TRANSCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

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Introduction

In his wide-ranging history of communication, Marshall T. Poe has almost euphorically described the present as an epoch of mediatized transculturality. While the eras of the printing press and audiovisual media were characterized by tolerance and multiculturalism, Poe argues that we are now moving into an era that is "beyond culture" (Poe 2011: 240). He suggests that, in the future, identities will no longer be so firmly linked to historical (national) cultures, but instead to a mix of diverse historical and new, invented cultures. An example of this is what he calls the transnational identities of different subcultures. These already existed outside the Internet (and are lived beyond it) but the emergence of the latter made access to them much easier. Hence the current transformation of media furthers the emergence of a transcultural everyday life. Poe cites, as proof of this, the book *Transculturalism*, a collection edited by Claude Grunitsky, a creative entrepreneur and son of the Togolese ambassador. Here transculturalism is described as a way of life within which "some individuals find ways to transcend their initial culture, in order to explore, examine and infiltrate foreign cultures" (Grunitzky 2004: 25). The ongoing transformation of the media is therefore associated with an entirely new way of living and experiencing culture, and this new way of life is captured by the concept of transculturalism.

If we pay attention to the media we might detect other aspects of transculturality. Among these are the transcultural conflicts that organizations have to confront and manage, but also the transcultural conflicts between

the "West" and the "Rest" (Hall 1992a). We are not only aware of such transcultural conflicts through various forms of media, from the World Wide Web to more traditional forms of mass media such as television and newspapers; media can *themselves* become driving forces in transcultural conflicts. One leading example of this was the uproar created in 2006 by the publication of cartoons of the prophet Mohammed (Eide *et al.* 2008), followed by protests in the so-called Arab world and a subsequent public discussion of Islam and religious values in Europe. The cartoons were published by the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* with the deliberate intention of creating controversy. This incident serves to illustrate the perspective of a certain media outlet on a "foreign culture." People in the Arab world found out about these cartoons, likewise—from a critical dossier circulated among Islamic preachers, from the Internet, from reports by Al Jazeera—and various forms of protest followed. These were then the subject of reporting by European mass media, coupled with commentary that, in some cases, sought to distance itself from the issue. The transcultural communication made possible by the globalization of media thus led to conflicts between religions and cultures, and did not necessarily enhance mutual understanding.

This and similar examples make clear how complex and many layered the phenomenon of transcultural communication is. They draw attention to the need for differentiated knowledge of the possibilities and limits of processes of transcultural media communication if one is to give due regard to the ongoing globalization of media communication. Transcultural communication affects us all when we are confronted with media products on television, in the cinema and in the press that "travel" beyond the bounds of different cultures. It affects us when we come into contact with people of different cultures over the Internet. In what way, and by which businesses, are these transculturally accessible media products produced? What is the relationship between media policy and the activity of global media corporations? What is the nature of transcultural media products? How are they taken up and appropriated? How does this all relate to the way we communicate across cultures using social media? What kinds of theories and approaches can help us develop a critical perspective on that? These are the questions that I hope I can at least begin to answer in this book; but before I provide a brief overview of the book as a whole, I would like to make a few remarks about the concept of transcultural communication.

As will be seen in the following pages, the concept of transcultural communication is part of a continuing academic discussion of globalization and mediatization. It cannot therefore be adequately defined in two or three sentences. Here in this introduction we can offer at most a degree of

orientation. It should already be clear that the objects of analysis here are mediated forms of transcultural communication, and not face-to-face interactions between individuals. This is because *transcultural communication* typically takes place through media. Unlike intercultural and international communication, which takes place between individuals or groups of individuals belonging to distinct cultures or nation states, the concept of transcultural communication involves processes of communication that transcend individual cultures. Examples are our day-to-day involvement with the Internet, reading online newspapers from other parts of the world (insofar as one understands the language), or downloading images and music from different cultural contexts. There are also Hollywood, Bollywood or Nollywood films that appeal to people of the most diverse cultures. We use the specific concept of *transcultural communication* so that we can approach phenomena on different levels—something that is not demanded when talking of intercultural or international communication. We cannot approach this subject by comparing different national cultural patterns of communication, as is possible with intercultural or international communication. Differences of this kind are of course *also* dealt with when analyzing transcultural communication. But this also involves patterns that promote differences that *transcend* various traditional cultures. For example, formats such as *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?* can be found in different national media cultures while being defined as the same broadcast across them. Therefore, developing a conception of transcultural communication involves the specification of particular national cultures, but also examines how these particularities are taken up in communication processes that transcend cultures, without at the same time assuming that in this process we are dealing with the development of a standardized and uniform global culture, the "McDonaldization" (Ritzer 1998) of the world.

