



Basics of IAMCR History

by

Cees Hamelink and Kaarle Nordenstreng

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Foreword

This booklet is intended as a foretaste of IAMCR history. Its first four pages are reproduced from the IAMCR website – the ‘nutshell’ article is a handy roadmap of the topic. The rest of the text provides examples of our approach to examining and reporting the history of the Association, seen in a broader context and accompanied by reflections.

This is the first edition, to be followed by updates in the months to come, including factual material such as lists of bureau and council members throughout the decades.

Our main source is the abundant material of the Digital Archive in the IAMCR web pages, which is openly available.

Amsterdam and Tampere, July 2020

Cees Hamelink, IAMCR member 1974–, President 1990–1994

Kaarle Nordenstreng, IAMCR member 1966–, Vice President 1972–1988

IAMCR history in a nutshell

by Cees Hamelink and Kaarle Nordenstreng

Reprinted from IAMCR history pages <https://iamcr.org/node/2943>



IAMCR reception in Prague 1984. From left to right: Robin Cheesman (Section Head, Denmark), Kaarle Nordenstreng (Vice President, Finland), Cees Hamelink (Vice President, Netherlands), Peggy Gray (President Halloran's executive assistant, UK).

The press release No. 1727 of Unesco on December 23, 1957, begins as follows:

Fifty experts on information media, from 15 countries, have just completed in a two-day session at Unesco House, Paris, the task of establishing the International Association for Mass Communication Research. Created with the co-operation of Unesco, the new association, which is independent, has its headquarters in Paris, in the offices of the Institut Français de Presse of the University of Paris, 27 rue St. Guillaume. Its function is the promotion throughout the world of the development of research on problems related to press, radio, television and films. The association's membership list includes about 200 names of institutes, educational establishments and individuals. Educators in journalism are the most numerous on the individual list of educators and sociologists.

The history of the IAMCR goes back to the first years of Unesco. Its Committee on Technical Needs in the Mass Media drafted in 1946 a constitution for an “International Institute of the Press and information, designed to promote the training of journalists and the study of press problems throughout the world”. The United Nations Conference on Freedom of Information, held in 1948 at Geneva, took note of the proposal and resolved that such an Institute could be conducive to the improvement of the quality of information, requesting “the Economic and Social Council to invite Governments and professional organizations, national and international, to examine together the possibility of implementing this proposal and, if it is found practicable, to co-operate in carrying it out”.

Actively involved in the 1948 UN conference were Fernand Terrou (who became the first president of the IAMCR), Jacques Kayser (a vice-president) and Jacques Bourquin (president from 1964 to 1972). They also played an important role in the drafting of Article 19 on freedom of information of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

Fernand Terrou, director of the Institut Français de Presse, was a leading advocate of the idea that an international association should be created “responsible for promoting throughout the world the development of the scientific study of problems relating to the important sources of information (press, cinema, radio, TV, etc)”. Terrou considered that no scientific progress was possible without extensive international exchange and collaboration. A parallel momentum was developing among academic centres of journalism education which also looked for international cooperation.

The 1952 Unesco General Conference authorized the Director General to proceed with the proposal and as a result two lines of action developed. One culminated in the establishment of training centres for journalists, the first being established in Strasbourg in 1956. The other development led to the establishment of a separate international organization for the promotion and exchange of scientific research. In 1953 a Unesco expert meeting began the compilation of list of projects in mass communication research around the world and in 1955 a report entitled Current Mass Communication Research was published. In November 1956 the Unesco General Conference authorized the Director General “to promote the coordination of activities of national research institutes in the field of mass communication in particular by encouraging the establishment of an international association of such institutes”. In December of that year an international conference took place at Strasbourg where a committee (Terrou with Mieczyslaw Kafel from Poland, Marcel Stijns from Belgium and David Manning White from the USA) was formed that prepared an assembly of what was to become the IAMCR.

This constituent assembly took place on December 18th and 19th 1957 at Unesco headquarters. Fernand Terrou of France was elected as the first president with Jacques Kaiser (France), Jacques Bourquin (Switzerland) and Raymond Nixon (USA) as vice-presidents, and the following as members of the permanent bureau: Claude Bellanger (France), Mieczyslaw Kafel (Poland), and Marcel Stijns (Belgium). It is remarkable that at the high time of the East-West ideological confrontation, colleagues from both sides worked together in the establishment of this international research organisation; in addition to Kafel from Warsaw, Vladimir Klimes from Prague was an active participant. Also academics from developing countries were involved from the beginning, including Danton Jobim from Brazil. Hifzi Topuz attended the founding conference as a young Turkish journalist.

The main aim of the Association was to facilitate exchanges of methods and findings between research institutes and to promote personal contacts among individual members. A related

objective was to seek recognition for mass communication as a subject for independent scientific investigation.

The first IAMCR General Assembly after the founding conference was held in October 1959 in Milan, where Raymond B. Nixon became president. The first leaders of the Association came mainly from journalism, journalism training and the print media and particularly from European countries. The enrolment of researchers from various disciplines and the widening of geographical representation were among the first priorities.

Between 1959 and 1979 the Association grew from 30 countries and 100 individuals to 60 countries and 1000 members. In the course of the 1990s further expansion resulted in the representation of some 80 countries.

In 1958 the first section to be established was Historical Research, followed in 1959 by Legal and Political Research, Psychological and Sociological Research, Economic and Technical Research. Since then the IAMCR has regularly expanded the scope of its scientific domains and it counts today 15 sections and 16 working groups.

Since its foundation in 1957 the Association has organised every second year a scientific conference in connection with its statutory General Assembly. From 1970 on the conferences were successively held in Western Europe, Eastern Europe and the Third World. The following list includes the venues of the bi-annual conferences and the Presidents elected:

1957 : Paris (France) Fernand Terrou (France)
1959 : Milan (Italy) Raymond B. Nixon (USA)
1961 : Vevey (Switzerland)
1964 : Vienna (Austria) Jacques Bourquin (Switzerland)
1966 : Herceg Novi (Yugoslavia)
1968 : Pamplona (Spain)
1970 : Konstanz (West Germany)
1972 : Buenos Aires (Argentina) James D. Halloran (UK)
1974 : Leipzig (East Germany)
1976 : Leicester (England)
1978 : Warsaw (Poland)
1980 : Caracas (Venezuela)
1982 : Paris (France)
1984 : Prague (Czechoslovakia)
1986 : New Delhi (India)
1988 : Barcelona (Spain) Cees Hamelink (Netherlands)
1990 : Bled (Yugoslavia)
1992 : Guarujá (Brazil) Hamid Mowlana (USA)
1994 : Seoul (South Korea)
1996 : Sydney (Australia) Manuel Pares i Maicas (Spain)
1998 : Glasgow (Scotland)
2000 : Singapore (Singapore) Frank Morgan (Australia)
2002 : Barcelona (Spain)
2004 : Porto Alegre (Brazil) Robin Mansell (UK)
2006 : Cairo (Egypt)
2008 : Stockholm (Sweden) Annabelle Sreberny (UK)
2010 : Braga (Portugal)

2012 : Durban (South Africa) Janet Wasko (USA)
2014 : Hyderabad (India)
2016 : Leicester (England)
2018 : Eugene, Oregon (USA)
2020 : Tampere (Finland, online) Nico Carpentier (Belgium)

Since 1991 the Association has held also a scientific conference in the years between the bi-annual statutory Assemblies, first with smaller conferences focusing on a particular topic and later with full-size conferences including section and working group sessions. These venues have been:

1991 : Istanbul (Turkey)
1993 : Dublin (Ireland)
1995 : Portoroz (Slovenia)
1997 : Oaxaca (Mexico)
1999 : Leipzig (Germany)
2001 : Budapest (Hungary)
2003 : (scheduled in Taipei but cancelled due to SARS epidemic)
2005 : Taipei (Taiwan)
2007 : Paris (50th anniversary in UNESCO)
2009 : Mexico City (Mexico)
2011 : Istanbul (Turkey)
2013 : Dublin (Ireland)
2015 : Montreal (Canada)
2017 : Cartagena (Colombia)
2019 : Madrid (Spain)

Over the six decades the aims and scope of the Association remained focused on the creation of a global forum where researchers and others involved in media and communication can meet and exchange information about their work. The Association wants to stimulate interest in media and communication research, to disseminate information about research and to create a broad constituency of researchers, practitioners and policymakers.

Throughout its history the Association has adopted public statements on such issues as the protection of journalists, the right to communicate, the freedom of research, the support for international communication policies in the service of democratic development, and the need to contribute to the improvement of communication facilities in the Third World. The concern about public presence of communication research and its role in public life has been a leading motive throughout the years. This became very concrete in the contributions of the IAMCR made to the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in 2003 (Geneva) and in 2005 (Tunis).

Overview of IAMCR history¹

by Cees Hamelink and Kaarle Nordenstreng

Context

Histories of the emerging field of mass communication (e.g. Hardt, 2001; Pietilä, 2005) —in continental Europe from the late seventeenth century onward and in the United States from the early nineteenth century onward—lead one to notice how little and how late international institutions have played a role in shaping communication research. Although the roots of the field go back to the classics of sociology and political science, it is only in the twentieth century that we can find any systematic international networking of research, built through particular structures such as international meetings or associations among relevant scholars. Journalists and other “press people” had their first international congress in 1894, followed by their own international association(s) in the first half of the twentieth century (Nordenstreng et al. 2016). Global media policies began to take shape in the League of Nations in the 1920s—at a time when communication research was not only established but already being divided into various traditions. But communication research remained conspicuously remiss on its own international platforms and structures until the end of World War II.

Post-WWII situation in humanities and social sciences

This passage examines the social and intellectual context in which communication research developed and focus on essential developments in the foundational disciplines of communication research. When the first references to communication research emerge on the international agenda there is in Europe a tradition of historical and legal studies of mainly the printed press. The early leaders of the Association were journalism teachers and professional journalists. In the USA a more social scientific approach is found that focused on the effectiveness of media as a response to industrial needs. In this early phase there was both in Europe and in the USA little conceptual analysis or theoretical exploration.

