



## A 1. Hegemony in relation to news analysis

The term hegemony refers to a state that the governing elite of a nation-state is in. This hegemonic position is based on two factors: The government should have the consent of the ~~government~~ governed and the political power that the government possesses must have authority.

Thanks to this hegemonic position, there is no need for the use of coercion or violence from the government to keep its power in the social system. The citizens accept this system and their place within it.

The media plays an important role in this hegemony as it is part of the mechanism that keeps the ruling elite in power. The consensus that exists among the citizens, i.e. the acceptance of the government, is reinforced and reproduced by the media.

There are two views on this hegemonic role of the media. Some regard it as benign. Here the hegemonic role of the media legitimizes the ideology of the ruling elite. The media act as a platform where the shared values of the society are expressed and the political views of the political elites are ~~advocated~~ advocated. Therefore, this role also falls within the five functions of the media, as expressed by McNair. These five functions are: inform, contextualize or educate the citizens, make known or give publicity to the political elite, enable or create a platform for public and political discourse, and be available or be a channel for the advocacy of the political views. Through its hegemonic role the media is thus fulfilling part of its main functions.

On the other hand, the hegemonic role of the media is regarded as negative. This view sees this role as a mere



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conservative indoctrination of the citizens by the media. In this view the media does not act for the well being of the citizens in any way.

There has also been much critique on the hegemonic role of the media. Firstly, this role is regarded as a too simplistic reading of this role. The news making is dependent on much more than the interests of the political elites. The government is also not always able to dictate the agenda of the media. A clear example of this is the news coverage by the American media of the Vietnam War. This coverage was not in favour of the ruling political elite and did not agree with the ideology of the government.

Secondly, media coverage leads to much more fragmentation than the hegemonic role suggests. By reporting on the bad behaviour of politicians for example, the media may cause a breakdown of consensus and it may even undermine the constitutional power of the government. This was the case in scandals such as the Watergate scandal in the USA.

## A 2. The 4<sup>th</sup> estate in relation to news analysis

McNair regards the media as the fourth estate, the other three being the judicial, legislative and executive branch. As the 4<sup>th</sup> estate, the media should be independent, free from political, economic or any form of pressure.

According to the idea of liberal democracy, the independence of this fourth estate should be protected from any political interference. The media largely consists of two main forms: broadcasting and the press. With regards to broadcasting, this independence should be protected even more. Broadcasting may be publicly funded but the political interference has been diminished by several



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mechanisms. For example, in the UK the Broadcasting Act was signed in 1990, safeguarding its independence. In the UK broadcasting is regarded as a national service and because air time is so limited, broadcasting should be either impartial/neutral or partisan/plural.

The press on the other hand, is almost expected to take political standpoints. As the number of newspapers and other news outlets is much greater, the press is more free to interfere in the political debate. It is common for newspapers to endorse a certain political party. So was said that in the 1990s, 12 out of 20 newspapers in the UK were supporters of the conservative party.

With the combination of both broadcasting and the press, the media provide the information necessary for the public to gain information, on which it can build the public opinion rationally. The media as fourth estate is therefore an important part of the political process.

### A 3. Encoding & Decoding

Encoding is an important part of framing, done by journalists. This term refers to the way information is entered into an information system. By encoding the type and overall message of the article, news or message is determined. Encoding takes place in the beginning of the information system, before the message is sent and subsequently received by the receiver or audience.

Depending on the type of frame a journalist uses (this may be a human interest frame, moral frame, economic frame, attribution of responsibility frame or a conflict frame), the amount and the specific information that will be encoded



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will differ greatly. In the encoding process the role and impact of the journalist is significant. Although the journalist is expected to act according to the role of his or her professional ethics of objectivity, the journalist will encode the message partly on the basis of his or her own experiences, predispositions, values, etc. This is where the role of mediation comes into play. The journalist or media in general stands between the actual events or the politicians and the citizens. The way the media constructs/encodes the message has therefore a significant impact and may lead to the perception of the media as a political actor. Also, the concept of intersubjectivity portrays the importance of the encoding process done by the journalist. This intersubjectivity refers to a shared reality which exists of three political realities. The first is the objective political reality, which are the events as they actually occur. The second is the subjective <sup>political</sup> reality, which are the events as they are perceived by the citizens or the political actor. The third is the most significant, being the constructed reality, is ~~the~~ determined by how the media reports on the events. This way of reporting is largely determined by the encoding process and consequently, the encoding process determines partly the way the public gets information. However, much is also dependent on the way the public receives and interprets the message, which is part of the decoding process.