This makes it clear that the concept of transcultural communication has close links with two other conceptions: mediatization and globalization. Both relate to long-term processes of change. Let us start with the first: *mediatization*. As I have shown in detail elsewhere (Hepp 2013a: 29–68), this idea seeks to identify the reciprocal relationship between changes in media and communication on the one hand, and changes in culture and society on the other. In the course of human history not only has there been considerable development in the number of technical media for communication, but existing cultures and societies have played a major role in determining how we communicate. Mediatization has quantitative aspects: an increasing number of media have become available for longer (a temporal dimension) at ever more locations (a spatial dimension) in

ever more situations (a social dimension). It also has qualitative aspects: media "mold" (Hepp 2013a: 90) our communication, and so how we create or construct our cultures and societies through communicating with one another.

This brings us back to the remarks made by Poe, which I cited above, who emphasizes the way in which transculturality is closely related to the way in which Internet-based media mold our communication today. But things are more complex than he makes them seem; for one thing, the manner in which media exert their molding effects is much more diverse than he supposes. It is not only the "ought" of the Internet (Poe 2011: 240) that furthers worldwide transculturalization. The general idea of the molding forces of the media conceals two very important factors. The first of these is that media *institutionalize* the way in which we communicate with each other. Email, television, Internet radio, mobile phones and so on—these are not simple pieces of equipment, but each involves particular forms and patterns of communication. Secondly, media reify our communication, since particular elements, apparatus and infrastructure are involved. This reification, in turn, makes any change costly. To take a historical example: once the centralized network of radio broadcasting had become established, it was no longer possible to use it for decentralized communication, even though this might have originally been a technical possibility (Brecht 1932).

Today most people live in what can be called "mediatized worlds" (Hepp 2013a, b: 69; Hepp and Krotz 2014). Technical means of communication are central to the construction of their "small life-worlds" (Luckmann 1970), or "social worlds" (Strauss 1978), which are molded by these means of communication as outlined above. For example, today no school can do without media; and this not only involves textbooks, but, increasingly, computers and the Internet. The political world is mediatized by virtue of the fact that the form of democracy in which we live depends, among other things, upon the television and upon social media, in which we can post our own political ideas and criticize those of others. Seen in this light, the various worlds of today's communities are inconceivable without the existence of media communication. What would Goths do without their music, and where would the fans of *The Big Bang Theory* or *Glee* be without TV series? It is much the same with the world of social movements; Occupy would not be possible without the existence of social media. Therefore, mediatized worlds are the level at which mediatization in a lived media culture becomes concrete—and increasingly so across the world.

This brings us indirectly to *globalization*, which, since the 1990s, has become a major topic for discussion (Beck 2000; Giddens 1990; Tomlinson

1999). The globalization of media communication is a central element of globalization itself. This can be seen at work in global financial markets, whose existence is predicated upon worldwide communication networks. These networks are important not only for the execution of financial transactions, but for the circulation of the information vital to transnational speculation.

In this book I will adopt a rather limited conception of the globalization of media communication, denoting the global development of mediatized connectivity, hence the increase of technically mediated communicative relationships. Conceiving the globalization of media communication in this way has a great deal to do with mediatization: when the worlds in which people live become mediatized worlds, the prospects and potential for communicative relations across the world increase considerably. This initially involves those living in the so-called developed parts of the world, and not all those who do live there. But even in other parts of the world the life of individuals is increasingly lived in mediatized worlds. Even if it is the privileged who are in the lead, this also affects people whose lives are precarious, as will be shown below. They also develop transcultural communicative connectivities.

The reason for adopting this limited conception of medial globalization is apparent in the example of the Danish cartoons mentioned earlier: since mediatized relations of communication can have quite diverse consequences—from the demarcation and stabilization of existing cultural communities, to conflicts between them, and also processes of rapprochement—some kind of analytic instrumentarium is required that does not immediately carry implications about the nature and direction of these consequences. In particular, we need to be careful to avoid the assumption that the globalization of media is necessarily related to processes of homogenization, or Americanization. Concepts like these cannot capture the contradictory diversity of media globalization because they assume that an initial impulse has constant and uniform effects.

There are two further ideas linked to this understanding of the globalization of media communication which are often used below: that of network, and that of flow (Castells 2000). Any reference to connectivity should be understood structurally, in terms of the network that sustains such connectivity. Substantively, we are here talking about "connections" between "nodes," which can be described as a structure. Examples of this are particular communication networks such as satellite television or the Internet. The notion of flow, on the other hand, shifts the emphasis to processes within such networks. Examples would be the flows of communication that actually take place through satellite television and the

Internet. Communication flows vary in kind and thickening—they are not evenly distributed throughout a network.