¹ This part is based on the authors’ joint project on the history of the IAMCR. Its first manifestations are a booklet published for the 50th anniversary conference, *IAMCR in Retrospect* (Hamelink and Nordenstreng, 2007); an entry, “IAMCR,” in the *International Encyclopedia of Communication* (Hamelink 2008); and a chapter, “Institutional networking: The story of the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR)” in the reader *The History of Media and Communication Research: Contested Memories* (Nordenstreng, 2008). The project will culminate in a book on the history of the IAMCR foreseen in 2021.

The history of IAMCR begins with the first years of the UN agency, Unesco, immediately after World War II. In 1946 Unesco proposed to set up an “International Institute of the Press and Information, designed to promote the training of journalists and the study of press problems throughout the world”. This initiative was marked by the idealism that had also inspired the founding of the United Nations. At this time in the mid-1940s, the mass media included mainly the press, radio and cinema –as television was still at an experimental stage. Given their role during the war, the mass media were being recognized as an important factor in many fields, including international relations. The springboard for IAMCR was a combination of training needs and the growth of research in mass communication. In this field, unlike, for example, in political science, the emergence of a scientific association occurred not only at the level of academic research – nationally and internationally. The beginning of mass communication research has been inseparable from the training of communicators, especially journalists. This was unlike political science that has played only a very small role in the training of politicians. However, while training was crucial for ensuring that the research interests received international recognition, in order to set up an international research association it was necessary for the areas of training and research to be separated.

The academic origins of the IAMCR are found in philosophical and legal concerns about freedom of information. The origins of the Association are not really embedded in the social science context that developed internationally after the Second World War. Modern social science emerged not only as an instrument to gather more knowledge about the organization of societies but also as a tool to understand how social processes could be governed. This inspired a need for models of organization and social integration, actually for a ‘science of social order’ that no established scientific approach could successfully address on its own. This did motivate a readiness among social scientists to look beyond their own disciplinary boundaries and find methods of research that would place social science knowledge on firmer foundations and generate more significant findings. It was generally felt that methods in sociology, anthropology, economics, political science, and psychology would have to be comparable to the rigor of the natural sciences.

Modern social science, having originated in Europe, emerged as an institutionalized activity in research and teaching only after – and strongly influenced by – its powerful development in the United States. After 1945 the American-style social sciences started to permeate the rest of the world as manifested by the exponential growth of especially American psychology. “Psychologists had a collective sense that the recent war put ‘psychology on the map’ of scientific respectability and professional salience” (Capps, 2014, 146). The remarkable development of the American professional academic market after the war prepared the United States to excel in the social sciences. As portrayed by Zunz (1998), the American model was based on a certain set of criteria within the academic community, characterized by competition and the loosely orchestrated concentration of government, industry, and the mass media to nurture and utilize academic resources and products. Furthermore, the influx of many European refugees stimulated American academics. The number of Nobel Prize winners from the United States was modest between 1901 and 1937. After 1938, however, the number of US Nobel Prize winners rose dramatically, achieving a dominant world share.

For the development of the social sciences after 1945 it is important to see that social scientists had been heavily involved in the war effort and often had worked in multidisciplinary teams a.o. with natural scientists. However “..while the war had profound effects on the social science disciplines, their practitioners failed to capitalize on their wartime activities in the way the natural scientists were able to do” (Backhouse And Fontaine,2014, 3) and it lasted until the mid-50s for the social sciences to regain their confidence as they began to be recognized as a source of new knowledge and as a tool for policymakers.

While emigrant scholars contributed greatly to the development of the social sciences in the US, the scientific evolution in continental Europe became largely interrupted – more so in Germany and also in Mediterranean countries, and, to a lesser degree in France and Scandinavia. In Western democracies the post-war history of the social sciences is marked by the parallel expansion – especially since the 1960s – of the whole higher educational system and the disciplinary specializations of social studies, including the emergence of new scholarly paradigms, new institutional settings, new ways of funding, new associations of scholars, and the increase of specialists, experts, students, academics and teaching personnels of different levels. After the war the social sciences are increasingly internationalizing and institutionalizing particularly in university department.

By the end of World War II, the social sciences hardly played any role in the European universities. For example, in sociology, there were only three chairs in France and none in Italy. In West Germany, political science chairs and a disciplinary association did not exist until 1950. To go to the US and study at an American university for sometime, therefore, became an almost necessary precondition for the further education and training of social scientists in Europe. Especially young scholars were enchanted with discovering the tools of systematically observing the modernization and the democratization of their societies. As these processes were closely linked with the American model this caused criticism from traditional cultural elites and the Marxist-oriented intelligentsia. Even so there was an increasing diffusion of quantitative methods of data collection, particularly survey and primary data. While it is true to say that the European social science tradition had its own deep experience in quantitative analysis what was missing in the continental tradition, and particularly in those countries that had been under despotic regimes, was the experience of field research and the collection of primary data. Resistance to the introduction of these new instruments, particularly survey methods and sampling techniques, became expressed from different points of view of traditional European scholarship as well as from administrative agencies with their customary statistical procedures.

Under these circumstances, it was not before about 1960 that one can speak of a major expansion of research and acceleration of its academic institutionalization. The social sciences, particularly the younger and newly built-up ones, like sociology, became highly attractive to the student generation for a number of reasons: the relatively young age of university personnel, compared with more established disciplines; the less precise definition of the academic institutionalization of the social sciences; and the proximity of their subject matter to the intellectual and existential preoccupation of the newly mobilized social groups. From this background there emerged, in all European countries, a demand for theories of political relevance and of significance for diagnosing and resolving societal. (Dierkes and Wagner,1992, 612-615). This interest, with its commitment to change, stood in opposition to the program of a supposedly ahistorical and value-free explanation of social phenomena.

Intellectual controversies and debates within the disciplines pitted the American social science tradition against a variety of Marxist approaches and other 'critical' schools with their supposedly more 'enlightened' responses to the demand for a more encompassing understanding and a more 'committed' interpretation of social facts. With this orientation, major streams of the social sciences, with Paris and Frankfurt as major centers, acquired a somewhat militant role, linking up with new social movements and entering into debates about the engagement of intellectuals. The traditional social structures and actors, however, managed to retain their overall influence and to uphold traditional explanations for problems of economic and social change. Social science research in much of the 1960s and 1970s can therefore be characterized, on the one hand, by innovative work in many areas, e.g., political participation, labor organization, class structure, the 'capitalist state,' and problems of personal and sexual relations. On the other hand, theoretical innovation was limited and research perspectives remained concentrated on the nation-state – despite a growing awareness of conflicts posed by North–South differences, the role of multinational corporations, or global environmental problems.

Perrin Selcer wrote in 2009 “In the late 1940 and early 1950s, experts associated with the Social Sciences Department of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) consciously sought to create a way of knowing that would bring unity to diversity” (2009, 309). A new system of international disciplinary associations emerged largely based upon the model of the American Social Science Research Council. The Social Science Division of Unesco was strongly influenced by the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, and particularly by the work of Kurt Lewin. Interdisciplinarity was high on the research agendas. The Department hoped through interdisciplinarity to create a “view from everywhere” ;a disciplinary unity in diversity. Unesco was the most active catalyst of new international organization. The organization did set up INGOs and outsourced research to them. Social scientists were not very well organized but ”by the end of 1949 there were the International Sociological Association, the International Psychological Association, the International Comparative Literature Association, and the International Economics Association. Each was provided a \$3,000 annual subvention.

The International Social Science Bulletin reported (1949) “It rapidly became evident that the very expression ‘social science’ meant widely different things in different countries.. ” For many European intellectuals they belonged to the humanities ... Americans were obsessed with empirical validity.....social science became institutionalized...it were especially Americans who initiated the formation of the international associations. “One reason that American social science was acceptable as a Transatlantic standard was that its development had been decisively shaped by Europeans, particularly Germans, whose Continental influence before Nazism also had been profound” (Selcer, 2009, 315). Important features of American social science were empiricism, instrumentality and institutional success. However the European top intellectuals did not want to follow American models and standards. They claimed that for the ambition to internationalize the production of knowledge a balanced representation was essential. However there was an inherent tension between internationalization and diversity. A critical question was how social science could be universal whereas there were important differences between European, American and Asian conceptions of social science.

Unesco 1945–1947

The history of IAMCR begins with the humanistic ideals that drove the establishment of the UN agency for education, science culture and education Unesco immediately after World War II. On 16 November 1945 the Governments of the States Parties to its Constitution declared on behalf of their peoples:

That since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed;

That ignorance of each other's ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war;

That the great and terrible war which has now ended was a war made possible by the denial of the democratic principles of the dignity, equality and mutual respect of men, and by the propagation, in their place, through ignorance and prejudice, of the doctrine of the inequality of men and races;

That the wide diffusion of culture, and the education of humanity for justice and liberty and peace are indispensable to the dignity of man and constitute a sacred duty which all the nations must fulfil in a spirit of mutual assistance and concern;

That a peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and that the peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind...

For these reasons, the States Parties to this Constitution, believing in full and equal opportunities for education for all, in the unrestricted pursuit of objective truth, and in the free exchange of ideas and knowledge, are agreed and determined to develop and to increase the means of communication between their peoples and to employ these means for the purposes of mutual understanding and a truer and more perfect knowledge of each other's lives.

In consequence whereof they do hereby create the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization for the purpose of advancing, through the educational and scientific and cultural relations of the peoples of the world, the objectives of international peace and of the common welfare of mankind for which the United Nations Organization was established and which its Charter proclaims.

