# The passing of the Dominant Paradigm: Looking back at Rogers

Gideon de Wet

In this paper an attempt is made to contribute towards a better understanding regarding the role and application of mass media (TV) with reference to developmental efforts. A theoretical and explorative overview will be posed dealing with three interlocking areas:

1. A retrospective analysis and discussion of Rogers' (1976) article on "Communication and Development: The Passing of the Dominant Paradigm." An attempt is made, in an integrated fashion, to analyse the implications of Rogers' (1976) declaration that the dominant paradigm has passed.

2. Secondly, and as a result of serious methodological questions regarding the analysis and interpretation of developmental communication efforts, an attempt is made to pose theoretical considerations which can lead to the structuring of an alternative developmental approach with reference to rural development.

3. The third area, which could be regarded as a natural consequence of the above-mentioned, deals with the role of the mass media (TV) with reference to rural development. The analysis includes an overview on media involvement in development as well as the specific applicability of "big media" in "little worlds". The emphasis shifts to message content where the importance of cultural values and the cultural convergence of messages is emphasised.

(This paper was read at the annual
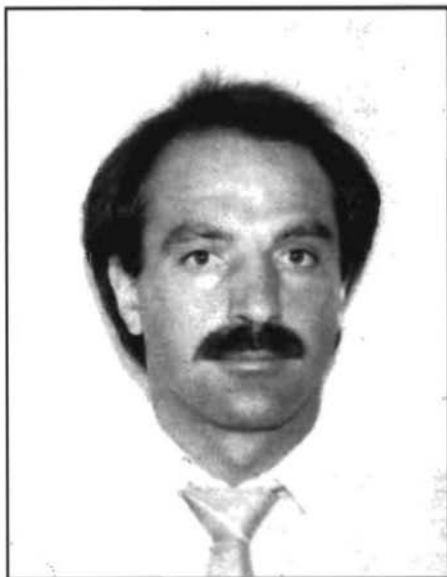
Gideon de Wet is Head of the department of Communication at the University of Fort Hare. This article is based on a paper delivered at the annual SACOMM conference held in Grahamstown in July 1989

SACOMM conference on 6 July 1989 at Rhodes University, Grahamstown).

INTRODUCTION

On receipt of this year's Congress theme "Television and the needs of society", two prominent constructs struck me initially, namely, "Television" and "society". Second thoughts revealed the mediating phrase "and the needs of". An interpretation of this phrase is crucial to an attempt to address this year's theme.

An abstraction of the theme may read: TV

— Society. This appears to be a re-emergence of the old challenge to "reveal" the social impacts of communication technologies on societies, this time in the guise of the proposed perspectives such as journalism, intercultural communication, development communication, and so on. Given this interpretation, would it be fair to rephrase this year's theme as: "The effects of Television on Society?"

Further "decoding" of this interpretation reveals that "effects" are the changes in an individual's (society's) behaviour, including inter alia actions, attitudes and knowledge that occur as the result of the transmission of a communicated message or messages. "Effects studies" generally assume linear models of communication; the ability to infer effects is equivalent to the ability to infer causation (Rogers, 1986:151-152).

A further abstraction leaves three prominent constructs, namely, television, needs and society. The aim of this paper is to analyse the interrelatedness of the tripartite orientation of these three constructs within a rural development communication context (black rural areas in Southern Africa).

Three interlocking focus points will be dealt with, namely:

1. A retrospective analysis and discussion of Rogers' (1976) article "Communication and Development: The Passing of the Dominant Paradigm". (See also a shortened version, Rogers (1980) on the same topic).

2. Methodological questions will be posed regarding the analysis and interpretations of development communication efforts. An attempt will be made to discuss theoretical considerations which can lead to the structuring of an African (Southern) model of development communication. This, however, will require further research, both of a qualitative and quantitative nature.

3. Lastly, an attempt will be made to look into the role of the mass media (TV) in rural development. Attention will be paid to the application of "Big media" in "little worlds".

From the above structuring it seems impossible, for the purpose of this presentation, to confine the congress theme "Television and the needs of society" to a single perspective or angle. Futhermore, it is dialectically unsound to restrict perspectives to demarcated sub-disciplines (fields). The line of thinking that confines itself to a single perspective in a demarcated discipline was a characteristic of the epistemology of a dominant paradigm in the social sciences that is now defunct. Or so some of us believe.

THE PASSING OF THE DOMINANT PARADIGM OF DEVELOPMENT

Orientation

Rogers (1976) published the hallmark article "Communication and Development: The Passing of the Dominant Paradigm" in the Sage Publication *Communication Research*, Volume 3(2). A reader of Rogers would note that subsequent publications such as Rogers (1980), Rogers (1981), Rogers & Kincaid (1981), Rogers & Chaffee (1983) and Rogers (1986), contained a new orientation towards, and a new epistemology for, social science research revealing a new valuation or assessment of what human beings are and how they live. Should this be regarded as a departure from objectification? A definite acknowledgement by Rogers that convergence and not linearity only should be pursued, reveals a remarkable shift in thinking. Compare for example Rogers & Kincaid (1981) "Communication Networks: Toward a new paradigm of research" with Rogers & Shoemaker (1971), "Communication of Innovations: A cross-cultural approach".

