

Cultural Identity and New Communication Technologies:

Political, Ethnic and Ideological Implications

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Section 1 **Emerging Media, Community, and Identity (Re)Construction**

Chapter 1

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<i>D. Ndirangu Wachanga, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, USA</i>	

The top-bottom model espoused by the traditional media structures is being problematized by the emerging technological changes. Kenya presents an example of bottom-up model, which is a challenge to the hegemonic potential of top-down model. We seek to establish how media in Kenya have been operating within a top-bottom model until recently. The emergence of the new communication technologies (NCTs) have allowed individuals to challenge dominant voices, mythologies, symbols, vocabulary, and politico-social structures around which the luminal rituals of the national have been interwoven for the sole purpose of fostering national cohesion. We submit that the proliferation of NCTs and communication strategies have dismembered the nation by stimulating exponential multiplication of discursive regimes that may have been impossible previously when media technologies were confined to the control of a central authority. Although there is a fundamental shift from 19th and 20th century media, there remains a strong top-down component in the media but bottom-up is now significant. It is from this background that we point to the vulnerability of NCTs to manipulation and co-option by the dominant, but hasten to mention that these technologies serve as a potential conduit to alter dominant hegemonic designs.

Chapter 2

Identity and the New Communication Technologies: Evidence from Kenya.....	23
<i>Nathan Oyori Ogechi, Moi University, Kenya</i>	
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New technology is not always used to portray and perpetuate narrow ethnic identities; rather, instances exist when the users want to project professional and national identities. Supported with data that focus on the pre- and post-2007 elections, the chapter argues that inasmuch as the New Communication Technologies are good, great caution should be exercised when using them since unchecked use might bring untold suffering to society.

Chapter 3

New Media in Kenya: Putting Ethnicity in Perspective 40

Martin C. Njoroge, Kenyatta University, Kenya

Purity Kimani, Kenyatta University, Kenya

Bernard J. Kikech, Kenyatta University, Kenya

The way the media process, frame, and pass on information either to the government or to the people shall affect the function of the political system. The media may lead to dysfunction in some cases. This chapter seeks to outline and discuss the interaction between new media and ethnicity in Kenya. The chapter investigates ways in which the new media reinforced issues relating to ethnicity in Kenya prior to the 2007 presidential election.

Chapter 4

The Role of New Information and Communication Technologies (NICTs) in the Relations between the Central Government and Four Major Kingdoms in Uganda 66

George Musambira, University of Central Florida, USA

Samuel Muwanguzi, University of North Texas, USA

The role NICTs are playing in the relations between Uganda's central government and four of the kingdoms in the country is analyzed and placed in the historical context. Within this context, each kingdom has pursued a strategy for preservation and development of its people's unique culture and ethnic aspirations. A convergence of cell phone and FM radio designed by the Buganda kingdom to confront the central government with specific demands and the government's response are examined. The less combative use of NICTs by Bunyoro-Kitara, Busoga, and Toro kingdoms is described.

Chapter 5

The Cultural, Economic and Political Implications of New Media: A Case Study on Mobile Telephony among University Students in Kenya 90

Frederick Kang'ethe Iraki, United States International University, Kenya

In this study we investigate the extent to which the cell phone technology has impacted the lives of young Kenyans, especially within the context of a university in Kenya. Kenya has had a tremendous technological leap from the 1990s where landlines were the main tools of communication, to mobile telephony where people can now communicate any time, any place.

Chapter 6

New Media and Gender in East Africa: Assessing Media Dependency and Public Attitudes 110

Uche Onyebadi, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, USA

Yusuf Kalyango Jr, Ohio University, USA

This study set out to ascertain the use of and dependency on new media technology for political communication by voting- age citizens of the three main East African countries, namely Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. We learn the importance of new media communication opportunities towards the struggle for liberal democracy, which is demonstrated by the unanimity of respondents’ attitudes that their governments suppress political discourse. But the degree of use and dependence on these new media instruments are not uniform across the region. Gender and the level of education are two salient factors that create these differences in the use of and dependency on new media technology for political communication in East Africa.

Chapter 7

Whose TV is it Anyway? An Examination of the Shift towards Satellite
Television in Zimbabwe..... 128
Rick Malleus, Seattle University, USA

The rise in popularity of satellite television in Zimbabwe was not mainly driven by the capabilities of the new technology, but by dissatisfaction with Zimbabwe Television (ZTV). The chapter will begin with a discussion that problematizes the idea of what constitutes new technology in the African and Zimbabwean contexts. The focus then moves to the content broadcast locally and how a segment of the Zimbabwean population have turned away from ZTV to have their media needs and gratifications met from satellite TV.

Chapter 8

‘Wiring’ African Newsrooms: The Internet and Mainstream Print Journalism
Practice in Zimbabwe 144
Hayes Mawindi Mabweazara, University College Falmouth, UK

The deployment of the Internet by Zimbabwean journalists (and indeed in Africa at large) is relative and contingent upon the ‘internal’ newsroom context(s) and the wider socio-political and economic circumstances in which the journalists operate. Among other functions, the technology shapes the mainstream press’ news agenda as well as avails information often censored by government. However, as the chapter shall demonstrate, the use of the Internet is replete with ethical and professional implications.