At its founding conference it was clear that the prime mission of Unesco was seen as promotion of peace. The organisation was born from a process of reflection on the possibility of and the necessary conditions for the establishment of long-term peace and security in the world. It was from its inception a philosophical institution, since it intended to contribute to maintaining peace and security by heightening collaboration between nations through education, science and culture in order to ensure the universal respect of justice, of the law, of human rights and fundamental liberties for all, regardless of race, gender, language or religion, that is recognized for all people in the Charter of the United Nations. "The ethical role of the future agency which would set it apart from organisations already active

internationally in the field of education, science, culture and education was in fact the central theme of debates leading up to and immediately following its creation”(Wells, 1987, 45). As Wells reports speakers at the founding conference warned against ‘knowledge without morality’. Here a key controversy became manifest. There were those who believed that peace would come about through understanding and understanding would evolve from free flows of knowledge and information. The opposite position was taken by those for whom peace implied a responsibility for the content of information flows. In 1946 the UN called upon the Commission on Human Rights to address the freedom of information, convene a conference on the topic and establish a sub-commission on freedom of information and the press. This commission was to prepare the conference and study freedom of information from a human rights perspective.

In 1946 Unesco’s first committee on Technical Needs on the Mass Media drafted a constitution for an “International Institute of the Press and Information, designed to promote the training of journalists and the study of press problems throughout the world”. (Report of the expert commission on free flow of information, 13-18 October 1947 in Paris). In the introductory paper published 23/10/1947) it is stated that “The political and economic conjuncture shows a marked tendency to increase and reinforce the obstacles which stand in the way of the free flow of information”. And continued by saying “The obstacles in question are not accidents, aberrations without reason”. The report described them in an appendix to the conference report. In the preamble the report stated it is not enough to give free rein to information, because freedom is inseparable from the feeling of responsibility which translates into hope by an effort to spread the truth. Only freedom inspired by the effort to express the truth promotes mutual understanding which implies the responsibility of mutual respect among cultures.

The second General Conference of Unesco took place in 1947 at Mexico City. In relation to mass communication the conference stated that Unesco will continue and intensify its effort to remove existing obstacles to the free flow of ideas by word and image. To that end, the Director-General was instructed:

- to collect and analyse on a continuing basis objective information on obstacles to the free flow of information, taking advantage of whatever information may become available through the United Nations or other agencies working in this field;

- to co-operate with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, the Commission on Human Rights, and the Sub-Commission on Freedom of Information and of the Press in all matters concerning freedom of information;

- to co-operate with the United Nations in preparing for the Conference on Freedom of Information and to promote at that Conference the principles stated in Unesco’s Constitution and policies adopted by the General Conference.

The General Conference also agreed to make recommendations to the Third Session of the General Conference regarding additional measures to reduce obstacles to the free flow of educational, scientific and cultural materials among nations.

Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

One of the first special conferences organized by the United Nations in April 1948 at Geneva was devoted to the freedom of information. This was where the famous Article 19 on Freedom of Expression and Information was drafted as part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This Article was adopted by the UN General Assembly in December of the same year. IAMCR can proudly claim that two of its founders and former Presidents – Fernand Terrou and Jacques Bourquin– were actively involved in drafting Article 19 during the UN Conference on Freedom of Information. Fernand Terrou, director of the Institut Français de Presse and the first president of the IAMCR, was a leading advocate of the idea that an international association should be created “responsible for promoting throughout the world the development of the scientific study of problems relating to the important sources of information (press, cinema, radio, TV, etc)”. Terrou suggested that no scientific progress was possible without extensive international exchange and collaboration. A parallel momentum was developing among academic centres of journalism education which also looked for international cooperation. Jacques Bourquin (president from 1964 to 1972. published in 1950 with Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, *La Liberte de la Presse* which was translated in Spanish and English.

The United Nations Conference on Freedom of Information took note of the proposal to establish an international institute of the press and information and resolved that since such an Institute could be conducive to the improvement of the quality of information, the General Conference requested “the Economic and Social Council to invite Governments and professional organizations, national and international, to examine together the possibility of implementing this proposal and, if it is found practicable, to co-operate in carrying it out”.

Prehistory

In 1946, Unesco proposed an “International Institute of the Press and Information, designed to promote the training of journalists and the study of press problems throughout the world”. This initiative was marked by the idealism that had inspired the founding of the UN itself.

At this time, the mass media included mainly the press, radio, and cinema— as television was still at an experimental stage. Given their role during the war, the mass media were being recognized as an important factor in international relations. Accordingly, one of the first special conferences organized by the UN in April 1948 was devoted to the freedom of information. This was where the famous Article 19 on Freedom of Expression and Information was drafted as part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the UN General Assembly in December of the same year. Two founders and future presidents of IAMCR—Fernand Terrou and Jacques Bourquin—were actively involved in drafting Article 19 during the UN Conference on Freedom of Expression and Information.

A decade passed, however, before the IAMCR was established. One reason for this slow progress was the rapid deterioration of East-West relations and the onset of the Cold War in the late 1940s. Issues related to the role of public opinion and the media were of concern to domestic politics and became increasingly important to international relations. In addition, the International Press Institute (IPI) was established in 1951 as an international association of newspaper editors and publishers in the Western countries, representing the “free world”, as opposed to the “Communist world”. At this stage, Unesco refrained from promoting the establishment of a separate research association, anticipating that the IPI would meet this need when it undertook, for example, a content analysis of the international news flows.

However, the limitations of the IPI’s geopolitical base soon became obvious. Unesco realized that in addition to press freedom there were other issues in the growing field of mass communication, particularly on journalism education, that would benefit from internationally coordinated activity by a separate organization. In 1952, Unesco returned to this topic, setting out two lines of activity: establishing training centers for journalists and founding an international organization for the promotion of scientific research on mass communication.

At this time the Unesco Secretariat established a Clearing House within its Department of Mass Communication, which was charged “to collect, analyse and disseminate information on press, film, radio and television, pointing out their use for educational, cultural and scientific purpose,” as stated in the standing preface of its publication series Reports and Papers on Mass Communication. The first twenty issues of this series, published between 1952 and 1956, covered topics related mainly to film, television, and newsprint, but its December 1956 issue was entitled, “Current Mass Communication Research—I.” This volume included a register of ongoing research projects and a bibliography of books and articles published since early 1955. The list of research in progress included nearly 400 projects in fourteen countries, while the bibliography listed some 800 publications in twenty-five countries. This impressive research overview was compiled with the aid of a questionnaire sent to 32 selected institutions in nineteen countries. The data gathering was assisted by national clearinghouses established in France, Japan, and the USA. The process encouraged the establishment of clearinghouses in West Germany and Italy.

The year 1956 was crucial for developments under the aegis of Unesco. In April, a meeting of experts on the professional training of journalists was held at the Unesco headquarters in Paris. This meeting of 40 professors and other media experts, with accompanying documents and resolutions, demonstrated that there indeed existed a dynamic field of research and training in need of international coordination. A list of establishments for professional training of journalists included 100 institutes from the United States alone, and nearly a hundred more from some thirty other countries.

At this point a colloquium was held in Strasbourg, where the International Centre for Higher Education in Journalism had been established. It was on this occasion, in December 1956, that a preparatory group called the “Interim Committee” was formed by four dedicated colleagues: Fernand Terrou (director of the French Institute of the Press and president of the French Association for Communication Sciences), Mieczyslaw Kafel (director of the Institute of Journalism at the University of Warsaw), Marcel Stijns (editor-in-chief of the Belgian journal *Het Laatste Nieuws* and vice president of the International Federation of Journalists), and David Manning White (professor of journalism at Boston University and chairman of the Council on Research of the American Association for Education in Journalism, AEJ). Terrou chaired the committee and Jacques Kayser, director of research at the French Institute of the Press, served as its executive secretary.

The tasks to be carried out by the new Association were now foreseen to include not only general promotion of international contacts within the field but also specific clearinghouse functions, such as the production of bibliographies and lists of institutions as had been issued in UNESCO’s inventory. The committee prepared a draft constitution and sent two circular letters out to potential participants. It convened the founding conference in December—after the IPI held its conference in Asia (Colombo) in November.

In summary, once mass communication, like other fields of socioeconomic activity, had reached a certain level of importance and specialization in society, this led to an institutionalization of the field, both nationally and internationally. Accordingly, IAMCR grew out of a rapidly developing media field, particularly with respect to journalism, which created its own branch of institutional interests and a need for professional education as well as for scientific research. As Terrou wrote in *Etudes de Presse*, the periodical of the French Institute of the Press, in 1956, “The professional training of journalists and the science of communication are the agenda of the day”, and added, “This is very good for the freedom of information”. For Terrou, as for Bourquin, IAMCR represented not only a technical project to promote training and research, but also an ideological project to serve a broader cause aimed at fostering peace and freedom in an international order.

In terms of its focus, IAMCR initially concentrated first and foremost on journalism and mass communication—rather than, for example, on speech communication (which had a long academic tradition in the USA), or on telecommunication (which at the time remained largely a technical subject). The actors involved were predominantly academics, with a strong presence of print journalists and others from the media industry.

The springboard for IAMCR was a combination of training needs and the growth of research in mass communication. As has not been the case in other fields, the emergence of a scientific association proceeded—on national and international levels—according to the demands of not just academic research but also of nonacademic professional training. From the

beginning, mass communication research has been inseparable from the training of communicators, especially journalists. Contrast this with, say, political science, which has played only a very small role in the training of politicians. However, although training was crucial for ensuring that the research interests received international recognition, at least in getting the association started, training and research would need to be separated eventually.

Geopolitically, IAMCR had a broad—even global—base, with institutions and individuals from all continents affiliated with it. There is no doubt that the initiative to create IAMCR was dominated by Europeans, particularly the French, but colleagues from countries such as Brazil, Peru, Uruguay, Egypt, Israel, India, Indonesia, Japan, Australia, the United States, and Canada were also involved. The new Eastern Europe, behind the so-called Iron Curtain, was represented by leading academics from Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet Union, making the IAMCR configuration more balanced than the IPI or the two international associations of professional journalists, the International Organization of Journalists (IOJ, representing mainly the East and the South), and the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ, representing mainly the West). Accordingly, IAMCR was not a Cold War project. On the contrary, it was founded on ecumenical soil crossing East-West and North-South divides.