Rogers (1976) contrasts the dominant paradigm in development, as was supported in intellectual circles till the 1970's, with the dominant paradigm in development communication. Remarkable similarities are struck, with linearity as shared principle.

The dominant paradigm of development

The emphasis in this approach centered around the criterion of the rate of economic growth. National development at any given point in time was measured in terms of the

gross national product (GNP). Stated differently, the per capita income. Particular historical and academic influences on this conception of development are identified, as follows:

1. *The industrial revolution:* The emphasis was on economic growth through industrialisation as the key to development. Technology and capital were at the heart of industrialisation. The industrial intervention was usually accompanied by colonialisation and domestic urbanisation. This was the model for the less developed countries (LDC's).

2. *Capital intensive technology:* Since the LDC's had little capital intensive technology, the notion was clear: Introduce the technology to the LDC's and they would become relatively more developed too. This end was not always realised. The fault was put at the individual's traditional ways of thinking, beliefs, social values, etc.

3. *Economic growth:* The profit motive was regarded as sufficient motivation for large scale development. The assumption was that "man" was economic. The problems of LDC's were defined in economic terms. Self-development was undesirable or impossible; it was too slow. The emphasis was on "More and bigger was better".

4. *Quantification:* Quantification, an outgrowth of social science empiricism, helped define what development was and was not. Material well-being was measured in monetary terms, and such values as dignity, justice and freedom did not fit on a dollars- and-cents yardstick. Growth was measured on a per capita basis.

In short, the notion was that the DC's were providing the model of development, and that underdevelopment was equivalent to poverty. Modernisation was equivalent to development in developed countries.

Criticism of the Dominant Paradigm of Development

Rogers (1976) identified three areas of criticism:

1. *Intellectual Ethnocentrism:* The argument is that the individual-blame logic may have been too narrow and ethnocentric in the cultural sense, because leading theorists were Westerners, and there was often a rather inadequate data base to support their conceptualisations.

2. *Redefining the causes of underdevelopment:* The dominant paradigm puts the blame for underdevelopment on the developing nations, individuals and governments, rather than on the developed countries.

3. *Small technology and Radical Economists:* The assumption in Western tradition was that small-scale, labour intensive orientations were insufficient, and were a type of investment that retarded economic growth.

Economists began to criticise the dominant paradigm, especially its assumption of a "linear theory of missing components, e.g. capital skills, etc." André Gunder Frank centers on capitalism as the main cause of exploitation, inequality and generally of underdevelopment. Frank proposed the "dependency theory" as an explanation to underdevelopment. This means that the dependency of poor countries on the rich, and internal colonies on urban imperialists, should be understood in this modernisation-dependency dichotomy.

Having discussed particular historical and theoretical developments, Rogers (1976) concludes that the concept of development should be expanded and made more flexible and humanitarian by proposing that development should be regarded as a widely participatory process of social change in a society, intended to bring about both social and material advancement (including greater equality, freedom, and other valued qualities) for the majority of people through their gaining greater control over their environment (Rogers, 1976:225). Rogers (1976) stressed the importance of the equality of information distribution, self-development, self-reliance and the integration of traditional and modern communication systems in the process of development.

It speaks for itself that development *per se* cannot be advanced without particular

communication processes. Changes in development paradigms have particular consequences for the role of communication in development.

Communication and development

The conception was that mass communication in development had been playing an important role in conveying information, persuasive messages etc., mainly in a hierarchical way, from the government to the public, "downward". The assumption was that masss communication was thought to be a very powerful and direct force for development. It was regarded as a magical multiplier — the mass media were in the front rank, along with the school and the factory as inculcators of individual modernisation.

However, despite considerable research, the relative power of the mass media in leading development was mainly assumed rather than proven. The hypodermic-needle concept of media effects had to succumb to empirically oriented communication research. The role of mass communication was rather indirect and contributory in facilitating development, rather than direct and powerful.

Criticism of communication in development

Communication researchers also began to question some of the prior development assumptions, with emphasis on the content of the mass media, the need for social-structural changes in addition to communication, and the shortcomings of the classical diffusion of innovations viewpoint.

1. *Inattention of media content:* When diffusion of innovation surveys were conducted, in learning about the new idea, the mass media were never reported, in spite of their overwhelming presence. A possible explanation seemed to be in the contents of the media messages, which seldom carried specific messages about innovations.
2. *Need for structural change as well as communication:* The assumption was that communication should be regarded as a complementary factor to modernisation and development. Effects are limited unless structural changes came first to initiate the development process.
3. *Diffusion of innovations and development:* There was criticism of the American hyperscience, with emphasis on behaviourism and operationalism, which may have had positive consequences in terms of technical methodological questions, but poor consequences in conceptual productivity terms.