Talking of networks, flows and the molding forces of the media involves the use of metaphors, images with which we can visualize complex socio-cultural phenomena. Perhaps the very plasticity of these conceptions has contributed to their use in discussion of globalization and mediatization. But it is through such ideas that abstract "meta-processes" (Krotz 2009) can be grasped initially, and so made conceivable. The term "meta-process" means, here that mediatization and globalization are gradual but lasting processes of change. It also involves the idea that globalization and mediatization cannot be broken down into a small number of analytical variables through which transformation processes can be tracked. The use of the term "meta-process" is rather intended to open up a particular "panorama" (Hepp 2013a: 49–51) of long-term change—a panorama that then makes it possible to pose the right questions when analyzing concrete phenomena, and to place them within a more general framework.

My purpose, here, is to provide an approach to the domain of transcultural communication that has been steadily developing in recent years. The arguments that I advance here are closely related to those in my book *Cultures of Mediatization*, where I sought to provide "insight" into individual cultures. I examined there what it means to be a mediatized culture. In this new book the focus shifts to contact between different mediatized cultures. It centers upon the relationship "between" media cultures—a relationship that is characterized by transcultural communication.

This kind of approach always involves two problems. First of all, one book cannot be exhaustive, covering the entire world. There is just too much of it. Secondly, it is always written from a particular standpoint, given that any description involves a point of view, and so cannot ever be entirely "neutral." I seek to minimize these two problems by arguing from example. All phenomena and questions dealt with below will be related to specific examples that I consider characteristic, for the present at least. These will, for the most part, be drawn from empirical studies whose methods are, however, diverse—ranging from questionnaire-based surveys to case studies. I will also make use of surveys and reviews made by other academics. However, in some cases my arguments are also based on work done by journalists. This last source will typically be used when dealing with current developments for which no other sources are available.

My standpoint is shaped by the two languages that I know best: German and English. It is also true that one's own cultural location plays a special role when talking about transcultural communication. In my case I write as a European who can see the potential of communal and

social transnationalism, for which the EU serves as an example. Perhaps the best that one can do is simply make one's own cultural position explicit, and, where necessary, examine it critically. Stepping outside it entirely is really not possible.

This combination of argument by example and my own linguistic and cultural positioning accounts for any failure to pursue many relevant examples that would be of great benefit to further discussion of questions of transcultural communication. This is especially the case in regard to Africa, Asia, and Latin America. I have, however, made great efforts to refer to the work of others at relevant points. This book is in no respect a "world history of the globalization of media communication." This would be a different project, on which some work has already been done (see Mattelart 1994 or Tunstall 2007). I wish here to present in as concise a manner as possible the *prospects offered by the conception of transcultural communication*. I also think that this would itself form a useful basis for writing any world history of media and communication. But, beyond such inclusive projects, the approach I offer here is, I think, important for a practical and critical understanding of the progressive globalization and mediatization of the world.

The book is divided into seven chapters, including this introduction and my concluding remarks. Chapter 2 presents a range of perspectives. Transculturality is not just another comparative framework to be added to interculturalism and internationalism. The concept of transcultural communication involves a particular understanding of the consequences of globalization, postcolonial criticism and methodological reflection. Together, these three elements make up what is original in the approach to transcultural communication adopted here.

Chapter 3 deals with regulation and the infrastructure of transcultural communication. To what extent have political agendas accelerated the globalization of media communication? How could the globalized infrastructure of media communication be created? Here we need a comparative overview of the various media systems in the world. However, the relationship between questions of transcultural communication and those of regulation cannot be reduced to the way in which particular media policies have furthered the globalization of the media. For this itself represents a challenge to media policy; this was already evident during the 1970s during discussions of media and communications policy in UNESCO, when the demand for a new world communication and information order was raised. Today there is a clear reference back to the idea of global governance of the media, related to attempts at managing "global media" through "globalized self-regulation."

Chapter 4, "The Production of Media and their Transcultural Contexts," addresses the production of transcultural communication. This chapter examines corporations that provide media content that is transculturally accessible, and the kinds of cultures of production that characterize these concerns. It also deals with the emergence of transcultural forms of journalism. Alternative forms of transcultural media production are also touched on here, anticipating material presented in the next chapter. Chapter 4 concludes with a consideration of the phenomenon of global media cities as prominent localities of transculturally oriented media production.

Chapter 5 moves from media production to media products, to transcultural media representations. I begin here with the sphere that has always been foremost in discussion of transcultural communication: that of film. This is examined using the examples of Hollywood, Bollywood and Nollywood. Attention is then shifted to imports and the adaptation of formats that create further transcultural communication relationships in the fictional sphere. This is followed by a discussion of the extent to which one could talk of transcultural news broadcasting, and hence of transcultural political public spheres. The chapter closes with a consideration of media events—perhaps the phenomenon and level of representation that has the most relevance to an analysis of transcultural communication.

Chapter 6, on "The Appropriation of Media and Transculturation," is directed to transcultural communication from the perspective of the involvement of individuals with media in their everyday life. I start by developing a conception of media appropriation as a process of cultural localization. This makes it possible to treat discussion of a digital divide in a mediatized everyday life from a fresh perspective. This leads to forms of communitization that have been altered by transcultural communication, the way in which in different cultural contexts the identity of individuals is linked to media, and the resulting challenges to (political) citizenship.

