

## 7. Conclusion: can the circle be broken?

Those who do not believe in the ideology of the United States, shall not be allowed to stay in the United States.

Attorney General Tom Clark, addressing the Cathedral Club of Brooklyn, 15 January 1948 (Caute 1978, p.15)

My five empirical chapters have explored the work of the individual researchers and men of practice from the forefront generation. Many of the actors discussed in this book were Outsiders because of their race, nationality, class, religion or location, or even simply because of their academic training and background. Most of them worked on policy science and many, but not all, were academics. One of my key tasks was to explore their personal journeys, both physical and spiritual, through the dominant structures of that period and how they themselves changed during those journeys.

My argument throughout the book is that in order to understand how ideologies and utopias work we need to study the life histories of individuals, which are often neglected when only macro-level phenomena are studied. As Mannheim (1993, p.71) reminds us, ‘historical life is made of the lives of human beings (a commonplace, which nevertheless is routinely forgotten by historians)’ – and I would add by social scientists. According to Mannheim,

what really counts in history is not the transformation of individuals but that of associated human beings bound together by specific and determinate group relationships and conflicts in concrete social situations (in general, such groups do not coincide with nations, and even less with humanity as a whole). (1932/1993, p.71)

That is why this book focuses not only on individuals but also on research groups whose members were of different nationalities. I have called them the forefront generation.

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The backgrounds of each of these actors were different, and they did not necessarily know one another personally. However, they all encountered, and even contributed to, the structures promoting an overall ideology of the time, that of US nationalism and patriotism. Despite the fact that they were motivated by utopias of their own – political or personal, conservative or radical – they ended by supporting, at least superficially, the same ideologies. It was, for example, a long journey from being an intellectual in Budapest to becoming a war or Cold War specialist in Santa Monica working for RAND Corporation, or from being a newspaper boy in Columbia, Indiana, to becoming general manager in New York of the Associated Press, the country's biggest news agency. Their world was turned upside down and during this process their thinking changed radically. They were all seeking 'the truth' and were often convinced that their truth was the right one.

Having studied personal histories of individuals and their work, it is time to return to Mannheim's key concepts of ideology and utopia, and to the generation defined at the beginning of this book, and to ask how useful these notions are for understanding the origins of comparative communications. I return here also to Merton's concepts of Insider and Outsider, before using his four criteria to analyse the origins of comparative communications and its early development.

This chapter mirrors the structure of my first chapter, drawing again on the concepts of ideology and utopia, the concept of a generation, Merton's concepts of Insiders and Outsiders, and finally his criteria for the evaluation of research.

## 7.1 Ideology and utopia

Mannheim's distinction between ideologies and utopias is important, but also troubling. Breiner (2013, p.7) argues that the difference between utopias and ideologies is that only utopias 'seek to radically break with historical and social realities to achieve forms of society that historical and social tendencies have not yet made possible', and that only ideologies 'inhibit our understanding of the social and political possibilities within the dynamic trends that constitute historical "reality"'. I am not convinced that this is the case. Having researched the origins of comparative communications in the US, I argue that both ideologies and utopias sometimes prevent researchers from seeing 'reality'. Academics and men of practice have often been blinded by their own utopias and have not engaged with ideologies that oppose these. Speier, among others, was very critical of liberals in Weimar whose anti-propaganda moralism represented a 'fallacy of misplaced righteousness' (Bessner 2018, p.86), but he was unable to accept the criticism by the 1960s generation of his own political views (see Chapter 5). The deep scars left by having been wrong about politics in Weimar and having failed to prevent the rise of Nazism never completely healed, affecting the émigré scholars discussed in this book for the rest of their lives and making them cling to

the dominant US ideology of the time. That same ideology was shared by all the members of the forefront generation studied in this book, whatever their former ideologies and/or utopias.

The 1960s generation that came after the forefront generation saw their predecessors as conservative, and themselves as radical (Gitlin 1978, p.230; Malherek 2022) in following a radical utopia of 'no war'. It is too easy to think that ideologies are always 'conservative' and utopias are always 'radical'. It is also tempting to argue that while ideologies are always based on false consciousness utopias are not and are thus almost impossible to change. According to Breiner, a change can come about in three ways.

First, a set of ethical norms may no longer correspond to the imperatives of a new social structure. Second, the human agent may be deceived or deceive him/herself regarding both self and others either through reifying or idealizing certain human characteristics at the expense of others. And lastly, an agent's everyday orientation to the world fails to comprehend changes in social structure. (Breiner 2013, p.7)

In my introduction to this book, I raised four proposals from Mannheim that I then sought to explore while studying the role of ideologies and utopias in research on the forefront generation and its members. These were: (1) a loosening of the relationship between class and ideology, especially in relation to intellectuals; (2) a recognition that ideology is sometimes hidden, especially from those living through it; (3) a widening of the definition of ideology beyond traditional politics; and (4) an argument that ideologies and utopias are so interwoven that one cannot exist without the other.