Of special interest for this study is the emphasis put on self-development. Self-development implies a completely different role for communication than the usual top-down development approach. The role of mass communication in self-development is more permissive and supportive than in the usual top-down development approach.

Rogers (1976) identified three new paradigms for development:

1. *The role of research in Change and Development:* Rogers (1976) pointed out that mass media institutions may tend to side with the "establishment", hence, the content of the mass media messages is designed to alter the existing social structure radically.

Attempts have been made, though, to launch research projects that deal with topics of special benefit to those sectors of society that cannot sponsor research themselves. This approach amounts to greater effort to free the selection of what is studied from the influence of those who sponsor communication inquiry.

2. *Field experiments and current practice:* Rogers (1976) indicated that in addition to the cost and the sponsorship of communication research, the type of research design may also affect how directly research results can contribute to social change as opposed to reifying the existing social structure. Field experiments can serve such a purpose. These put the communication scholar in the role of communication development designer as well as that of research evaluator.

3. *Focus on interpersonal networks:* The focus is on the analysis of relational data.

about communication flows or patterns by using interpersonal relationships as the units of analysis. The advantage of network analysis is that the social structure can be overlayed on the communication flows in order to improve the scientific understanding of both the structure and the message flow.

SUMMARY

Rogers (1976) pointed out that new awarenesses were created regarding the major shortcomings of the old development paradigm, namely: in theory, that is, in terms of a stimulus-response model, or in terms of a hierarchical model, a top-down LDC structure, a First-Third world relation. Ideological shortcomings were also highlighted where underdevelopment was regarded as the result of development efforts, the dependency-theory orientation. Self-development was proposed.

A new role of the mass media in development, namely, in the form of self-development, was advocated where the media played a supportive rather than the usual top-down development role. This gave rise to new theoretical orientations regarding communication research such as the focus on interpersonal networks.

In short, the underdeveloped were considered valuable as partners in both the development process as well as in the research process.

Looking back at Rogers

Three particular question areas arise as a result of Rogers' (1976) presentation, namely, the notion of self-help and political, economic and ideological forces; methodological research questions; and the mass media's role and content in development.

Rogers'(1976) article was not intended to draw the final curtain on the dominant paradigm by effacing it completely, nor was it an effort to start afresh with replacing paradigms, and, in doing so, bury Willbur Schramm's *Mass Media and National Development* completely. It does not take much, 13 years later, to scan through the literature on development and to pick up Rogers' echo on the hegemony of the dominant paradigm. (See in this regard Hsia [1985], Kwame Boafo [1985], Lent [1985], Pepitone & Triandis [1987], Tapson [1987], Stevenson [1988], etc.)

Of considerable importance, though, were Rogers' efforts to explore alternatives which could supplement the existing paradigms. Increasing dissatisfaction with the dominant paradigm gave rise to more and more criticism. Criticism of this nature, though, is not only confined to development communication paradigms, but to social science research, and in particular to the hegemony of the received view. Miller (1983:31-32) summarises the awakening by saying that the past decade and a half has produced a spate of books, journals, etc., dealing with epistemological, methodological and meta-theoretical matters, a disciplinary stock-taking. Of considerable importance was the realisation that humans are active agents, exercising influence over their environment rather than passively reacting to it. Humans have a free will to choose. "An influential, vocal segment of the field has renounced the view of human communicators as marionettes dancing on deterministic threads and has replaced it with a vision of people as masters of their own communicative destinies". In similar vein Bormann (1981), Comstock (1983) and Katz (1983) support such an orientation.

1. SELF-HELP: POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND IDEOLOGICAL FORCES

This realisation of an action-motion-free will orientation supplements Rogers' (1976) emphasis on self-help. The holistic emphasis focuses on the individual or community as interactive entities which determine in terms of their needs their own destiny. A complete independence is not advocated either, but rather a partnership determined by the mutual goals of the developed and the underdeveloped. Though not so explicitly, maybe due to space and time limitations, Rogers (1976) emphasised the intricate power relations of politics, economics and

ideology, rather superficially. The question, though, is: is it realistic to advocate a change in attitude toward development programmes, and the implementation of the programmes, when no real change, or only gradual change, in terms of global economic, political and ideological orientations is possible? Wouldn't change in one's attitude, one's assessment of humanity, also ultimately lead to changes in political, economic, and ideological systems? Without integrated and systematic processual changes between man, and his self-made systems of power, the notion of self-help also seems limited. The question could be asked thus, is this "new" view of humanity only possible within the rules of those who determine and control economic, political and ideological systems? Another question revolves around the relationship between power and communication.