Chapter 7 deals with "Perspectives of Transcultural Communication." This identifies the core arguments of the preceding chapters and remarks upon the perspectives created by transcultural communication with reference both to the subject matter, and with regard to the approach adopted in this book.

I would like to say, in closing the introduction, that in writing this book, I have sought to avoid premature judgments. Even so, even the simple decision to engage with the problem of transcultural communication is not free of normative implications. I seek to review and analyze the possibilities of transcultural communication because I think this area is of great importance to human cooperation in a time of advancing globalization.

As Richard Sennett has remarked (2012: x): "we have greater conduits between people thanks to modern forms of communication, but less understanding of how to communicate well." It is my hope that this book will make a small contribution to the improvement of communication, and so to communication between cultures.

2

Approaches to Transcultural Communication

During the last few years there has been a surge in interest in media communication in its global context. Those studying media and communication have become increasingly aware that a leading characteristic of mediatized communication is the crossing of (cultural) boundaries, as well as the demarcation of new boundaries. The establishment of satellite communication, the Internet and, increasingly, globalized mobile communication has made it ever more plain that many elements of this process are not bounded by nation states or national cultures but tend, by their very nature, to transgress these limits. It is true that increasing interest in media history and global issues has often demonstrated that some of these phenomena are not so new after all (Bösch 2011; Briggs and Burke 2009) but it is nonetheless possible to say that the advance of *globalization* and *mediatization* in recent years has intensified the interest of those researchers working in communication and media and looking at questions of cross-border communication. Empirically speaking, globalization and mediatization are related. To take one small example: the development of computer-based stock-exchange dealing was critical for the globalization of the world economy, involving the mediatization of the trade in shares, stocks and bonds. We cannot discuss globalization in general, and the globalization of media communication more particularly, unless we also relate this to questions of mediatization.

In parallel with this increased empirical relevance there has been a conceptual shift. Some studies continue to use the concepts of "international communication," "intercultural communication," and "development communication," but recently these have become more globally embedded. Hence the idea of "international communication" (Thussu 2006) emphasizes media communication that transcends borders, linked, however, to the idea that (public) mass communication is primarily oriented to the nation state (Esser and Pfetsch 2004). "Intercultural communication" (Jandt 2012) shifts attention to personal and reciprocal media communication, and there are clear crossovers between communication and media studies on the one hand and the study of language and literature on the other. "Development communication" (McPhail 2009) tends to be practical in orientation, directed to the question of the contribution that media can make to the "modernization" (Lerner 1977) of what was at the time called the Third World, but which more recently treats the use of media as "help for self-help" (Servaes 1999). Ultimately, all these cases treat both borders and their transgression in respect of a concept of the nation state.

The advance of globalization and mediatization has brought with it other concepts, in particular "transnational" and "transcultural" communication. The former idea retains the sense of a nation state and its national culture, but emphasizes the existence of phenomena that cannot be contained by the simple interaction between individual states, as implied by the term "international" (discussed by Schiller 1979). The key concept of *transcultural communication* used in this book goes one step further, arguing that this approach is not simply yet another analytical level in the comparative study of communication and media. "Transcultural" does not only refer to communication processes across cultures, as in the expression "cross-cultural studies" (Lewis 1999); the concept involves a more fundamental reorientation, as outlined in the following pages. Accordingly, this chapter is organized into four parts. I will first of all reconstruct the three primary discursive fields to which the concept of transcultural studies relates: the communicative consequences of globalization; the critique of postcolonialism, and the methodological reflection arising from comparative analyses. This then opens up the prospect of integrating and developing empirical discussion of transcultural communication, providing a substantive basis for an understanding of communicative figurations in globalized, mediatized worlds.

Some clarification is initially necessary, so that misunderstandings may be avoided. The word "approach" used in this chapter is to be taken literally. We are not dealing, here, with a finished theory, or an established school of academics and analysts (such as the Frankfurt School). Instead, we are seeking to emphasize the way in which the concept of transcultural

communication has developed over several decades, and established a specific way of dealing with questions of media communication that is, nonetheless, open to further development.

This also explains why we deal with this approach in terms of *three discursive fields*, considering in addition the relation of each field to the others. These three fields have emerged as the primary vectors for discussion of the manner in which communication both transgresses and creates boundaries, where the conception of transcultural communication (or transculturation) was only gradually adopted, and which when subsequently pulled together could be seen to form a unitary approach. Each of the three discursive fields provides access to the idea of transcultural communication in a specific way, while also being an important component of the general approach: they historicize the developing discussion of transcultural communication in terms of the ongoing globalization of media communication. Within the discursive field of postcolonialism, this is represented by the critical potential of the concept of transculturality. In methodological discussion the focus is upon the reformulation of the instrumentarium of cross-cultural and comparative study of media and communication. These different emphases make plain the heuristic rationale for maintaining a distinction between these discursive fields. All the same, the degree to which these three converge when considering transcultural communication is also clear. It is only when we treat these three core elements as a unity that we are able to talk of a coherent approach to transcultural communication.