Foundation 1957–1964

The founding conference was held at Unesco headquarters in Paris in December 1957. Fifty experts from 15 countries attended to establish the Association for promotion throughout the world of the development of research on problems related to press, radio, television and films. The Association's membership list included about 200 names of institutes, educational establishments and individuals. Educators in journalism were the most numerous on the individual list of educators and sociologists. Fernad Terrou from France was elected as the first President.

The first General Assembly after the founding conference was held in Milan, Italy, in 1959. It was combined with a Colloquium that was organized with FIEJ (International Federation of Publishers) and the International Council for TV and Film. The topic was The Mutual Influence of the Means of Information. The Colloquium opened with a report by the later iAMCR president Jacques Bourquin on "The press in the modern world; how to protect originality and effect on public opinion." The president of the IAMCR Fernand Terrou presented a paper on the comparative legal situation of the big information media. Other IAMCR members presented papers, among them Mrs E. Noelle Neumann. In the afternoon of October 6 the General Assembly took place. Most important on the agenda were elections. Raymond Nixon (USA) was elected president, Fernand Terrou became Secretary General with as adjunct Jacques Kayser of France, and as treasurer Jacques Bourquin was elected. Among the proposals for statutory change the following points were discussed: the rotating of the function of president, the strengthening of the secretariat, and the facilitating of the development of sections. The meeting discussed the appointment of a commission for terminology and methodology.

On this occasion, IAMCR elected its first American President, Raymond Nixon, while the French founding President, Fernand Terrou, became Secretary General. Most of those elected as officers in Paris in 1957 remained in office in Milan in 1959, although some changed positions. The General Assembly in Milan modified the organizational structure of IAMCR with a rotating presidency and a permanent secretariat with the posts of Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General. Four permanent sections were also established, for (1) historical research, (2) legal and political research, (3) psychological and sociological research, and (4) economic and technical research.

Apart from the work of the sections, IAMCR mobilized scholarly attention to topical issues through separate colloquia and thematic sessions at its biennial conferences. The first major thematic undertaking was an international colloquium on the professional secrecy of journalists, held in Strasbourg in October 1958. This was followed by a study on the same topic commissioned by Unesco and issued jointly by IAMCR and IPI in 1959. Another early project that Unesco invited IAMCR to contribute was the preparation of a selective bibliography on the influence of cinema on children. IAMCR also began to collect and publish general bibliographies on mass communication research—something that was foreseen as one of its main tasks at the founding conference. Although the harvest of these inventories was not as abundant as that gathered by Unesco's Clearing House in 1956, the first IAMCR Bulletin served as a channel to share bibliographical data.

In Vevey, Switzerland, on June 19, 1961, the third General Assembly was opened by President Nixon who presented a review of mass communication research in the world. He expressed the opinion that international contacts among scholars in the field of mass communication could stimulate a development similar to what cross-national contacts and studies brought to the social sciences in the 19th century. The Secretary General reported that in accordance with the decisions of the General Assembly in Milan four sections were established and were operational. The section on Historical studies chaired by Giuliano Gaeta from Italy, the section on Juridical and Political Sciences Studies chaired by Fernand Terrou, the section for Psycho-Sociological Studies with Wilbur Schramm of Stanford from the USA as chair, and the section on Economic and Technical Studies chaired by Marcel Stijns from Belgium who was the honorary president of the International Federation of Journalists. The Secretary General reported that the moment had now come to get the work of sections going and to coordinate their work. He also reported that there was an interest in forming national councils, like the Canadian Institute for Communication, the Belgian National Council, the Council on Communication Research that was accepted as the National Council for the USA and the director of the Centro Internacional de Estudios Superiores de Comunicación para América Latina (CIESPAL) had agreed to form a regional council in Latin America.

The secretariat announced that it would collect research documents to be published in the *IAMCR Bulletin*. Wilbur Schramm proposed that the bulletin would be mainly used for the publication of bibliographies. The sections would have to play an essential role in this. Fernand Terrou resigned from his function as Secretary General and Maarten Rooij (the Netherlands) was elected as his successor. Terrou became head of the Juridical section and as such became member of the Executive Council of the Association. In the IAMCR booklet "Past, present and future" (without date) Raymond Nixon reported, "...in the spring of 1961 I went to the meeting of the IAMCR bureau with a recommendation that Dr Maarten Rooy, director of the Amsterdam Institute (i.e. the Institute of Press Science at the University of Amsterdam) be nominated as the next Secretary-General, and that *Gazette* become the official journal of the Association. Naturally, this aroused strong opposition from most of our French members (the statutes provided that the legal seat of the Association was Paris) but a majority of the Bureau finally agreed".

The history of *Gazette* goes back to a conference in Godesberg in April 1951 – initiated by the professors Baschwitz, Hagemann, Dovifat and d'Estier – where was decided to establish not only a German association of communication scholars but also an international association. There was also a plan presented for an international journal "for science of the press and mass psychology" (Wieten, 2005), first published in January 1955 as *Gazette*. At a third international conference in Amsterdam, 1953, Unesco's policy to stimulate cooperation between institutes and the exchange of research results was supported and the Amsterdam Institute became the international liaison centre. Baschwitz wrote in the first issue of *Gazette* about the science of the press. "This science provides a reliable basis for the treatment of related subjects of study, such as public opinion, propaganda, advertising, and, in connection with this, other mass media such as the radio, television and film in particular". He also proposed that this science should be linked with sociology, social psychology, political science, create union between theory and practice and provide a forum for scientific discussion, for the exchange and comparison of ideas on an international basis.

The General Assembly in Vevey approved the recommendation. Dr Rooij took office as Secretary General in summer 1961 and in October 1962 the first issue of the IAMCR bulletin under his editorship appeared as a supplement of *Gazette*. Both *Gazette* and the bulletin were sent without extra charge to all IAMCR members. In the bulletin Rooij expressed his hope that the bulletin would get a lively responses from the membership and that the sections would regularly contribute to the bulletin. Raymond Nixon reported later that he wrote to Rooij that there might be a problem with the editors Kafel and Klimes from Eastern Europe . In case *Gazette* published articles critical of the communist regime it might be seen that they - as editors- took taking responsibility for those publications. The editors preferred that the Bulletin would appear in a form separate from *Gazette*.

In September 1962 a contract with Unesco was signed according to which the Association would “ensure co-ordination of scientific work in mass communication research and promote establishment of new national councils in this field”. The Association contributed to Unesco’s work through a Bibliography on the influence of television on children completed by Wilbur Schramm. Schramm also facilitated a contract with Unesco for Paul H. Deutschmann to write a book on Objects, Methods and Techniques of communication research in developing countries. The possibility of holding the 1963 General Assembly in the USA was proposed by the Secretary General to the Executive Committee and he offered to discuss this with Schramm and Lazarsfeld when they meet in Paris late November 1962.

President Nixon introduced the transfer of the secretariat from Paris to Amsterdam, with Maarten Rooy as Secretary General, *Gazette* as the official journal of the Association, and the IAMCR Bulletin as its supplement. At this stage, there was clear friction between the French and the Americans—Unesco siding with the Americans rather than with the French—but formally the Association was functioning normally. Nixon was succeeded in Vienna by Jacques Bourquin as president, leading to a new era.

Rooij reported that the sections became the centre of gravity in the Association and he referred to the Juridical section that envisaged a seminar on comparative legislation, and the Historical section that was asked to contribute to the bulletin in the framework of the International History Congress. Rooij also suggested that the Economic and Technical Section could work on a contract with Unesco for the exploitation of smaller newspapers in developing countries, and commended the Psycho-Sociological section for their sponsoring of two contracts.

Consolidation 1964–1972

The 1964 General Assembly and Conference was held in Vienna where Jacques Bourquin was elected as President. The conference took place at the Palais Palfy with as key theme: Research on information in the age of television. The sections on history, law, and terminology reported about their activities. The minutes mention that also the psycho-sociological section (co-chaired by Wilbur Schramm and Alex Edelstein), the section on economy and technology chaired by Marcel Stijns, the section of market and advertising studies chaired by Leo Bogart and the professional education section chaired by F. Fattorello presented their work. General Secretary Rooij reported about the finances and administration of the Association and announced that he had decided to relinquish the Secretariat. The newly elected President Bourquin took over the Secretariat and moved it to his office in Lausanne.

In the new Lausanne-based IAMCR, *Gazette* had only a nominal relation to the Association, and its supplement, the *Bulletin*, gradually disappeared, owing to lack of funding. Formally, Rooy was appointed as an officer in charge of publications, while Terrou was listed as director of research. In practice, the clearinghouse function of IAMCR was limited to occasional lists of studies and publications by the members, distributed with the presidential letters. Yet some thematic studies were carried out under UNESCO contracts, including a comparison of the statutes of radio and television companies.

The main activity of IAMCR at this stage was the biennial conferences and other symposia; these were fairly well attended and served as important platforms for academic and political exchanges. Through these live occasions, the membership grew slowly but surely and kept its balance, especially between Eastern and Western Europe.

The 1966 conference, held in Herceg Novi, Yugoslavia, was a milestone in IAMCR's early history. More than 70 participants from 17 countries of Europe, Asia, and the United States discussed, among other things, the topic of mass media and national development. The development theme was introduced by Gerhard Maletzke of Germany, while Lakshman Rao from India was present as UNESCO representative. Many Americans, including George Gerbner and Herbert Schiller, as well as Walery Pisarek from Poland, Yassen Zassoursky from the Soviet Union and Kaarle Nordenstreng from Finland, joined the Association at this time.

Additional sections were established in Herceg Novi, for terminology and methodology, for professional training, as well as for marketing and advertising. The latter section was led by an American, Leo Bogart, who proposed, in a letter to the General Assembly, a merger with the World Association for Public Opinion Research (WAPOR). The Assembly invited Bogart to seek close cooperation—and eventually a merger—between his section and WAPOR. Participants envisioned a similar merger between the history section and the International Council of Historical Sciences. These initiatives remained without any follow up.