A number of contributions, such as Haule (1984) and Jakubowicz (1985) advocate a new information order as part of a total global reorientation concerning international power forces. However, Jakubowicz (1985:82) remarks: "... the content of the communication is a function of the combined influence of social, political, economic, cultural and technological factors determining the process of communication." So international communicationas well, must be studied in all its ramifications and in terms of its full context in order to arrive at a diagnosis of the ills of the old order and consequently at a prescription for how the new one is to be created. The implication, of course, is that unless the political, social, cultural and economic determinants of international relations, including communication determinants, are reformed, the old communication mould will persist. That admittedly is a very tall order, which explains why no one has yet come up with a precise idea just what the new order should look like. Stevenson (1988) criticizes these attempts heavily.

Holloran (1981:161) supports the sentiments expressed by Jakubowicz (1985), but also highlights particular shared experiences by developing countries which could be used to support explanations regarding the interdependence of the self-help concept: "I recognise despite the important national differences within regions, say Africa and Latin America, that most developing countries have something in common, particularly with regard to the various forms of imperialism and colonialism, the current implications of these, and a continuing dependency".

In reaction to the dominance of the modernisation forces, alternative routes to development have constantly been explored, with the resulting tension between modernisation and traditional values. This has become the playground of ideological forces. Hoogvelt (1983:152) observes in this regard: "Although one is compelled to agree with the modernisation theorists regarding the overall social structural and cultural changes which the primacy of the principle economic rationality inevitably imposes ... there is yet one very important degree of freedom... . This freedom of choices hinges upon the recognition of the ultimate purpose which is to be served by profit maximisation (that is by the application of the principle of economic rationality). And it is in this choice that the so-called 'capitalist' and the so-called 'socialist' development models take their respective points of departure. For whereas in the capitalist model, profit maximisation is an end in itself, in socialisation profit maximisation is regarded as a means to other social ends..." For Harrison (1980:4) a rather sharp distinction regarding development scientists can be made between classical Marxists and modernisation theorists, though particular common ground also exists, namely:

1. Both approach development or social change form an ethnocentric premise. The Marxists were trying to facilitate certain developments they regarded as suitable for the West. The modernisation theorists were trying to view the Third World from a position of advantage.

2. 'Development' was regarded, by classical Marxists and modernising theorists alike, as part and parcel of social change, albeit a vital part. It was rarely if ever defined, and its value was never questioned (Harrison, 1980:6).

3. Lastly, both Marxist and modernising theorists ignored the views of those about to be developed.

An important question arises: should Rogers' (1976) urge for self-help not be seen against this background? Could self-help be conceptualised in how Kwame Boafo (1985:83) views it, namely, that it involves modern and traditional technologies, skills and knowledge, which should then be manifested in the relationship between communication processes and social structure? The community provides the framework for social and intellectual interaction where information processing takes place. Felstehausen (1974:44) continues: "Yet, without exception, both development and communication take place within communities. From the point of view of providing a border around the diverse activities of human beings (this does not mean a geographic border on a map), the concept of community provides the scope needed to take account of rules, sanctions, status, power, economics, motives, customs, beliefs, values and rituals. All are part of the content of human communication, and at the same time, changes in these elements all serve to define progress toward development. It is inconceivable that an assessment of communication effectiveness can be made without taking into account these structures and channels, and the rules which govern the way they function".

Against this background self-help remains an integral part, in a processual way, of the larger dynamics of societies and regions. Self-help does not exist in isolation. Nevertheless, Rogers (1976) made a considerable contribution toward development communication orientations by emphasising self-help as an alternative. Development in this regard could then be described as change toward patterns of society that allow better realisation of human values, that allow society greater control over its environment and over its own political destiny, and that should enable individuals and societies to gain increased control over themselves.

2. METHODOLOGICAL QUESTIONS AND NEWER COMMUNICATION RESEARCH PARADIGMS

Rogers' (1976) attempts to introduce newer paradigms of research can in a way be rephrased as a question in the words of Hamelink (1983:74): "Can communication research produce knowledge through which we can learn to understand and to change social reality?" This implies the question of whether human life is continually subjected to particular forces that are in a way objective in nature, but in the same sense, they are factually susceptible to description and explanation. But it is important to realise also that human life, societies, communities would continuously provide material that differs in terms of the challenges that they pose to researchers describing and explaining human activities. People, societies, are not static, but uniquely dynamic.

Rogers (1976:231) declared that his proposals for newer paradigms for development, namely the role of research in change and development, field experiments and current practices, and the focus on interpersonal networks, pose certain implications for communication research as well as for communication activities. However, important methodological questions need to be asked and answered.