Some remarks need to be made, here, on the concepts of culture and communication. The concept of transcultural communication employs *culture* as outlined by Jan Nederveen Pieterse (1995) as a translocal concept distinct from a territorial conception of culture. Such territorial conceptions are inwardly directed and endogenous, focused on the organicity, authenticity and identity of culture. This amounts to a "functional organism," a national culture related to national societies. By contrast, translocal conceptions are outwardly directed and exogenous, focused upon hybridity, translation and ongoing identification. Culture is, here, something that is processual and unfinished. It is this latter conceptualization to which transcultural communication relates. Therefore, it is important to avoid an unthinking connection of the concept of culture to the national cultures of territorial states. Culture is always related initially to the everyday production of meaning. Borrowing from Stuart Hall (1997), we might understand by it the "sum" of different "systems of classification" and "discursive formations" involved in the production of meaning in the course of everyday life. Systems of classification are ultimately patterns

of systematic relationships between (linguistic and nonlinguistic) signs. Discursive formations are ongoing, patterned constellations of the use of these signs in linguistic and nonlinguistic practices. Culture, therefore, is always a matter of practice, the production of meaning by "doing."

Correspondingly, cultures are treated here as *phenomena of thickening* (Hepp 2013a: 72–74). This means that the many cultural patterns that occur empirically are characteristic of different cultures, or that they can be found in one way or another in different cultures. Consequently cultures flow into one another, and their borders become blurred. Despite this, in the "core" of a thickening it is possible to identify a culture, what characterizes it, what distinguishes it from other cultures. If in the following I talk not of culture, but of media culture, I am referring to all those cultures whose primary source of meaning is mediated through technical means of communication, and which in these processes are "molded" in different but specific ways. Media cultures are cultures characterized by mediatization, as formulated above. Mediatized worlds are those fragments of the social in which media cultures realize themselves as everyday life.

In regard to the concept of *communication*, we can say that the transcultural communication approach is related to an action-oriented concept of communication, or a practice-oriented concept. Correspondingly, communication means any form of symbolic interaction conducted either in a planned and conscious manner, or in a highly habituated and socially situated way (Reichertz 2009: 94). Communication relies upon signs that men and women learn through socialization, and which are treated purely as generally quite arbitrary symbols, being based upon social rules: there is for example no "natural basis" for a tree being called "tree." Interaction means reciprocally oriented human social action. This means that men and women who are oriented to each other "do" something. Communication is fundamental to the human construction of reality; we "create" for ourselves a socio-cultural reality through diverse communicative processes. We are born into a world in which communication already exists, we learn what is characteristic for this world and its culture in the communicative process of language acquisition, and when we act in this world it is always communicative action.

2.1   Consequences of Globalization

Very broadly speaking, transcultural communication should be understood as a consequence of the globalization of media communication. For the German-language area, this idea was advanced by the sociologist

and communications specialist Horst Reimann (1992), who identified the idea of transcultural communication as the specific characteristic of an increasingly global communication process that was creating a "global public sphere." His point of reference here is Niklas Luhmann's systems theory, which, on account of the inherent tendency of today's communication to cross borders, presupposes the constitution of a world society: "More and more possibilities for communication . . . cannot be contained within regional boundaries" (Luhmann 2012: 86). This perspective on the boundaries of a society implies that boundaries are set by the possibility of connecting communication, hence when communication becomes increasingly "global", we can talk about the existence of a "world society." Such a society is characterized by a diversity of transcultural communication.

Although the communications and media specialists Kurt Luger and Rudi Renger (1994) also work with the conception of transcultural communication (Luger 1994), their link to cultural studies and European cultural philosophy lends them a different perspective. For their arguments they rely heavily upon the philosopher Wolfgang Welsch, but the links to globalization theory are also evident. Their basic premise is that globalization has led to the supersession of "traditional cultures" (national and regional cultures) by diverse "new forms" of life (Welsch 1999b: 222 f.): lifestyles supported by branding, globalized popular media contents or advertising. Transculturality then becomes a concept through which such phenomena can be analyzed.

The concept of transculturality has also been linked, for some time, to questions of globalization in the English-language area. Apart from some efforts to construct a "transcultural psychology" (Kiev 1972), this has been related to work on practical issues of management. Here, for instance, transcultural communication is treated as part of a "transcultural leadership" (Simons *et al.* 1993) that is characteristic of globalized businesses. "Transcultural" is here defined as being "grounded in one's own culture but having the culture-general and culture-specific skills to be able to live, interact, and work effectively in a multicultural environment" (Simons *et al.* 1993: 245). These links are even clearer in publications related to the study of communication and media. Drawing upon Néstor Garcia Canclini (1995, orig. 1989), James Lull has argued that the advancing globalization of media communication has brought about transculturalization (Lull 2000:242). Marwan Kraidy (2005: 38–44) has likewise developed his understanding of transcultural communication through analysis of the globalization of the media.