In 1968 IAMCR held its General Assembly in Pamplona, Spain—under Franco's regime. Paradoxically, this venue replaced Oxford in the UK, where visas could not be guaranteed for representatives from the East European "Communist countries". Thus, in this turbulent year 1968, there were red flags at the University of Navarra marking the presence of delegates such as Emil Dusiska from East Germany's main School of Journalism, Karl Marx University

in Leipzig. Politically, this was an indication of “liberal” tendencies in Spanish society in the sensitive field of mass media, and served as encouragement for the radical elements among the students and faculty (Barrera, 2007).

In Pamplona, Zassoursky was elected vice president—the first Russian in the leadership, although his predecessor as dean of the Faculty of Journalism at Moscow State University, Evgeniy Khudyakov, had been involved in the preparatory process. Irena Tetelowska of Poland became head of a new section on bibliography; this director of the Press Research Centre in Cracow was the first woman to hold a leading position in the Association. Another section was established for research on mass media and international understanding, after a big international symposium on this topic held in Ljubljana jointly with the Yugoslav IAMCR members in September 1968 to highlight the 20th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Paradoxically, this was just after the “Prague spring” was crushed.

The 1970 General Assembly was held in Konstanz, West Germany—after Moscow had been considered as a venue in connection with a world conference of historians. Here IAMCR adopted an extensive set of recommendations to the UN and its member states on various aspects of mass communication, notably freedom of information, the cultural integrity of nations, and the use of satellites. Those active in drafting the recommendations included Bogdan Osolnik of Yugoslavia and Dallas Smythe of Canada. A separate resolution was adopted in support of journalists on dangerous missions and another in support of the efforts to set up a UN University, with the expressed hope that “the science of mass communication” would be accorded the recognition appropriate to its importance. This conference was the first attended by James Halloran, and he was immediately elected vice president.

At this time—from the late 1960s to the early 1970s—significant developments took place around the Association. First, mass communication research grew everywhere along with the expansion of the media themselves, especially television. New university programmes were established and national committees were appointed to highlight the field, leading to new institutions like Halloran’s Centre for Mass Communication Research at the University of Leicester. Second, the scientific and political orientation of communication research was diversified by the entry of critical, “anti-positivist” scholars—among them many who were active in IAMCR, notably Smythe from Canada and Schiller from the USA— and younger scholars, such as Robin Cheesman, Nicholas Garnham, and Armand Mattelart from Western Europe. Third, Unesco assumed a more prominent role for itself in the field. The Unesco initiative is a story in itself—its explicit policy orientation bringing it close to the critical generation of scholars, and its global resonance connecting it to the Non-Aligned Movement of the developing world, with Yugoslavia as one of its leading members. The General Conference of Unesco had adopted in 1968 a new strategy for promoting communication research and policy, including a study on the role and effects of mass communication in modern society (Unesco, 1970: 3). Its Department of Mass Communication commissioned from Halloran a working paper on mass media and society for a meeting of experts convened in Montreal in 1969. Halloran was also consulted about whom to invite and many on his list were active in IAMCR, including Bourquin, Maletzke, Nordenstreng, and Smythe.

Halloran's working paper for Montreal and the final report of the meeting were issued as a publication in English, French, and Spanish (UNESCO, 1970). Taken together, this event and the publication stand as a milestone in the history of mass communication research. They were followed by Unesco's international panel of consultants on communication research, which included Halloran, Nordenstreng, Pisarek, Smythe, and others from the Association. The panel was first convened in April 1971 to prepare Proposals for an International Programme of Communication Research—another landmark document (Nordenstreng, 1994).

Growth 1972–1990

Buenos Aires, in 1972, was more than just the first conference that IAMCR held in Latin America. It signaled a new era of cooperation with Unesco—at a time when mass communication research was going through what might be called a “social turn”, the stage when a young field becomes conscious of itself and actively involved in social policy. Unesco’s role in Buenos Aires was crucial, as it paid the travel costs of the twelve members of its panel on communication research (which held its second meeting there on the eve of the conference). Also many others found the means to travel to Argentina at the time, including Dusiska and Schiller.

According to Bourquin’s last presidential letter, the Buenos Aires conference, under the theme “Communication and Development”, was attended by some 50 IAMCR members in addition to “an important South American and Argentinian participation”. Elections resulted in Halloran as president and Dusiska as secretary general. Nordenstreng and Schiller were elected vice presidents, in addition to four others who had held office in the earlier years. A sign of the times was the establishment of a new section for research on media and developing countries. Alfred Opubor of Nigeria was elected head of this section, while Annette Suffert of France was appointed head of another new section on television studies.

From 1973, we can follow IAMCR developments in Halloran’s presidential letters, issued from the Leicester Centre, where the secretariat was effectively moved from Bourquin’s office in Lausanne. Halloran’s mimeographed letters followed the same familiar tone established by Bourquin, and they became longer and longer, reporting in detail not only the Association’s events and plans but also whom he had met and who had contacted him as the Association president. This networking established “Jim Halloran” as a man known by

hundreds of colleagues around the world and made Leicester a focal point in the field, with Peggy Gray as the president’s right hand in administrative matters.

Secretary general Dusiska, at his Leipzig office, remained somewhat in the background but cooperated effectively with Halloran. Dusiska hosted a meeting of the Executive Committee with a thorough debate on the Association’s past, present, and future. The Committee welcomed the host’s offer to organize the next biennial conference in Leipzig, employing large institutional resources that secretary general Dusiska had at the Karl Marx University with the backing of the East German authorities. With Leipzig, the Association’s tradition of holding successive conferences in the Eastern, Southern, and Western hemispheres was established.

Conferences Leipzig 1974, Leicester 1976, Warsaw 1978, Caracas 1980, Paris 1982, Prague 1984 and Delhi 1986 with Pres Jim Halloran

At the 1974 conference in Karl Marx University in Leipzig, German Democratic Republic, president Halloran reported in 1974 that membership increased steadily and that now 35 countries were represented. An effective cooperative working relationship with Unesco had been established among others for the publication of a bibliography. Relationships were also being explored with the ICA, the AEJ, and the International Sociological Association. There were active sections on Satellites Technology, Professional

Education, Social Psychology, International Understanding, Legal Affairs, History and Bibliography.

The 10th General Assembly that was held at the University of Leicester in 1976 stood in silence in memory of one of the Association's founding members Fernand Terrou who had passed away. The President reported that there were now more than 700 members from 46 countries. Particularly the increase of membership from the Third World was noted. The president also reported that the IAMCR was beginning to function as an effective NGO of Unesco. The General Assembly received reports from the sections on History, Law, Social Psychology, Bibliography, Television, Developing Countries, Professional Training and International Understanding. There was a lengthy discussion on the future development of sections.

The 11th General Assembly took place at the College of Music in Warsaw, Poland in 1978. Members stood in silence in respectful memory of one of the pioneers of the Association, Claude Bellanger. The President reported that an agreed letter previously circulated to all the International Council had been sent to Unesco's MacBride Commission. The Assembly confirmed the decision to apply to Unesco for the Status of NGO Category A. Following a lengthy discussion it was agreed that three new sections should be formed, Political Economy, International Communication and Communication Satellites and Technology. The International Council was instructed to give careful consideration at its next meeting to the question of the role and function of sections and more specifically to the programme of the new sections and the appointment of heads of sections.

In 1980 the Association held the meeting of its International Council and General Assembly at the Parque Central in Caracas, Venezuela. Two hundred and ninety people had registered. There was a comprehensive discussion on the need for changes of the statutes given the rapid development of the Association. Members were asked to send comments and suggestions on the appropriateness of existing procedures and regulations governing membership, elections, governing bodies and conference arrangements. Noteworthy of this conference were the long and controversial debates on the theme of the 1982 conference to be held in Paris, the birthplace of the Association. There were strong objections from members against the theme "Communication and Democracy" as it would "politicize the Association". The Assembly however confirmed the theme as suitable for the 25th anniversary of the Association.

A remarkable highlight of the conference was the dialogue between Ithiel de Sola Pool and Herbert Schiller (later published in the Journal of Communication): in a hot and jam-packed room two eminent scholars held the attention of the audience through a respectful exchange of very divergent views on communication technology and society. At the end of the General Assembly Martin Loeffler accepted the unanimous invitation to prepare a history of the IAMCR. An offshoot of the Caracas conference was a critical examination of the draft report of the International Commission for the Study on Communication Problems. The draft, known as the MacBride Report for the commission's chair, Sean MacBride, had just been issued and closely read by several IAMCR activists, and led to a collection of essays (Hamelink, 1980).

By this time, the Unesco panel of consultants on communication research had finished its term and could no longer meet parallel to IAMCR, thus ending Unesco's indirect subsidy.

Unesco's support to thematic publications was also discontinued, a development parallel to its declining support to COMNET. This was due to changing priorities in Unesco's communication programme that, in the late 1970s, was increasingly concerned with the MacBride Commission (MacBride et al., 1980). Several IAMCR members, including president Halloran and vice president Zassoursky, contributed to the Commission's work through its secretariat and series of background papers, but this work bypassed IAMCR as an institution. Nevertheless, Unesco did contract with IAMCR to carry out a major study on foreign news (Sreberny-Mohammadi et al. 1985). Also, the section on professional education (headed by Zassoursky and later by Nordenstreng) mobilized, together with the AEJ, IOJ, WACC, and the regional sister associations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, a project for the promotion of textbooks in journalism education in the developing world. This project received a major grant from Unesco's new International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC)—thanks to the efficient lobbying of Alfred Opubor, who represented Nigeria on the IPDC board. Later, in the 1990s, the project continued with support from the Finnish International Development Agency (FINNIDA).