Lent (1985:12) develops these implications by stating: "... as the old research paradigms, especially those on development and communication meet increasingly unfavourable reactions, let's hope that certain researchers do not seize the opportunity to establish or re-establish their reputations by creating new paradigms for universal acceptance. This may be happening already ... a great deal remains to be done concerning the problems of research in individual cultures. To introduce another universal model may sidetrack these efforts until the new (old in new guises) paradigm also meets disfavour". In addition to this, declares Hamlink (1983:75), three obstacles need to be overcome, namely scientism, theoretical

monomania, and methodological exclusivism. Scientism in short refers to the self-proclaimed excellence of science over all other forms of human knowledge; an ideological parochialism; a belief in the scientific fix. Comstock (1983) also shares similar viewpoints: "Theoretical monomania refers to the phenomenon whereby whole fields of scientific investigation tend to be dominated for long periods by one single theoretical construct. Such a construct is difficult to subvert. Rather than this basically uncritical attitude, science requires a fundamental skepticism and needs to adopt a theoretical pluralism as its foundation".

Methodologically, scientists tend to be "either/or" thinkers. Social scientists, for example, prefer in their descriptions of reality either atomistic or holistic approaches; in their explanations of reality they follow either deductive or dialectic methods. Such exclusivities weaken the capacity to understand reality, let alone to change it. Against this binary mode, a methodological eclecticism would allow a multitude of approaches to the unraveling of reality".

Reason & Rowan (1982:xiii-xiv) approach Hamelink's (1983) and Lent's (1985) dilemma by proposing an objectively subjective orientation, with a systematic interplay between naive inquiry (subjective) and old paradigm research (objective) which results in new paradigm research (objectively subjective). "What we are building in a new paradigm research is an approach to inquiry which is a systematic, rigorous search for truth, but which does not kill off all it touches: we are looking for a way of inquiry which can be loosely called objectively subjective. The new paradigm is a synthesis of naive inquiry and orthodox research, a synthesis which is very much opposed to the antitheisis it supersedes".

See figure 1.

NEW PARADIGM RESEARCH
objective subjective

NAIVE INQUIRY   OLD PARADIGM RESEARCH
subjective   objective
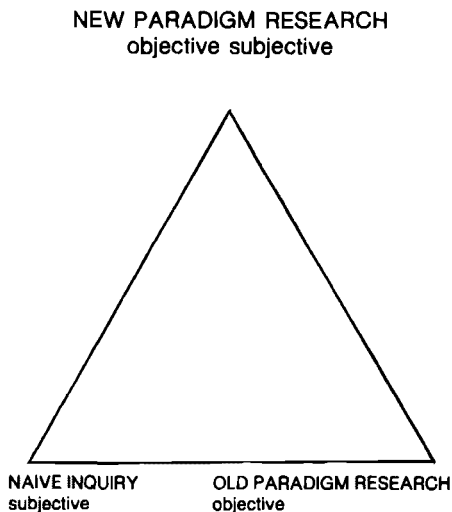
Figure 1 (Reason & Rowan + 1981:xiii¼)

Strongly objected to is the notion that people are seen as isolatable from their normal social context. People are not seen as being alienated and self-controlled, stripped of all that gives their own action meaning. Reality does not reflect a one-dimensional quantifiable profile in the Kuhnian tradition, but reality rather reflects a multiple profile quality, even more so when intercultual communication development programmes are implemented. Development in this context takes place predominantly in an intercultural setting. Rogers (1976) did not address the methodological implications in this regard. A culturally contextual orientation seems thus inevitable.

The implications of the above-mentioned methodological questions for development efforts in black rural areas in Southern Africa seem obvious. An accompanying question, though, is to ask whether an attempt could be made to construct an African or a Southern African development communication model, with the emphasis on black rural areas?

A modest approach would set the aim of posing important methodological questions that could be incorporated in

development efforts. Problems of development in the African context seem not to differ profoundly from other areas across the world.

Kwame Boafo (1985:86) supports this by stating that an analysis of the utilisation of development communication strategies in African societies shows that development-oriented communication projects in most African societies have not been integrated into the larger intersectoral efforts of development. For the most part, communication projects in sub-Saharan African societies have tended to operate over and above basic structural elements which constrain development.

Further important methodological and epistemological considerations need to be addressed in order to support a contextually oriented approach. The urge to ask these questions comes from a dissatisfaction with Western based social sciences as instruments of problem solving. Epistemology in this context refers to the nature of knowledge and its uses.

A number of researchers approach the above-mentioned approach from different angles. Hale (1984), Pratt (1986) and Melkote (1987) support a re-appraisal of African value systems and the relationship with economic, political and cultural factors. Coetzee (1983:32) also stresses the importance of the cultural dimension, Kwame Boafo (1985) stresses historical orientations, while Urevbu (1988) emphasises the re-orientation between science, technology and values. The point of departure is that science and technology are cultural enterprises which exist in varying degrees in all societies. Technology has reached a dominant position to the extent that the whole structure of some societies is dependent on a technological base.