Box 2.1   Understanding transculturality and transculturation

Transculturality from a Philosophical Perspective
I call this new form of cultures transcultural since it goes *beyond* the traditional concept of culture and *passes through* traditional cultural boundaries as a matter of course. The concept of transculturality . . . seeks to articulate this altered cultural constitution. (Welsch 1999a: 222, italics in original)

Transculturality from an Anthropological Perspective
. . . the word *transculturation* better expresses the different phases of the process of transition from one culture to another, because this does not consist merely in acquiring another culture, which is what the English word acculturation really implies, but the process also necessarily involves the loss or uprooting of a previous culture, which could be defined as deculturation. In addition it carries the idea of the consequent creation of new cultural phenomena, which could be called neoculturation. (Ortiz 1970: 102 f., italics in original)

Transculturality from the Perspective of Modern Economics
"Transcultural leadership" fills a gap in management development. It is about how diversity affects your everyday activities. It deals with conversations, meetings, interviews, making decisions, as well as with obtaining agreement, resolving disputes, providing appropriate training and performance reviews. It tells how to handle people from diverse backgrounds whether planning, working, or eating lunch together. (Simons *et al.* 1993: xv)

Transculturality from the Perspective of Media and Communications Studies
Unlike cross- or intercultural communication that tends to study contacts between individuals from different cultures that are assumed to be discrete entities, transcultural communication believes all cultures to be inherently mixed. It seeks to understand the depth, scope, and direction of various levels of hybridity at the social—not individual—level. Critical transculturalism integrates both discursive and politico-economic analyses in the study of international communication and culture. (Kraidy 2005: 149)

The establishment of the concept of transcultural communication is therefore indicative of a specific response to media globalization (see the contributions in Hepp and Löffelholz 2002): if we can presume the globalization of media communication, then we have to change our ideas about transborder communication from those associated with the classical paradigms of international and intercultural communication. This move brings together a rather heterogeneous group of traditions of thinking: systems theory, cultural studies, and media anthropology.

To form a suitable *understanding of the globalization of media communication* we need, first of all, to come to terms with the genesis of this conception. I will not simply employ here an economic conceptualization of the emergence of global media corporations and their increasing power across the world. The matter is a great deal more complex. We can see this at work initially in the critique of the "cultural imperialism" approach, in which the increasing global reach of media communication is conceived in terms of the exercise of cultural power by one central nation over others on the periphery (Galtung 1971), often referred to as "Americanization." John Tomlinson concludes his comprehensive review of the career of this idea by suggesting that "What replaces imperialism is globalization" (1991: 175). This is somewhat exaggerated, but it makes clear that global cross-border communication has arrived at a state of complexity that can no longer be grasped adequately with ideas related to national and imperial structures: Columbia Pictures Entertainment Inc. in Hollywood was taken over by Sony, a Japanese corporation, and Latin American and Indian media businesses began to "communicate back" to the West (for an overview see Boyd-Barrett and Thussu 1992; Tomlinson 2002). The conception of the globalization of media communication promised to open up more complex theoretical work than had the idea of cultural imperialism.

At this point the study of media and communication enters the general discourse of the social sciences. Various social scientists have called for the existing apparatus of the social sciences to be reconsidered in the light of developing globalization (see for example Appadurai 1996; Beck 2000; Giddens 1990; Hannerz 1996). John Tomlinson (1999) has drawn upon this literature to argue that, in the cultural domain, globalization should not be equated with the formation of a homogeneous "global culture" (Featherstone 1990). On the other hand, it cannot be assumed that globalization has no cultural consequences. Considered in this way, globalization does not only involve the "complex connectivity" of elites, but also the everyday lives of a large number of people. There are various dimensions to this connectivity. It is indeed possible to conceive the globalization of media communication as a world-wide increase in

communicative connectivity (Hepp 2008). Here cultural change is associated with deterritorialization, a loosening of the apparently natural relationship between culture and geographical or social territories (Garcia Canclini 1995: 229). A specific instance would be pieces of music that are accessible through the connectivity provided by the Internet; or television formats like Pop Idol, which is broadcast in the most varied countries, or Bollywood films from which there is an audience way beyond the Indian subcontinent, or the way in which travelers and migrants maintain contact through the Internet or social media. All the same, one should guard against the assumption that the globalization of media communication involves a lack of boundaries (Hafez 2007). In the Arab world, for example, we can see a process of the reterritorialization of a pan-Arab public sphere taking place. It is consequently also important that we do not treat the globalization of media communication from a Western perspective. There is apparently a need to "de-Westernize" the study of media and communication (Curran and Park 2000; Gunaratne 2010; Nyamnjoh 2011; Ray 2012; Thussu 2009). One should constantly re-examine the degree to which ideas developed in the investigation of Western media cultures and systems are simply transposed to the study of the entire world.