After a long period of uncertainties about time, place and programme the **13th General Assembly took place on September 9, 1982 in the Maison de la Chimie in Paris**. The President reported that there were now members in 63 countries and he suggested that the Association should aim at a membership from 100 countries as a realistic target. The president also reported about the close relationships with the Association for Education in Journalism, the World Association for Public Opinion Research and the International Sociological Association as well as regular communications with the International Communication Association, the International Institute of Communication, the Union of Democratic Communication, the International Organisation of Journalists and the Instituto Latinoamericano de Estudios Transnacionales. The President was instructed by the Assembly to explore the possibilities of contributing more to the planning and execution of Unesco's Communications Research programme. In the interest of more democratic participation the Assembly agreed that whenever possible the decisions taken at International Council meetings should be conveyed to all members of the Association well before the date of the General Assembly. It was also agreed that all members should be encouraged by the President to make their wishes known well in advance of meetings.

In August 1984 the 14th meeting of the International Council and the General Assembly took place at the Palace of Culture in Prague, Czechoslovakia. About the conference on "Social Communication and Global Problems" the President reported that it was attended by 440 people and that the intellectual level of the conference was set by the keynote of Norwegian peace researchers Johan Galtung. The idea of having one dynamic speaker of international repute at the opening was very well received. It was reported to the membership that the Association continued to have an effective working relationship with Unesco and that projects had been completed in media education, media and disarmament and media and ethnicity. A substantial grant from Unesco had also made it possible for the section on Professional Education to organize a workshop with organizations such as AEJ, IOJ, Felafacs and journalists' associations in Asia and Africa. In response to a request from Unesco the Association had submitted recommendations for a research programme within the framework of Unesco's declared aims and objectives. The Assembly was informed that membership now amounted to 1500 members from 65 countries.

The 1986 conference had as theme Communication technology, Development and the Third World. **The Conference and the General Assembly took place in the Ashok Hotel, New Delhi, India between August 25 and 29, 1986.** The conference attracted 360 participants from 42 countries. There were plenary sessions, eight section meetings and 17 working groups. As the report of the conference mentioned these were of a very high standard and the facilities, accommodation and cultural arrangements were first class. The President welcomed the situation where increasingly sections and working groups maintained working contacts between main conferences. Membership was now at 1,000 members from over 60 countries, the People's Republic of China was represented for the first time, the financial situation was satisfactory and the Association wanted to think about differential fees for members from Third World countries. The Secretary General announced the publication of the first of what should be a series of Occasional Papers. There was a lengthy discussion on the importance of an active publication policy. The Assembly also discussed proposals for changes in the statutes related to composition and tasks of the governing bodies, election procedures, function of sections and status of section heads. It was decided that the proposals should be referred to the Executive Board for further consideration, and that following this only recommendations approved by the International Council should be submitted to the General Assembly in 1988.

The conferences and other activities of IAMCR in the 1980s continued to be broadly based and successful, with Barcelona in 1988 as the highlight—attended by more than 600 participants from 46 countries. The eight sections and 32 ad hoc working groups organized more than 70 panels in all, with more than 250 papers presented. Adding to this record attendance, Halloran could proudly announce the latest membership figures: 1850 members from 60 countries.

Yet the rapid growth and dynamism of the previous decade, partly stimulated by Unesco's financial assistance, was no longer present. IAMCR continued its established forms of formal activity, without introducing a newsletter, or its own journal. After Gerbner became editor of the *Journal of Communication*, published by the Annenberg School for Communication in Philadelphia, he suggested that it become an IAMCR journal, but the proposal was rejected by the International Council, mainly on financial grounds but also because of hesitancy about being tied to only one journal—and an American one at that. Meanwhile, other associations in different regions mobilized researchers closer to home, including the African Council for Communication Education (ACCE), the Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC), and the Asociación Latinoamericana de Investigadores de la Comunicación (ALAIC).

By 1987 there was already a commonly held sentiment within the leading IAMCR bodies that the Association was approaching a state of stagnation and that it was time for a change of generation—as well as a change in the presidency. This message was first presented to Halloran in a letter by the Finnish Association of Mass Communication Research during a meeting of the Executive Board in Tampere in August 1987, which suggested two candidates for a replacement: Hamelink and Mowlana.

With the prospect of elections at the Barcelona General Assembly the President invited all members of the Association to submit nominations for any of the officer positions and for membership of the Executive Board and the International Council.

The **Barcelona conference of July 1988** was special in the sense that its timing concurred with the 40th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The invited speaker was John Humphrey, the Canadian legal scholar and human rights advocate who was the author of the first draft of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Sixteenth General Assembly heard the President reporting about the genuinely international development of the Association with 609 members from 40 countries participating in the conference and a global membership of 1850 members. The Secretary General reported that since 1986 seven occasional papers had been published. The Unesco observer informed the Assembly that Unesco was keen to promote pluralism in language and that the organisation might be able to assist in meeting costs of future conferences. Following a long discussion it was agreed that in addition to English and French, Spanish should be regarded as an official language of the Association.

The result of the elections were that as officers were elected Cees Hamelink as President-elect (to take office as president in 1990), Tamas Szecsko as General Secretary, Olof Hulten as Treasurer, Annie Mear as Deputy Secretary and as Vice-presidents Hamid Mowlana and K.E. Eapen were elected. For the International Council 30 members were elected. The elections in Barcelona 1988 were historic in the sense that there was an open election for the International Council, with each position having a male as well as a female candidate—a process proposed by Gerbner. Indeed, it was after 1988 that “female members began to penetrate what until then had been the top management ‘glass ceiling’ in our organization, thanks in part to a more egalitarian attitude on the part of our male colleagues and pressure from the newly formed Women’s Network” (Robinson, 2002). But gender did not just surface in IAMCR management; it also attracted scholars doing research on media and gender, leading to a section headed by Madeleine Kleberg of Sweden. A new section was also established in media education, headed by Birgitte Tufte of Denmark.

IAMCR was a close witness to the “collapse of Communism” in Eastern Europe from 1989 to 1991, first in August 1989 in Budapest, where Secretary General Tamás Szecskö hosted a meeting of the International Council during the days when the first East Germans escaped to the West via their embassy in Budapest—a prelude to the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989. **The next IAMCR conference was held in Bled, Slovenia, which in August 1990 was in a state of violent conflict, leading to its secession from Yugoslavia.** Yet the resort town at Lake Bled hosted a peaceful and professionally efficient meeting with the theme “Developments in Communication and Democracy”, paving the way to the new millennium.

At Lake Bled, Yugoslavia, the Conference (with 530 participants and 290 papers) and the 17th General Assembly took place in August 1990. President Halloran thanked all the officers, council members and members at large for their help and friendship during the 18 years of his presidency. As the new President, Hamelink, took over several presentations were made to the outgoing President. A gavel for the Association in memory of Jim Halloran's Presidency given by the Nordic countries was presented by Olof Hulten. A Honorary Doctorate from the University of Bergen was presented by Helge Ostbye and Kirsti Saelen. The Honorary Life Presidency of the Association was announced by the new President, and Peggy Gray was made an Honorary Life member of the Association.

A paper on election procedures was presented and accepted. It was agreed that a Nominating Committee be formed, at least one year prior to the election of any officer, to nominate a

candidate or candidates for election by the Association. Members of the Association will be asked to nominate candidates by sending names supported by at least 6 members of the Association to the Nominating Committee. Six new committees established by the International Council were announced. The Fund Raising and Finance Committee (chair: Olof Hulthen), the Legal Committee (chair: Cees Hamelink), the Membership Committee (chair: Kwame Boafo); the Publications Committee (chair: Brenda Dervin), the Research Policy Committee (chair: George Gerbner), and the Section Review Committee (chair: Karol Jakubowicz). The report of the Publications Committee was presented by its chair Brenda Dervin. Items for the Newsletter, for which a Call for Contributions appeared on the Daily Bulletin, should be in by December 1st 1990. Members of the Committee (Dervin, Cheesman, Carlsson, Jakubowicz, Pares i Maicas, Wasko, White) were thanked for their work. The proposal for an experimental IAMCR book series was accepted.

A paper on External Relations was presented and approved. It was decided that the IAMCR will request the Unesco Executive Board to grant Category A status, ECOSOC to grant category 11 consultative status, ITU to grant appropriate INGO status, WIPO governing bodies to grant observer status, and ILO to grant appropriate consultative status. Negotiations should continue with pertinent non-governmental international organisations to pursue future cooperation. Official protocols of collaboration between IAMCR and the regional associations AMIC (Asia), ALAIC (Latin America) and ACCE (Africa) should be signed at the earliest convenient time. The Executive Board should enter discussions with COMNET directors about effective modes of cooperation and the possible exchange of the status of Associate member.

On the Legal Seat it was agreed that the address of the legal seat of the Association in the country designated by the statutes is declared by the Executive Board by a simple majority. The legal seat will therefore remain in France and the Association will be legally registered in the country where the Administrative Office is located at any time. It was agreed by the Assembly that the Administrative Office of the Association will be established in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, and that the Fund Raising and Finance Committee shall seek adequate structural support for a fully independent and professional Administrative Office.

The **2002 Barcelona conference** was attended by more than 800 participants and manifested the importance of the IAMCR in the era of globalisation and cultural diversity. The General Assembly was informed about the contributions of the Association to the UN World Summit on the Information Society. A motion that provided that “the General Assembly mandates the International Council to set up a task force to coordinate IAMCR’s involvement in the WSIS process” was approved. In Barcelona the presidency of Manuel Pares i Maicas ended and in his farewell speech he stressed that it was critical for the IAMCR to emphasize plurality based on the principles of human rights and freedom of expression. The outgoing President noted with satisfaction that during his presidency participation of women, young researchers and colleagues from developing countries had increased. The presidency was handed over to Frank Morgan who stressed the continuing need for research and for new ideas that will come from cooperation and not from competition. He ended his maiden speech with a reference to the words of Aristotle that the wisdom of the group is greater than that of any member of the group.