Harms (1983:3) emphasizes a problem-oriented approach at the expense of an earlier theoretical-oriented approach. "In this shift of paradigm ... a number of changes appear to be underway. One of these is an increase in interest in complex societal communication problems; there is a suspicion that these problems may be more compli-cated than any theoretical problem in the field. Another of these changes is in the relationship between science and problem, for example, if the theoretic sciences pursue theoretical problems, and the problem-oriented sciences pursue societal problems, these two scientific approaches become a mirror-image of the other".

On a broad level a number of researchers thus advocate cultural specific implications in formulating methodologies. A distinction is made between "emic" and "etic" approaches as well as between "ethnomethodology" and "ethnoscience". The "emic" approach and the ethnomethodology approach stress a holistic-contextual-qualitative approach. The "etic" and the ethnoscientific orientation support an analystic-reductionist-quantitative methodology. Culture plays a key role in the ethnomethodology approach. It serves as a filter or a screen through which new technologies, methods, etc. are presented to, and evaluated by, societies. (See Gudykunst & Kim (1984) and Obeng-Quaidoo (1985) in this respect). Tafoya (1984:48) stresses in this regard that cross-cultural research illustrates the interaction between two dynamic processes and, as research methodology and culture are matched, two types of results are produced. The first is the obvious product generated with the application of the methodology to the culture. The second product is more unique and less predictable. This is the unanticipated consequence(s) produced as researcher, subject and culture studies are influenced by factors associated with the research project and by the process itself.

To cut closer to the bone, Obeng-Quaidoo (1985:111) stresses the importance of core value boundaries of African cultures in the development of communication research methodologies.

1. The role of the Supreme God/Allah and lesser gods (forefathers)

The Supreme God's influence seems slow and remote, but the lesser gods play significant roles in the imagination and thoughts of the African people. The question is what

role does the Supreme God play in problem solving? Buhrmann (1984) also stresses the importance of cosmological knowledge. Buhrmann (1984:153) worked on the role of the indigenous Healer (Igqira) among the Xhosa. Traditional Xhosa people do not separate health and ill-health into mental and physical aspects. They say "when I am ill the whole of me is ill". "Their world view expresses the same wholeness and unity especially in terms of their relationships with their ancestors ... The ancestors share in the tribespeople's daily living in a way which is difficult for the rational-minded Westerner to understand ... On the whole the ancestors are friendly protectors, guides and mentors, but their displeasure can be aroused and then they can withdraw their protection ..."

2. Concept of time

Time in the traditional sense of African thought is a symbol for events. The linear concept is emphasized less in traditional thinking. (See Gudykunst & Kim's (1984) distinction between high and low context cultures). Myths in this context play a very important role in explaining the past, but in explaining the future, myths play no significant role. In terms of Western economic thought, for instance, the ploughing and reaping functions of agriculture should not always and only be judged in economic terms. For the African such functions have particular cultural incentives as well.

3. Work and the Protestant ethic

Western industrial man considers work as duty, connected with external rewards. In the traditional sense work is regarded as a necessity for survival and not duty.

4. Collectivity

"Apart from the celebrated extended family system which encompasses everyone within the immediate clan, people from a similar village tend to regard each other as brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, ... unless there is a conflict or friction among families in a village. This explains why the caring for the aged, the destitute, the handicapped members of the group is the duty of all well-to-do and ablebodied members of the extended family" (Obeng-Quaidoo, 1985:113-114).

In short: It is clear from the beforementioned that traditional Western methodologies cannot simply be applied and copied in rural African research settings. A greater awareness of the shortcomings of these methodologies urges social science researchers and in particular development communication specialists to take note of the profound and fundamental influences that different value, cultural and ideological systems have on research planning and analysis. The belief, though, is that knowledge of these differences and their implications alone is not enough; in addition there must be a change in attitude towards the researched as human beings. This applies to all methodologies, from phenomenological methodology to experimental or quasi-experimental methodology.

A second necessity involves a multi-disciplinary as well as an inter-disciplinary approach. Knowledge and research should be gained and conducted within such a mould. An inter-disciplinary holism should be advocated to which development communication researchers can contribute significantly.

Thirdly, and of equal importance, remain the questons of "what" and "how" should development communication messages be compiled and communicated. The next section attempts to answer some questions in this respect.

3. MASS MEDIA (TV) AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

If we regarded communication not just as an information-transmitting process, but rather as a convergence process, in which participants share information to reach a better understanding, such an orientation obviously emphasizes the communication process as a whole, of which the message content fulfils an integrated part. Rogers & Kincaid (1981) and Barnett & Kincaid (1983) stress the convergence model that represents human communication as a dynamic, cyclical process over time, characterized by mutual causation

rather than one-way causation with emphasis on the interdependent relationships of the participants. A three-dimensional analysis of the involvement of communication as a process, namely on the physical, social and psychological levels, tries to assist the researchers in conceptualizing the holistic orientation of the convergence model.