Decoding is more focused on the receiver, whereas encoding focuses on the sender of the message.

Through decoding, the receiver or audience receives the information and interprets it individually. This decoding process does not happen uniformly and much is dependent on factors such as social semiotics, the type of message and the dispositions of the audience. Social semiotics refers to the social and historical factors present in every individual (↳ through experiences)



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determining his or hers predispositions or values or views on the world. Due to the increase of different types of messages the constant flow of information and the increase in both accessibility and sources, ~~the fragmentation of the audience~~ the fragmentation of the audience has increased. This makes that the decoding process does not occur uniformly and it leads to a variety of understandings, interpretations and different opinions.

#### [A] 4. The public sphere.

The term 'the public sphere' was originally proposed by Habermas. According to him, this term refers to the realms of social life where facts and opinions flow through, where politics can be debated and where the public opinion is formed. There are two prerequisites for the ~~the~~ political discourse in this public sphere. The messages conveyed must be truthful and they must be comprehensible for the public.

The public sphere is also one of the requirements for a democratic regime (the other requirements being an open system, with educated or knowledgeable people, with access to information and social networks, making rational choices, and where politicians can advocate their standpoints).

The public sphere is key in challenging the political powers to explain their actions and defend themselves. It increases the accountability and transparency of the government.

It exists mainly within the nation-state but due to the process of globalisation, a global public sphere has emerged which was created and is sustained by communication technology.



B

1. Held: models of understanding globalisation & role of communication tech.

The three globalisation perspectives proposed by David Held are:

- i) The globalists
- ii) The inter-nationalists
- iii) The transformationalists

Held has explored these different views with regards to the impact on politics, the society and its citizens, the culture and the implications of technology on these three aspects.

In the globalist view globalisation and the subsequent impact are inevitable. Globalisation starts through an increase in social interactions, which systematically broaden, deeper and reach out. The impact globalisation has on the nation-state are significant. As the world becomes more global, national boundaries become less important. The concept of <sup>territorial</sup> sovereignty loses part of its significance, and the national identity becomes less pronounced. People apply an outward view and are not constrained by their local, regional, or national environment.

Within the globalist view, a distinction is made between the ~~the~~ positive globalists and the pessimist or negative globalists. According to the positivists, increased globalisation leads to more connectedness, understanding and tolerance of other cultures and societies. Globalisation has economic benefits, as transnational or international markets are established. It leads to an increase in trade and other economic opportunities. The most extreme positivist consequence of globalisation is that it will eventually lead to world peace.



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On the other hand, the pessimist globalists regard the consequences of globalisation not so positive. Through globalisation homogenisation occurs. As information is available world wide, people will have similar influences and as a result the differences between them will decrease. Pessimist regard this homogenisation as negative as the value of diverse cultures and identities gets lost, the world loses its richness of cultures and diversity. Negativist also point to the unevenness of the process of globalisation. The impact of globalisation is not equally strong or beneficial in all parts of the world. Some say globalisation has lead to the creation of a 4<sup>th</sup> world. This refers to the people who are excluded from the economic benefits of globalisation. The 4<sup>th</sup> world exist in every country, even in the rich, advanced, capitalist, globalised societies. One could find the 4<sup>th</sup> world in France for example, in the banlieues. Globalisation also adds to the already existing gap between rich and poor. It provides more opportunities for the wealthy and relatively less to the poor. With regards to culture, globalisation causes cultural imperialism. The strong cultures such as the American or from Western Europe will have the main cultural impact on the world. For example, research has shown that foreign TV programmes and movies ~~are~~ originate from the United States of America in more than 40% of the cases. Also, the use of English as one of the most international languages points to the cultural imperialism. In fact, globalisation is often regarded as a source of American power and dominance, not just in cultural terms. According to the pessimist globalists, the process of globalisation is not established for good, international intentions. Globalisation can be



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regarded as a mere expansion of the power and dominance of the larger states.