The 24th General Assembly of the Association took place in July 2004 at Porto Alegre, Brazil. There were unfortunately many no-shows for the conference and there were difficulties with financial arrangements and registrations. In the General Assembly Secretary General Ole Prehn spoke about the 2003 cancellation of the conference in Taipei. “An unhappy event for the IAMCR and particularly for the organizing committee in Taipei”. Prehn remarked that the Taipei cancellation was a case to reflect on. “Was the epidemic really such a threat or was it yet another situation in which the media exaggerated it and created a media storm”. He ended by saying that the Association membership gave members the chance to be part of a truly intercultural aspiration in a world that is globalizing but also increasingly fragmented. In Porto Alegre Frank Morgan handed the presidency to Robin Mansell.

The 25th General Assembly took place Cairo, on July 26, 2006. The members stood in silence in memory of George Gerbner, Jim Carey, Michael Traber and Roger Silverstone who had died since the last Assembly. President Mansell reported that the IAMCR has commissioned a company in Uruguay –Communicia.org headed by Bruce Girard- to establish a new web site and a new membership database. She also stated that in the coming years emphasis would be given to national and regional membership recruitment and external relationships. It was announced by vice president Sreberny that IAMCR now offered members a choice from three discounted Sage journals, New Media and Society, International Communication Gazette and Global Media. During the Assembly the IAMCR prize in memory of Dallas Smythe was awarded to Felicity Brown (New Zealand) and the Herbert I. Schiller prize was awarded to Stijn Joye (Belgium). The Assembly approved the establishment of a new task force on Media and Communication Policy.

The 26th General Assembly and scientific conference with as theme “Media and Global Divides” took place in Stockholm in 2008. Annabelle Sreberny became President. There were more than 900 registrations from over 80 countries.

Challenges

The list of conferences after 1990 is quite long, since “off-year” meetings were held at sites offering to host IAMCR between the regular biennial events.⁵ Starting with Istanbul in 1991, these conferences were intended to be smaller and to combine a meeting of the International Council with selected plenary sessions and a number of section meetings. In practice, they were often quite large and rich in their scholarly content—for example, Dublin in 1993 with Anthony Giddens as the keynote speaker, and Oaxaca in 1997 with a celebration of IAMCR’s 40th anniversary—so that there was little difference between these meetings and the regular biennial conferences. There was, clearly, a demand for international platforms to be catered and more than enough enthusiastic hosts. On the other hand, the rising costs of international travel and improved Internet facilities for maintaining virtual contacts depressed to some extent the spontaneous interest in using IAMCR conferences for networking.

These developments created a challenge that led to a variety of proposals: to orient the Association toward virtual networking based on special interests mobilized by the sections; to focus on regional meetings in the off-years; and to convene the main conferences less frequently than every other year—perhaps every fourth or fifth year as many other scientific world congresses have done. However, no consensus emerged, and the Association continued more or less as before. For rank-and-file members, the core activities were organized by the sections, which grew in number despite attempts by a section review committee to establish a logic that would avoid proliferation. Working groups were introduced as a subcategory of sections, gradually leading to a total of thirty sections and working groups.

There continues to be a fundamental challenge, one that has followed IAMCR throughout its history, created by the tension between special disciplinary approaches in the field (history, law, etc.) and a more general interest in interdisciplinary areas of research (development, new technology, etc.). This poses a dilemma that cannot easily be resolved through organizational arrangements. This was recognized by Halloran and his predecessors and, in consequence, they were quite open to different initiatives and concerned with achieving a truly international representation. As Terrou used to say, no scientific progress was possible without extensive international collaboration.

Maintaining a worldwide association—first in terms of its East-West balance and later its North-South balance—has been a challenge throughout the history of IAMCR. There have also been periods of friction between different regional interests within the Western world—Spanish-speaking versus Anglophone regions, Europe versus North America—but these conflicts never overtook a common interest in a global platform. In fact, it can be argued that geopolitics has not been an obstacle so much as a positive factor that has made IAMCR both internationally representative and intellectually stimulating. If there have been obstacles throughout our history—as in all human organizations—they are to be found in personalities and their “chemistry” rather than in scholarly traditions as such.

The changing nature of mass communication itself in the era of new media and digitalization has also presented many challenges. A manifestation of this was the decision to change the Association’s name: “Mass” was replaced by “Media” at the General Assembly in Sydney in 1996.

The proposal was made by Wolfgang Kleinwächter, then head of the legal section, and it was approved by acclamation. The name change was smooth because there was no need to revise the English acronym IAMCR. Moreover, the other language versions of the name remained unchanged, as “mass” was absent from both the French Association Internationale des Etudes et Recherches sur l’Information et la Communication (AIERI) and the Spanish Asociación Internacional de Estudios en Comunicación Social (AIECS).

The change was a natural step reflecting a general trend since the 1990s to do away with “mass” as the distinctive feature of the field and instead elevate “media” as its central designator. Accordingly, many academic programmes and institutions adopted “media and communication” in their names. On the other hand, “mass communication” has not become totally anachronistic either, retaining its status as a valid label for the field in individual institutions as well as associations.⁷ One should recall that six decades ago the concept of mass communication was quite modern, and in the 1940s it was even written into UNESCO’s constitution, according to which the organization was charged to “collaborate in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples, through all means of mass communication and to that end recommend such international agreements as may be necessary to promote the free flow of ideas by word and image” (Article 2a).⁸

The Association has continuously faced new challenges, both institutionally and substantively. The institutional challenge was met by expanded relationships with the UN system beyond Unesco, to include the Economics and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), as well as NGOs, including the IFJ, which after the Cold War embraced most of the former IOJ. Perhaps the most significant challenge was presented by the particularly topical debates in the field of human rights in platforms such as the Organization of Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE, Helsinki 1992), the World Conference of Human Rights (Vienna 1993), and the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS, Geneva 2003 and Tunis 2005). A focus on communication rights meant a return to IAMCR’s roots, when its founders had participated in the drafting of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. IAMCR members offered a critical-analytical approach, seeking to achieve a balance between those with proprietary interests in employing the concept of human rights as an instrument to justify globalization for commercial purposes, and those with democratic interests, championing fundamental freedoms in pursuit of enhancing civil society and its media in the post-Cold War world.

These challenges were created in part by Unesco’s move away from the so-called New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO), its abandonment of the MacBride Commission’s approach, and its acceptance of a neoliberal solution to communication problems.⁹ Personality changes in Unesco’s communication sector led to less emphasis on the scientific tradition represented by IAMCR’s activities. The most obvious change occurred in the early 1990s when Alain Modoux (former head of Unesco’s press relations) became the director of the Communication Sector, succeeding Alan Hancock, the media research and policy expert. Until Hancock, the sector had always been quite sympathetic to communication research, and regarded IAMCR as its prime representative. With Modoux, IAMCR lost its special status at Unesco, which had begun looking for partners among media proprietors and public relations circles. This was also reflected in the process of reorganizing the NGOs associated with Unesco, whereby IAMCR is nowadays found among a dozen

media-related NGOs, replacing its earlier status as one of three media NGOs and the only one representing research (Nordenstreng, 2007).

As part of this reorientation, Unesco helped to create a new body called ORBICOM, the International Network of Unesco Chairs in Communication. It was established in 1994 around the so-called Unesco Chairs in Communication, which were endowed partly with Unesco funding in several universities, particularly in developing and former socialist countries. However, in practice, most of its membership was made up of academic and industrial representatives from the West. Formally, this new body was not directed against IAMCR, but in practice it contributed to a confusing and divisive state in the international field of communication research.

The global landscape of communication associations was further confused by the strengthening of regional research associations, although most of them have friendly and even formalized relationships with IAMCR. The first of these was AMIC, the Asian Media Information and Communication Centre, established in 1971, and the most recent is ECREA, the European Communication Research and Education Association, established in 2005. Also, several international organizations of a special thematic nature have entered the field, including the Association for Cultural Studies (ACS) and the Association for Internet Researchers (AoIR).

A particular challenge was posed by ICA, the International Communication Association, which in the 1990s began a process aimed at internationalizing its membership beyond its predominantly North American base. At the same time, Klaus Krippendorff of the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania, with David Mitchell from the University of Calgary in Canada, launched IFCA, the International Federation of Communication Associations, aiming to establish a common platform for different research-oriented associations in the field. IAMCR was lukewarm to this initiative, which was more or less the same as its own original mission, but it did not oppose the idea as such. Other international and national associations were not too enthusiastic, either, to join a common global platform for the sharing of research in the field. After some initial enthusiasm, this voluntary club has remained more or less a paper tiger.

By the turn of the millennium, the international landscape of media and communication research organizations had grown to be quite abundant and diverse (cf. Nordenstreng, 2011). What does this suggest about IAMCR?

On the one hand, we may say that the mission of IAMCR has been successfully carried out, as the field has expanded not only in terms of national institutions but also of international networks. On the other hand, we may ask to what extent this historical success story is attributable to IAMCR—has it happened perhaps in spite of, rather than because of, IAMCR influence?

The present authors' answer to this question is quite cautious and even cynical: IAMCR cannot be celebrated as a decisive factor in internationalizing the field—the Association has followed rather than driven the development. Still, IAMCR has played a vital part in mobilizing the international dimension of the field, especially in the earlier decades. It is unlikely that any other body could have more effectively promoted international networking in a field so deeply rooted in national conditions of politics, economy, and culture. This is a

research problem for the sociology of science, but in any case we may conclude that an overall lesson of the IAMCR history is a paradox—an irony—of the fact that its relative importance seems to have decreased the more the field has developed in general and become internationalized in particular.