This, against the background of the discussion dealing with methodological and epistemological questions, plays an integral part in development communication and thus in message formulation.

Stated differently, the questions researchers ask, the motives behind these questions, the answers they eventually get at and the analysis of these answers, eventually lead to message formulation or reformulation. Therefore it is important that knowledge of the physical, social and psychological dimensions of the underdeveloped be presented and understood in a holistic way. Content could be the result of the spirit of self-help in Rogers' (1976) tradition, with a convergence orientation, a mutually defined effort between developer and underdeveloped. Development could be defined in terms of self-defined needs by the underdeveloped. This deviates profoundly from the deterministic or one way conception of the power of the media, the hypodermic needle model.

Much has been written about the hypodemic needle approach, or the so-called magic bullet model, with reference to the mass media and development (see Rogers [1976]; Rogers & Kincaid [1981]; Rogers, [1986[; Bineham [1988], and De Fleur & Ball Rokeach [1989], to mention a few). It is general knowledge that the stimulus-response model is an oversimplification of the power of the media. The question however, is, how should the mass media (TV) be used and applied in rural development? Is it in any way practical?

Even more confusing at first hand, when it comes to the application of mass media (TV), is the finding (see Rogers [1976] and Pratt & Manheim [1988] in this regard), that some research studies indicated that audiences in rural areas use interpersonal and traditional media sources more often than they use modern mass media. One could argue, though, that in this conclusion lies the strength of the mass media. A number of researchers (see Ugboajah [1979], Kwame Boafo[1985] and Pratt & Manheim [1988] for example) advocate an integrated approach between the so-called modern and the traditional. Kwame Boafo (1985:89) stresses that: "Since the communication environment of rural communities is characterised by the predominant use of oral and traditional methods, communication strategies, to be appropriate and effective in motivating and mobilising people for development, need to encompass the traditional media ... An optimal information utilisation in rural development in Africa is dependent on communication strategies which consistently amalgamate the traditional media and the modern media technologies ..."

The second question deals with the practical implementation of TV in the development process, let alone the integrated networks of satellite, cable TV, VCR's and computer technologies. It speaks for itself that limitations such as infrastructure shortcomings, finances, lack of education, high-technology skills, etc., seriously impede the use of these media in development programmes. Practical arrangements could be applied, such as to centralise facilities in places, or to take the underdeveloped out of their own environment, but these also have their limitations.

One could, however, also ask, shouldn't this dichotomy of "big media" and "little people" rather be turned around? Shouldn't the developed, on a much larger scale, be exposed to the lifestyles, desires, etc. of the so-called underdeveloped? Could TV not be applied with greater success in such a strategy, at least as a starting point?

CONCLUSION

This paper was an attempt to indicate and to address particular intricate questions regarding the role of the mass media (TV) in development programmes with reference to rural African conditions. The belief is that a continuous evaluative process concerning

development in the fullest context, from methodological and philosophical questioning to the practical implementation of development messages, should be undertaken.

The Southern African situation is waiting for the contributions that communication can make. With the changes in the composition of academic audiences at tertiary institutions, development communication (social sciences) will have to seriously prepare itself for the alternative paradigms. This is more urgent than we may think.

"Television and the needs of society". With such a theme, at first glance, one could surely have asked what was meant by televi-sion, needs, and society. It is arguable whether definitions will help to solve these questions. In the spirit of academic enterprise though, and academic freedom, I hope, interpretations of these constructs seem to be more important in this context. One wonders, though, in the spirit of the passing of the dominant paradigm, would it not be fitting to rephrase the theme, "Society: the needs of Television?". Or was it premature of Rogers (1976) to have implied that the dominant paradigm had passed? With such realisation arises the question, is it knowledge or intellect, evidence or facts, economics or ideology, that keep the dominant paradigm alive and well, or is it attitude?

REFERENCES

Barnett, G.A. & Kincaid, D.L. (1983) Cultural convergence. A mathematical Theory. In Gudykunst, W.B. **Intercultural Communication Theory. Current Perspectives**. Sage Publications: Beverly Hills, p 171-194.

Bineham, J.L. (1988) A historical account of the Hyperdermic model in Mass Communication. **Communication Monographs, 55(40)**: 230-246.

Bormann, E.G. (1981) **Communication Theory**. Holt, Rinehart & Winston: New York.

Buhrmann, M.V. (1984) The health care of an Egqira (Indigenous Healer). In Papadopolulos, R.K. & Saayman, G. **Jung in Modern Perspective**. Wild Woodhouse, Ad Donker: London.

Coetzee, S.F. (1983) Development: False hopes and new directions. In **Development Studies Southern Africa, 6(1)**:27-40.

Comstock, G. (1983) The legacy of the past. **Journal of Communication, 33(3)**:42-50.

De Fleur, M.L. & Ball Rokeach, S. (1989) **Theories of Mass Communication**. (5th ed.) Longman: New York.