Section 2

Emerging Media, Language, Pop Culture, and Health Communication

Chapter 9

Textualizing the HIV/AIDS Motif in Theatre-Against-AIDS Performances in Kenya..... 164
Mahiri Mwita, Princeton University, USA

Using examples from performances of four theatre groups that operate in Nakuru and Mombasa towns of Kenya, the chapter examines how the performances textualize, thematize, and theatise the main issues in HIV/AIDS as seen through the perspective of the performers and how the targeted audience reacts to these “AIDS performances.”

Chapter 10

New Media and Health Communication: Communication Strategies in Malaria

Control in Nigeria 197

Nwachukwu Andrew Egbunike, University of Ibadan, Nigeria

The new media are gradually gaining ground as dependable channels that meet the communication needs of young Nigerians in the fight against Malaria, a pandemic that kills more than 3,000 children daily in Africa. This chapter discusses how the potential associated with the Internet and social networks can be incorporated in the campaign for the Insecticide Treated Nets (ITNs) among the Nigerian youth.

Chapter 11

Translanguaging and Negotiation of Ethnicity: Reproduction of Hegemonic Structures in

Communication Media..... 213

Peter Githinji, Ohio University, USA

New communication technologies have only succeeded in providing a new arena where the traditional discourse is reproduced. Standing at the intersection between these new technologies and communication is language—the medium that facilitates interpersonal interaction both in traditional modes of interaction and in digital interactions. We shall be examining how the linguistic practices interact with these new communication technologies.

Chapter 12

Veganporn.com & “Sistah”: Explorations of Whiteness through Textual Linguistic

Cyberminstrelsy on the Internet..... 235

Amie Breeze Harper, University of California-Davis, USA

Covert whiteness (a tacit form of racialized consciousness) does not necessarily manifest itself at the surface level in the same overt manner that extreme white cyber hate “imagined communities” do. By applying Critical Race Theory and Black Feminist methodology-based discursive analysis, Harper investigates performances of whiteness in a vegan/animal-rights-oriented website called Veganporn.com.

Chapter 13

Language and Performing Arts: East African Hip Hop and Public Sensitization for

Political Change 256

E. Sangai Mohochi, Maseno University, Kenya

D. Ndirangu Wachanga, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, USA

The youth, specifically, exhibit a higher urge to change the local by borrowing more and more from the global. They copy music styles, themes, dance styles, as well as dressing codes of popular western musicians and their language forms. In that context, this paper aims at meeting two goals. First, to analyze the extent to which youthful musicians have managed to maintain a balance between educating and entertaining society at the local level, while keeping abreast with emerging global trends and influences.

Section 3
Emerging Media, Global Politics, and Cultural Transformation

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- Mediating Identity and Culture: Nigerian Videos and African Immigrants in the U.S. 273
Adedayo Ladigbolu Abah, Washington and Lee University, USA

Using a combined method of surveying and personal interviews, several African immigrants, their children, and friends living in the Dallas/Fort Worth area of Texas, USA were interviewed for their views on the role of the nascent Nigerian video industry in the way they sustain and straddle their multiple identities and culture in their society of settlement. Results indicate that most of the immigrants view the videos as affirmation of the values they grew up with and with which they still identify.

Chapter 15

- The Role of Mass Mediated Messages and Cultural Identity with Cross-Cultural
Communication Failures Resulting from Flawed U.S. Military Policy in Iraq 294
Jim Schnell, Ohio Dominican University, USA

This chapter addresses mass media and cultural identity dynamics that impact U.S. military policy in the execution of the Iraq war and related cross-cultural communication issues that have evolved during the course of the war. The inability to consider, let alone plan for, cross-cultural ramifications has been a central communication failure that has proven tremendously problematic. The mass media, via traditional channels and new communication technologies, have been keen to report on these matters which, in turn, have modified public understanding of the matters being reported.

Chapter 16

- New Media and Hegemonic Discourse in Pakistan 304
Saman Talib, Beaconhouse National University, Pakistan
Sadia Gardezi, Lahore School of Economics, Pakistan

The effects of the 'new media' may not be what we expect with respect to the democratization of society. The analysis in this chapter shows that ideological hegemony is not only alive and well, but might even thrive in these new media. To scrutinize these effects, the chapter focuses on the impact of Pakistani cable television on identity and culture discourse through the lens of three topics: identity and the new communication technologies; ideology, power and the new media; and new media and new popular cultures.

Chapter 17

- The World Narrow Web: Internet Content Regulation in South Korea 320
Siho Nam, University of North Florida, USA

The inauguration of the Lee Myung-Bak administration in 2008 signaled a crisis for Internet-driven participatory, democratic public culture in South Korea. One of the most visible effects was immediately found in the administration's repressive media policy. A series of anti-democratic regulations,

grounded in both conservative and neo-liberal philosophies, was implemented to control and tame civic participation, public deliberation, and identity politics on the Internet. Firstly, in light of this, this chapter summarizes certain main debates regarding the role of the Internet in promoting or hindering democracy.

Chapter 18

An Agent for Change: The Internet is Setting New Agendas in China..... 337

Jiafei Yin, Central Michigan University, USA

This chapter investigates the social conditions and ways in which new communication technologies are transforming the politics, culture, and the society in China through analyses of uses of the Internet, different roles played by the traditional and the new media, cases that were catapulted to the national media spotlight by the online community, government laws and regulations responding to the development of the Internet, and through contrasts with the roles new communication technologies play in western and African societies.

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