However, globalists all together see the importance of communication technology as a causing factor of globalisation. Communication technology has compressed both time and space, causing the creation of phenomena such as global villages. People are no longer tied to their location as they can take part in the virtual community. The speed that information travels and reaches all parts of the world is also very significant to the globalisation process. Communication technology has also caused an intensification of the globalisation process as people are more in contact with the world than ever before. This allowed the rise of global civic society where the third sector, social movements and NGOs can form on a transnational level. This global civic society is based on transnational issues, uses transnational communication and is founded for transnational solidarity with political consequences. Consequently, the rise of global governance has begun slowly but steadily, with a transnational infrastructure. This global civic society and transnational infrastructure of global governance was only possible thanks to increased global communication technology and this is also enabled by it.

The globalists believe that eventually globalisation will lead to a cosmocracy, which is a society lead by global capitalist elites.

For all three models the main communication technology that has made the greatest impact is the Internet, with computers and telephones as hardware.





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The inter-nationalists have a contrasting view on globalisation. In their opinion, the consequences of globalisation are not as significant and are a mere continuation of earlier trading links. The process of globalisation has merely expressed the centrality of the nation-state. As their name suggests, inter-nationalists regard this process as an increase in trade and interactions between nations. They do not believe globalisation is actually taking place. They regard it as regionalisation. For example, the European Union is not the result of globalisation but of regionalisation.

Inter-nationalists build their theory on the Westphalian ideal of a nation-state (established after the 30 year war in 1648)

This Westphalian ideal consists of five principles:

- Territory: fixed, external borders, internationally recognised
- Sovereignty: the state is a legitimate, independent ruler over its people.
- Primacy: the nation-state controls all use of natural, economic, resources
- Autonomy: political, economic activities are free for the state
- Anarchy: the world is anarchic, therefore states must ~~act~~<sup>act</sup> out of self-interest

Together with liberty and democracy, this forms the basis of the modern nation-state.

Inter-nationalists thus look at the nation-state as primary actor and the process of globalisation has not changed this

Inter-nationalists view the role of communication technology less pronounced. Although the information is global, media are still mostly nationally bound. For example, in broadcasting domestically produced programmes are still the most popular. News production is also organised nationally or locally. Hardly any global TV exists, and if it does, it is not successful. Therefore, global communication technology has no real significance for inter-nationalists.



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Transformationalists find themselves somewhere in between. They recognize the process of globalisation but they do not see it as inevitable and they believe that the process and impacts may be reversible. For them globalisation has brought about a power shift from the national government to both regional and global level. However, the national government is still significant and simply adapts to the new power configuration. They believe globalisation leads to communities of place or epistemic communities.

Transformationalists have troubles with determining the cultural impact of globalisation. The determination of the changes in national identity is impossible as they see nations as heterogeneous. They also do not agree with the argument of cultural imperialism as they view it as too focused on the USA. For them globalisation flows are not one way.

For transformationalists, communication technology has a significant role in the globalisation process but not as extreme as the globalists' view. This technology has enhanced the power increase both regional and global level as it increased the voice of the public outside the national government. The change in power configuration was thus only possible thanks to this technology. Again, however, this technology has not ruled out the significance of the nation-state. As national actors also use communication technology to convey and display their use and importance, their power has still remained. The amount and significance however has been altered and divided between the several layers.



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These different models of globalisation also interpret the evidence for globalisation. This evidence of globalisation consists of four main elements.

- Stretched social relations
- intensification of the impact of globalisation and the density of social interactions
- interpenetration of societies and cultures.
- Transnational or global infrastructure emerges.

For globalists, all evidence is acknowledged as they view the process of globalisation and its impacts as changing every aspect of life.

Inter-nationalists do see stretched social relations but these are more regionally than global. They do not acknowledge a true intensification as they believe citizens are bound to their nation. Inter-nationalists see the impact of interpenetration in a more negative light and as an argument against globalisation. As societies and cultures come face to face, this will lead, in their view, to an increase in diversity. It will only enhance the idea of a national identity and culture. They see the establishment of transnational infrastructures as formal inter-state setups where the different nations still act out of self interest.

Transformationalists acknowledge the evidence of globalisation but for them most of these impacts are not inevitable and can be reversed.

Thus, globalisation and its impact is very differently interpreted in these three views, mostly relating to the impact on the nation-state and the role communication technology has played in advancing the process of globalisation.