Felstehausen, H. (1973) Conceptual limits of Development Communication. **Rural Sociology, 38**:39-54.

Gudykunst, W.B. & Kim, Y.Y. (1984) **Communi-**cating with Strangers. An approach to Intercultural Communication. Random House: New York.

Hamelink, C.J. (1983) Emancipation or Domestication: Toward a Utopian science of Communication. **Journal of Communication, 33(3)**:74-79.

Harms, LS. (1983) On the problem-oriented Communication Science: another Renaissance, an alternative way. In Dissanayake, W. & b Mohd Said, S. R. **Communication Research and cultural values**. (1.21) Asian Mass Communication Research and information center: Singapore.

Harrison, D. (1980) **The sociology of development**. (Unpublished paper:1-30) Sussex School of African and Asian Studies.

Haule, J.J. (1984) Old paradigm and new order in the African context: Toward an appropriate model of Communication and National development. **Gazette, 33(1)**:3-115.

Holloran, J.D. (1981) The context of mass communication research. In McAnany, E.G., Schnitman, J. & Janus, N. (1981) **Communication and social structure. Critical studies in Mass Media Research**. (p 21-57) Praeger: New York.

Hoogvelt, A.M.M. (1983) **The sociology of developing societies**. (2nd ed.) MacMillan Press: Hong Kong.

Hsia, H.J. (1985) On the imbalance of international

communications: An analysis, a review, and some solutions. **Communicare, 4(2)**:5-25.

Inayatullah (1967) Toward a non-Western model of Development. In Lerner, D. & Schramm, W. **Communication and Change in the developing countries**. University of Hawaii/East-West Center Press.

Jakubowicz, K. (1985) Third World news cooperation schemes in building a new international communication order: Do they stand a chance? **Gazette, 36(2)**:81-93.

Katz, E. (1983) The return of the Humanities and Sociology **Journal of Communication, 33(3)**:51-52.

Kwame Boafo, S.T. (1985) Utilizing development communication. Strategies in Arican societies: A critical perspective (Development communication In Africa) **Gazette, 35(2)**: 83-92.

Lent, J.A. (1985) Western type communications research in the Third World — A critical appraisal **Communicare, 4(1)**: 5-14.

Melkote, S.R. (1987) Biases in development support communciation. Revealing the comprehension gap **Gazette, 40(3)**:39-55.

Miller, G.R. (1983) Taking stock of a discipline **Journal of Communication, 33(3)**:31-41.

Obeng-Quaidoo, I. (1985) Culture and Communication research methodologies in Africa: A proposal for change **Gazette, 36(2)**:109-120.

Pepitone, A. & Triandis, H.C. (1987) On the universality of social psychological theories. **Journal of cross-cultural Psychology, 18(4)**:471-498.

Pratt, C. (1986) Communicating population issues in Sub-Saharan Africa: A development policy for Nigeria. **Gazette, 37(3)**: 169-189.

Pratt, C.B. & Manheim, J.B. (1988) Communication research and development policy: Agenda dynamics in an African setting. **Journal of Communication, 38(3)**:75-95).

Reason, P. & Rowan, J. (1981) **Human Inquiry. A sourcebook of new paradigm research**.

John Wiley and Sons: New York.

Rogers, E.M. (1976) Communication and Development. The passing of a dominant paradigm. **Communication Research, 3(2)**:213-240.

Rogers, E.M. (1980) The rise and the fall of the dominant paradigm. In Wilhoit, G.C. & De Bock, H.: **Mass Communication Review Yearbook**. Sage, 1980:679-684: Beverley Hills.

Rogers, E.M. (1981) Manipulation and Mass Communication: Lessons from research on diffusion of innovations. **Masscommunicatle, 4(9)**: 149-158.

Rogers, E.M. (1986) **Communication Technology. The new media in society**. Collier MacMillan Publishers: London.

Rogers, E.M. & Chaffee, S.H. (1983) Communication as an academic discipline: A dialogue. **Journal of Communication, 33(3)**: 18-30.

Rogers, E.M. & Kincaid, D.L (1981) **Communication Networks: Toward a new paradigm for research**. Free Press: New York.

Rogers, E.M. & Shoemaker, F.F. (1971) **Communication of Innovations. A cross-cultural approach**. The Free Press: London.

Stevenson, R.L. (1988) **Communication Development and the Third World**. Longman: New York.

Tafoya, D.W. (1984) Research and cultural phenomena. In Gudykunst, W.B. & Kim, Y.Y.: **Methods for intercultural communication research**, p 47-65. Sage Publications: Beverley Hills.

Tapson, D.R. (1987) Directors' Report. **Ardrinews, 7(1)**

Ugboajah, F.O. (1979) Developing indigenous communication in Nigeria. **Journal of Communication, 29(4)**:40-45.

Urevbu, A.O. (1988) Science, technology and African values. **Impact of science on society, 38(3)**:239-248.