Reflections

An interesting feature of the historical development of the Association is that its beginnings are mainly defined by research interests of a humanities nature and were not embedded in a social science context. With the benefit of hindsight it would have been logical though that mass communication studies had formed at that time part of an international scientific platform. There was after the war a need for societal models that could explore how to deal with the big post-war issues like massive pauperism and that could study how after a period of immense propaganda deceptive communication should be exchanged for processes of participatory and pro-social communication. It took until 1957 and actually to 1959 for the Association to seriously deal with such issues. Yet, the founding fathers of the IAMCR could have consulted from the early 1940s onwards a rich social science library. An international platform for mass communication studies could have been informed by the works of psychologists Carl Rogers and Jean Piaget, or Karen Horney's feministic views of psychoanalytic theory that possibly marked the beginnings of academic feminism. In the early fifties there were the studies of Erik Erikson, Hans Eysenck, B.F. Skinner, Abraham Maslow, Leon Festinger, Harold Lasswell Gordon Allport, and George Herbert Mead. From crowd psychology studies were available of Hippolyte Taine, Henry Fournial, Gabriel Tarde, Kurt Baschwitz, and Paul Reiwald. Meanwhile also political science had developed and offered for the study of mass communication studies such those of Charles E. Merriam and Harold F. Gosnell, Harold Lasswell, Quincy Wright, Hans Jochim Morgenthau, and Hans Speier. There were also sociological insights available from August Comte, Ferdinand Tönnies, Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, Karl Mannheim, Talcott Parsons, Robert Merton, and David Riesman.

The main motives influencing the establishment of the IAMCR, however, were humanistic ideals about world peace, the free flow of information, freedom of expression combined with an emphasis on the need for journalistic training. In retrospect the lack of a social science context is a pity because the late 1940s could have used an international academic platform that would have contributed to the contest of laissez-faire ideas about the free flow of information ideas versus the qualification of these ideas in terms of democratic principles and to the need to reflect on the issue of war propaganda.

The list of IAMCR conferences throughout its nearly 60 years of history demonstrates the impressive geographical spread of the Association. IAMCR has met on all continents, and although most of the venues have been in Europe, the list includes also several countries of the South, beginning with Argentina in 1972. The first 30 years of the Association's history were under the Cold War conditions when IAMCR played a special role in facilitating East-West contacts and exchanges. Michael Meyen has published an article on IAMCR in the East-West battlefield, exposing the East German attempts to use the Association as an instrument in Cold War politics (Meyen, 2014). As pointed out in Nordenstreng's comment on the article, this was only a side affair in the big picture whereby IAMCR served as a constructive and ecumenical platform for scholarly contact across political and cultural divides.

It is obvious that the Association has provided an opportunity for many emerging ideas to be articulated and internationally promoted in the field. For example, the gender approach was

pushed to the agenda in Caracas in 1980, leading to a working group on “Sex Roles within Mass Media” which in 1990 became the Section of Gender and Communication.

In its international expansion the Association has managed to provide a platform for academic exchanges across geographical, political and cultural boundaries. Increasingly also a great variety of scientific interests found a home under the umbrella of the Association. In the midst of the diversification of the field the Association continued to provide a network for communication scholars around the world. In this sense the original mission of IAMCR remained very much valid: “provide a forum where researchers and others involved in media and communication can meet and exchange information about their work” (Statutes Article 2.1.1.).

It is important to remember that in addition to serving as a “forum”, the Association has throughout its history pursued a human rights inspiration and a concern for social relevance of academic research. From its pre-history that begins with the 1948 UN Conference on Freedom of Information to its involvement in the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in the early 21st century, the Association has pursued issues of free speech, participation in cultural life, sharing of knowledge, and the right to communicate. Late President Jim Halloran used to urge fellow scholars to not conduct research with the back to the world and the face towards the books. In this spirit of seeking academic and social relevance the Association’s openness to East/West conversations and to interaction with the global South and its regional associations has to be understood. Following from its history the Association is bound to continue its role in global scholarship since there are still major questions ahead of the field of media and communication studies. Enormous challenges in the area of theoretical reflection and in particular in de-westernizing and de-colonizing conventional epistemological mind-sets have to be confronted. There is a need to find creative approaches to the science/policy encounter, to the researcher/practitioner confrontation and to gender and ethnic issues. It is also of critical importance to engage with future studies: our very meaningful past gives us promising prospects for dealing with the future of public communication in both global and local perspective.

The Association as a forum for scientific reflection

In public and political perceptions of science finding answers to questions is prominently presented as the core activity of scientists. This is most vulgarly displayed in the popular science quizzes on television. These shows transform science into a game of solving puzzles. What a perversion of our trade! Science is above all else the art of asking critical questions. One may think uncritically about many things, but one cannot think scientifically in an uncritical way. It is difficult to imagine how anyone could engage in scientific research without being critical! Uncritical thinking may be characteristic of other discourses in society, science can only be critical as it is to make distinctions and engage in analysis and assessment.

This mental exercise requires a reflexive mind. In science there is no place for the absolutist mind. The essential clash we face in today’s world is a collision of mindsets that is more fundamental than rifts between cultures, ethnicities or religions. This is the clash between the absolutist mind and the reflexive mind. Their reflexive mindset tells scientists that all claims to validity—be they political, moral, or religious—are open to examination and critique. The

reflexive mind is willing to test all ideas in public, listen to those who criticize them and be open to the need to revise earlier convictions. The core of the reflexive mindset is the urge to ask questions. It thus defies the philosophical tradition that largely shaped Western educational programs and instead, inspired by Plato, insists that intelligence should be measured by the capacity to respond to questions. The suggestion that science equals finding smart answers to questions is fatal for the development of creative and critical thinking. In the reflexive mindset, intelligence is measured by the capacity to ask questions. Reflexive pedagogy allows children to have questions and uncertainties and thus develop their own visions and dreams about the world. To enable the art of asking questions inevitably entails leaving space for uncertainty. It is very promising for scientific development that to-day cosmologists are willing to accept that the universe consists of some 96 per cent of invisible dark energy and dark matter that we do not understand and cannot explain. In the same vein, it is an important step that advanced genetics research looks at itself as primarily ‘driven by ignorance’. The reflexive mindset challenges such notions as absolute truth and certainty. It avoids solid foundations, fixed grounds and beliefs that there should be indubitable knowledge without which the world would be hopelessly lost. Reflexivity recognizes that Immanuel Kant liberated the human mind for speculative exploration and from the Cartesian craving for certain knowledge.

Science is not about definitive proof but about temporary approximations of reality which may be replaced by better approximations. For this critical reflexive exercise science requires platforms with such essential characteristics as discursive freedom that allows up to agree or disagree with each other’s positions on the basis of reasons which we can evaluate and the validity of which we can freely accept or reject. Respect for this discursive freedom implies the recognition of the dignity of the agency of the other by accepting their autonomy to accept or reject claims which we hold as essential to our identity. It also implies co-operative behaviour, trust, diversity, and mobility: the key elements —according to Charles Darwin— for the survival of all species, creativity in dealing with the multiplicity of human identities, the capacity to improvise in confronting uncertainty and the acceptance of the temporality of all solutions to the complex problems of human adaptation to ever faster developments.

We write these reflections in the time of the Corona crisis when the world is confronted with pandemic health risks. This inevitably brings to the fore the question what the role of science and scientific associations could be in global crises. This is urgent as humanity faces in the early 21st century deep challenges to its future existence from a health perspective but also from ecological and nuclear risk perspectives.

In times of crisis politicians, media and citizens turn to science for certainty and answers. Genuine science can however not provide this. And yet it often pretends it can! Scientists are in advisory committees, sit in on TV talk shows, become celebrities. This all suggests that they do have answers on which policymakers can base their decisions. This is deceptive. It is risky for science to get involved in controversial political decision making. Science is too often abused for political purposes. We should realize that science and politics live in different universes. Politics requires urgent and simple answers to questions to create societal consensus on critical issues. Science needs patience, is better in asking questions than in providing answers. Moreover science evolves through disagreement and contestation. Rather than seeking consensus it continues to look for the “black swan” and instead of providing the

“evidence” that politicians require science explores temporary approximations to complex issues.

In recent past years the discovery was made in different research fields that it was necessary to move away from monodisciplinarity to the engagement of various disciplinary experiences in research. Thus emerged multi-disciplinarity which for complex questions is helpful but still not satisfactory. It is necessary to move to a trans-disciplinary approach that engages with multiple knowledges. This means that in addition to scientific knowledge also experiential and tacit knowledge from non-scientific sources has to be taken seriously. This approach requires the insight that also in the non-scientific community there is solid and relevant knowledge. In early 21st century we may even have to consider a further move to extra-disciplinarity . The academic disciplines as we know them to-day are in fact organizational principles for the management of universities, for scientific publications and for the distribution of research funds. They did not come about as the result of intellectual considerations. They are the result of specific historical responses to societal challenges such as the French revolution (the mother of sociology), capitalism and marxism (the fathers of economy), colonialism (the daughter of imperialism is -according to Levi Strauss-anthropology), and the Hobbesian challenge of solving war of all against all which inspired political science.

For the study of global crises we have to question the global validity of a system of social sciences that was born from European realities and that was not the product of Asian, African, or Caribbean realities. The Western paradigmatic approach has distorted human reality. Also in the West! The Euro-centric theories were also bad science for the West itself. There is an urgent need for dialogue in which the disappearance of a dominant paradigm challenges researchers to produce new creative theories and methodologies. The dialogue can prevent that Western centrism is exchanged for other forms of centrism and the epistemological fundamentalisms are simply swapped. How can we avoid that one type of centrism and fundamentalism (e.g. the Euro-American centrism and the parochial belief in its intellectual superiority) is exchanged for another type of centrism and fundamentalism (e.g. Asian centrism and an equally parochial belief in its universal validity)

The key challenge for studies on communication and culture is whether this field of scientific enquiry can move into the adventure of questions about the ethics and perspectives of (human) life and thus accept responsibility for the social environment it investigates. In this spirit we should continue to provide an essential contribution to the science of communication and herewith to the survival of the most communicative species on the planet. Our Association is still young and its journey since 1957 promises bright futures. When Socrates stood before his judges in Athens, he argued that critique begins with the exercise of critical self-reflection. He admonished the court that, “the unexamined life is not worth living”. The IAMCR should continue to provide a forum for the kind of self-scrutiny and reflective thought that makes academic life worth living. As a global association there have inevitably been ups and downs in the quality of critical reflection and the collegial spirit may have sometimes left a lot to be desired. But the Association had the good fortune of having many scholars in its midst who really made a difference in the understanding of the role of communicative processes in a troubled world.

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