This general discussion has led to a new emphasis on the *historical character of the globalization of media communication*. Here the work of Armand Mattelart has shown how the current global network had its beginnings in the development of the first telegraph wires and cables of the nineteenth century (Mattelart 1994: 3–30). He has also shown how today's ideas of an information society have their roots in seventeenth and eighteenth-century utopian thinking (Mattelart 2003: 5–26). Consequently, we need to take account of the larger historical context of the present advances made in the globalization of media communication, indicating the existence of a longer term, although not unilinear, mediatization of culture and society (Krotz 2008). Comprehensive communications connections between various regions of the world have existed for some time. Today's technical advances, and the increasing variety of these connections, are instead notable not for their simple existence, but for the way in which they reach into everyday worlds. Importantly, they are also available in real time, enabling the extensive synchronization of mediated communication. Seen in this light, the globalization of media communication was for the twentieth century not something that was radically new; but what we can register is its ongoing "radicalization." Electronic media have brought about successive and sudden increases in the everyday relevance and synchronicity of communicative connectivity.

On the whole, we can therefore detect an ambivalent relationship between the ideas of globalization and media communication on the one hand, and transcultural communication on the other—the positions outlined above have provided a discursive foundation upon which the conception of transcultural communication first emerged, and then developed into a specific approach. In so doing, it also sought to extend discussion of the globalization of media communication, and lend it substance. Work on transcultural communication seeks to provide a more exact understanding of increasing global communicative connectivity. What is particular to media communication if this occurs across cultures? What might count as an adequate empirical description of transcultural media communication? These are the empirical questions that the study of media and communication seeks to address in developing the idea of transcultural communication.

2.2   Postcolonial Critique

A second discursive element in the transcultural communication approach is made up of the postcolonial critique. This is an interdisciplinary field, which includes—besides studies in media and communication—cultural anthropology as well as literary studies. Founding works in this field of inquiry were, among others *The Wretched of the Earth* by Frantz Fanon (1961), *The Colonizer and the Colonized* by Albert Memmi (1965), and *Orientalism* by Edward Saïd (1978). The main thrust of postcolonial studies is, on the one hand, a critique of colonialism as such, and, on the other hand, a critical analysis of processes and structures rooted in colonialism, but continuing up to the present. The field of postcolonial studies is wide and internally differentiated, and so it is not possible to deal with it here in any detail (cf. for an overview Ashcroft *et al.* 2009a and Chambers and Curti 1996). The focus is rather upon another point: What did this postcolonial critique contribute to the overall discussion of transcultural communication?

More usual here is the use of the term "transculturation" rather than transcultural communication. The basis for this can be found in a book by the Cuban cultural anthropologist Fernando Ortiz, first published in 1940 under the title *Contrapunteo cubano del tabaco y el azúcar*, otherwise known in English as *Cuban Counterpoint*. He examines the relationship of the production cultures of tobacco and sugar and their influence on the formation of new cultures. "Sugar," here, is an industrial system imported with colonialism, involving machine production and mechanized time. "Tobacco," by contrast, represents an indigenous mode of production in

which the production process is under domestic control, involving individual craft skills, and a pace and rhythm in the work that follows the seasons (Mackenthun 2011: 134). The encounter between these two modes of production is a complex dialectical process, and to analyze this Ortiz introduces the concept of transculturation, opposing to it the idea of acculturation, and treating it as the process of growing into a culture (see the quote in Box 2.1).

Bronislaw Malinowski (1970) approved of this conception of transculturation as used by Ortiz in developing a new perspective upon cultural processes in Latin America. In his view, "The real history of Cuba is the history of its intermeshed transculturations" (Ortiz 1970: 98). With the onset of colonization it was not simply a national Spanish culture that arrived on Cuban soil. Cultures embodied in people from different Romance European countries found their way there. From the very beginning they encountered indigenous cultures, leading to a "new syncretism of cultures" (Ortiz 1970: 98). Very many other processes of transculturation were added to this—for example, by the institutions of the slave trade. Ortiz here laid emphasis upon the importance of experiences in the slave ships years before the work of Paul Gilroy (1993): Africans "of different regions, races, languages, cultures, classes, ages, sexes [were] thrown promiscuously into the slave ships, and socially equalized by the same system of slavery" (Ortiz 1970: 101). A slave trade that was in itself transcultural then continued processes of transculturation in Cuba. Hence the idea of transculturation conveys the sense that colonial relationships of power and production do not imply the imposition of one culture (see Hermann 2007: 257 f.; Koch 2008: 12). In addition, the processual character of the concept lays emphasis upon the continuing development of new syncretic—or as we would today say, hybrid—forms of culture.

