedness is deliberate in order to encourage attention to the varied contextual meanings attached to different forms of media and communication.

Media anthropology's interest in and preoccupation with context should, however, not be equated with a belief that the Global South is by nature a radically different place that can only be understood in context. Instead, context is considered to be crucial in all settings, whether in the Global North or Global South. Hence, the concern with context does not imply that the Global South is simply a space of "raw data" to be made sense of through "Western theory." Indeed, a number of scholars are beginning to engage more explicitly with the question of what form theoretical debates on media and communication may take if they start from the vantage point of, for example, Nigeria (Larkin, *Signal*), India (Sundaram, *No Limits*; Sundaram, *Pirate Modernity*), or Peru (Chan). These scholars have demonstrated not only an interest in interrogating media culture in specific contexts in the Global South but also a commitment to reflecting on how their analyses could potentially aid in understanding media and communication in the Global North. For instance, Larkin asks himself

> […] what a theory of media would look like if it began from Nigeria rather than Europe or the United States. Would it look the same? Would the conditions of existence for media […] make media theory look different? Is it just a case of exceptionalism, a vivification of anthropological difference inscribed in media theory? Or do these differential conditions interrupt assumptions about media, highlighting processes played down in analyses that ground media in the social and political configurations of the United States or Europe? (*Signal* 253)

While its concern with meaning and context is a key strength, a possible limitation of media anthropology could be that as a result of its focus on micro-context and everyday practices, it has often neglected to connect local media culture to larger structures, power relations, and global processes. As Kraidy and Murphy have argued, "the local cannot be understood as a locus of study that is detached from the larger forces of history, politics, economics, or military conflict. Rather, the local needs to be understood as the space where global forces become recognizable in form and practice as they are enmeshed in local human subjectivity and social agency" (339). Media anthropology has not always sufficiently taken into account these broader structures and, instead, has tended to focus on local forms of agency.

Recent work on comparative approaches to media culture—rather than normative, comparative media systems analysis—may be able to offer an approach that does not isolate the local or national but instead connects it analytically to the regional and global, and allows for comparative research on both the territorial aspects of national media culture and the deterritorial features of media culture, which are shared beyond the borders of the nation-state. Such an approach does not only move beyond what Beck has referred to as "methodological nationalism" ("Cosmopolitan Vision" 24-33) but also responds to changing media culture as Hepp notes:

> Today's media cultures comprise . . . both aspects at the same time: on the one hand, there are still rather territorially focused thickenings of communicative connections, which is why it does make sense to talk about mediated regional or national translocal communities as reference points of identities. On the other hand, communicative thickenings exist across such territorial borders, [offering] the space for deterritorial translocal communities with corresponding identities. ("Transculturality" 5-6)

Hence, in the transcultural, qualitative, comparative approach to media cultures proposed by Hepp ("Transculturality"; "What Media Culture Is (Not)") and Couldry ("Media Cultures"), media culture is not defined territorially and bound by the nation-state but is analyzed as "a thickening of specific patterns of thinking, discourse and practice" (Hepp, "Transculturality"

9), which enables comparison of media culture *within* territorial boundaries and *across* national borders. Focusing on media culture, defined here as "the open set of practices relating to, or oriented around, media" (Couldry, "Theorising" 117), would assist in developing a regional approach to media and communication in the Global South that enables an exploration of "local-to-local, South-to-South relations" (Kraidy and Murphy 345; cf. Morley *Media*). By adopting media culture rather than media systems as object of study, it becomes possible to investigate the role of media *in and from the perspective of* people's everyday lives in the Global South.

CONCLUSION

In its relatively short history, the field of media and communication studies has paid significant attention to the way in which the Global South, the "Third World," or "developing world," has been framed in Western media. Many studies have highlighted how Northern-based media continue to represent the Global South in negative terms, as a place where poverty, corruption, disease, and famine reign. However, apart from critiquing the role of the media in the creation of these images, the field of media and communication studies needs to reflect more critically on the way in which it has been constructing and imagining the Global South in its academic books, chapters, journal articles, and conferences. As I have argued in this article, media and communication in the Global South often continue to be seen as negative imprints of "the West." As Achille Mbembe has pointed out with regard to knowledge production on the African continent, while "we now feel we know nearly everything that African states, societies and economies *are not*, we still know absolutely nothing about *what they actually are*" (9). While a number of scholars have expressed the need to "dewesternize," "internationalize," or "decolonize" the field of media and communication studies, it is crucial to go beyond what I have here called "normative dewesternization," the act of representing "the Other" from within the prism and norms of "the Self." In order to gain a better understanding of the role of media and communication in the Global South, I have proposed a shift from an often normative comparative media systems approach to a more descriptive and contextual comparative media cultures approach. While the first approach often constructs the Global South as a place characterized by a number of absences—the absence of press freedom, freedom of expression and democracy—the second approach allows for a grounded, bottom-up examination of media and communication *from* the vantage point of the everyday lives of ordinary people in the Global South. There is a risk, however, that such an account may end up losing sight of questions to do with power and end up celebrating the creativity and inventiveness of "the local." Hence, it remains vital to connect ethnographically-oriented studies of "media culture" with analysis of broader processes such as neoliberalization, which have not only seen a drastic change in the division of labor between the state and market in the area of media and communication but have also produced radical changes in the everyday lives of a large number of people living in the Global South. Given the dynamic and complex nature of contemporary societies, it remains questionable whether an arguably static media systems approach is useful in mapping the role of media and communication in the Global South. Instead, a focus on media culture in the context of processes—such as neoliberalization—rather than systems might offer a more malleable and dynamic framework to examine the relationship between media change and social change.

Notes

[1] Mignolo, *Darker Side*; Mignolo, *Local Histories*; Mignolo and Escobar; Sousa Santos; Grosfoguel, "Decolonizing"; Grosfoguel, "Epistemic."

[2] While I acknowledge the nuanced difference between the subfields of "international communication" and "global media studies," I use both terms in loosely interchangeable ways in this article. Whereas the first adopts the nation-state as object of study, the second field—influenced by growing research on globalization in the 1990s—focuses on the transnational, hybrid and increasingly global aspects of communication processes (see also Rantanen, "From International"). It could be argued that the Global South has had a more prominent place in studies of international communication as compared to global media studies, precisely because the former privileges the nation-state as a frame of analysis and is interested in the relative power of nation-states globally. In the absence of a national focus, global media studies has shifted its attention to cultural flows and hybridized identities which are often examined in conjunction with growing diaspora populations that, in most analyses, are based in the Global North.

[3] See, for example, Hall; Fiske and Hartley; Fiske, *Television Culture*; Ang, *Desperately*; Ang, *Living Room*; Ang, *Watching*; Morley, *Nationwide Audience*; and Morley, *Television.*

[4] For the former approach, see Quebral; Servaes, *Communication for Development: One World*; Melkote and Steeves; Mody. For the latter, see Wilkins; Gumucio-Dagron; Hemer and Tufte; Gumucio-Dagron and Tufte; Servaes, Jacobson, and White; Servaes *Communication for Development and Social Change*; Dutta.

[5] See also Murphy and Kraidy, *Global*; Murphy and Kraidy, "International"; Murphy; and Kraidy and Murphy.

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