The concept of transculturation was adopted by postcolonial studies, in part referring explicitly to Ortiz, but later without any such acknowledgement. This has been shown in detail by Diana Taylor (1991), who has drawn particular attention to the Peruvian ethnologist and writer José Maria Arguedas (1982). In his view, indigenous cultures as we know them are themselves the product of transculturation, arising during years of contact between earlier Peruvian cultures and those of the colonizers. For Arguedas, therefore, there is no such thing as a pure indigenous culture and a pure Spanish culture in Peru, but instead a variety of "Mestizo" cultures. He does not consider Eurocentric conceptualizations of culture to be adequate to the understanding of the hybrid character of Latin American cultures.

Subsequent discussion broadened these perspectives (see, for example, the contributions in Bekers *et al.* 2009; Davis *et al.* 2002; Kalogeras *et al.* 2006). Later developments in the study of culture and communication in Latin American followed on from this as, for instance, already seen with Néstor Garcia Canclini, who emphasized the resolutely hybrid character of Latin American cultures (Garcia Canclini 1995; Hepp 2009b; Lull 1998). Transculturalization came to signify the emergence of new cultural forms from previously distinct cultural contexts in a process of *hybridization* that had a definite impact upon power relations. Rather like Ortiz's use of syncretism, hybridity involved the mixture of resources from different cultural contexts, and their combination and fusion (Hepp 2010: 216, 274). In this context the process was analyzed chiefly with respect to the "sub-altern" appropriation of colonialism, the contact zones of a "hybridization from below" attracting particular attention. In her study of colonial travel journalism, Mary Louise Pratt claimed that transculturation arose in specific contact zones that developed as follows:

> Contact zones [are] social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination—like colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the globe today. (Pratt 1992: 4)

As this quotation makes clear, the concept of transculturation converges upon that of a "third space," which Homi Bhabha, a leading theorist of postcolonialism, has identified as a cultural interfacial space of meeting:

> It is that Third Space, though unrepresentable in itself, which constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensures the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew. (Bhabha 1994: 55)

Consequently processes of translation and rehistoricization can occur not only in literary space, but quite concretely, as, for instance, a stairway as a space of cultural encounter of quite different people. The concept of transculturality thus becomes a comprehensive "key concept" (Ashcroft *et al.* 2009a, b) in the analytical armory of postcolonialism. The purpose of such study is to develop "a critical potential for the description of complex historical relationships as well as a utopian potential for the realisation of incomplete projects of mental decolonisation" (Mackenthun 2011: 123). Engagement with transcultural communication in the context of the study

of postcolonialism ranges from theoretical reflection on their own work by media practitioners (MacDougall 1998), through academic studies of film as locations of transcultural encounters (Kramer 2006), to the study of processes of mediated transculturation in the era of the globalization of media communication (Kraidy 2005; Lull 2002). Ultimately analyses such as these are directed to the understanding of contemporary transculturation embodied in media communication that both crosses and demarcates borders. In this way the problematic and phenomena of a process of transculturation, originally conceived to be an expression of the postcolonial situation, becomes a *general phenomenon* of today's media communication. Hence transcultural encounters no longer relate to (post)colonial locations, but become treated as a normal instance of the manner in which media communication transcends borders. James Lull sums it up like this: "Transculturation processes synthesise new cultural genres while they break down traditional cultural categories" (Lull 2000: 242).

Marwan Kraidy (2005) has provided what is so far the most differentiated theoretical treatment of communication and media within this framework (for his approach see Box 2.1). The "critical transculturalism" that he had developed emphasizes the manner in which culture is both constructed and molded by power, drawing attention to an increasingly global transculturality. He does not seek to establish transcultural communication relationships from the existing structures of a political economy of the media but instead analyzes transculturation as interactive relationships embedded in specific economies. Central to his approach is an emphasis upon the "translocal perspective" (Kraidy 2005: 155), which pulls together diverse relations of communication between a variety of locations at very different levels, and in so doing forestalls their reduction to national totalities. He summarizes this as follows: "Critical transculturalism . . . rejects what anthropologist George Marcus called 'the fiction of the whole' but at the same time emphasises that intercultural relations are unequal" (Kraidy 2005: 153).

This approach aims to develop a critical perspective of hybridities that have been generated through the communicative practice of translocal and diverse cultural contexts. Here Kraidy (2005: 152) draws upon Mikhaïl Bakhtin's concept of hybridity (Bakhtin 1981). Bakhtin made a distinction between organic and intentional hybridity. Organic hybridity characterizes the outcome of transculturation as an unconscious process, as described by Ortiz: ". . . unconscious hybrids . . . are pregnant with potential for new world views, with new 'internal forms' for perceiving the world in words" (Bakhtin 1981: 360). By contrast, intentional hybridity is a conscious construction that deliberately combines different cultural elements. Kraidy notes that the