### (1) The relationship between class and ideology

One of the most famous and most often criticised of Mannheim's concepts is that of free-floating intellectuals (*freischwebende Intelligenz*). We need to ask how free-floating the men I have studied in this book really were. They seemed to have floated between utopias and ideologies such as internationalism and nationalism synchronously, almost like travelling waves. This is why I find it crucial to acknowledge the importance not only of the concepts of ideology and utopia but also of their interrelationship and changing natures. Consideration of the empirical chapters included in this book underlines how theoretically close these concepts are. They show how the motivation of both academics and men of action shifted from utopias to ideologies, and sometimes back. When we compare, for example, the young Lasswell with the older Lasswell, we can see the shift from a young man influenced by the League of Nations to an old man who had not only left behind his idealistic view of international understanding but even changed his own research interests to focus on law and order.

But we also see Cooper's utopia becoming an ideology, which in turn gave birth, in the 1960s and 1970s, to a new utopia. I chose him as an example of a non-academic, a man of action, in order to see why he was influenced by those same ideologies and utopias, as well as to study his role in promoting these. When we compare Lasswell with Cooper, we can see similarities in their lives. They were born 22 years apart but the careers of both were marked by the two world wars. Both were disillusioned by the outcome of World War I, and both ended by aligning themselves with the Cold War ideologies that gave a leading role to the US in promoting worldwide freedom after World War II. At the same time, they were very different in terms of their education and professional careers. Both were caught up with the ideologies and utopias of the time, although they disagreed about the role of government in relation to news. When Cooper retired, his writings no longer served his organisation but his book became an inspiration to future generations outside the US, while Lasswell went on publishing for 30 more years, and *Four Theories*, the subject of Chapter 6, still lives on. This shows how long-lasting ideologies and utopias are.

Does my empirical research, then, support the notion of a loosening of the relationship between class and ideology, especially in relation to intellectuals? All the men I studied ended up supporting the same ideologies, having partly shared different utopias and despite their different backgrounds. Defined as intellectuals or elites, and taking into account that they included men of practice, they become surprisingly uniform in their ideology. At the same time, one has to remember that academics, at least, were a divided generation, and in this book I have concentrated on some of those who were not included as members of the Frankfurt School, though some, such as Mannheim, held office in the Frankfurt Institut für Sozialforschung. The men I studied in this book were policy scientists whose close relationship to the government was justified by their research serving wider social goals, not only academic purposes. Policy science brought researchers closer to other elites and it became harder for them to conduct independent critical research.

## (2) Recognising that ideology is sometimes hidden

By raising this point, I argue that ideologies are naturalised to the extent that they do not require further thinking. This may be an oversimplified statement, especially in relation to the academics featured in this book, many of whom were familiar with Mannheim's work and his insistence on the social sitedness of knowledge and intellectual labour. They were very aware of the dominant *political* ideology of their time, often bending to it because they were constantly reminded of it. There was no uncertainty about what was expected from them during World War II and in the late 1940s and early 1950s, especially when they worked on policy science. However, Cooper's campaign against Reuters, and especially its timing, was not a textbook example of how ideologies work; on the contrary, he was going against the tide, and against the UK, a military ally of the US.

I include émigré scholars in order to see whether their careers had been affected by the same ideologies. We have Leites, an émigré originally from Russia, who became a critical researcher on Soviet Communism. We also have Kecskemeti, an émigré originally from Hungary, who shared Leites' interest in studying communism. Both were marked by their escape from fascism and from their former home countries taken over by communism. Both were doubly displaced by the two European dictatorships of Soviet Communism and Nazism. They chose was to support US government ideology during and after World War II. One could question whether they had any other choice, but during the war and the 'Silent Decade' (Horowitz 1996, p.357) of McCarthyism choices were very few. RAND Corporation may have been a safe place for émigré scholars who did not oppose US military ideology. One of the great ironies is that many of RAND Corporation researchers and consultants, notably Lasswell, Kecskemeti, Leites and Speier (who had been Mannheim's PhD student at Heidelberg), shared an admiration for Mannheim and used his ideas when working with the military (Bessner 2018, p.227). Kecskemeti edited and translated Mannheim's writings while working at RAND Corporation (Kecskemeti 1952/1997; Mannheim 1953). This is yet another example of how what was largely seen as a bastion of US military ideology can also be seen as a haven for émigrés from Europe.

Even the 'Illinois Three' of Siebert, Peterson and Schramm could not avoid, during that decade, the influence of McCarthyism. They encountered the change from a short-lived government ideology of internationalism to government suspicion of internationalism. Schramm was brought to the University of Illinois by its president, Stoddard, whose role in UNESCO opened up new opportunities for collaborative international research. When the Cold War started this was no longer supported by the university's governing body, which found a reason to fire him (Stoddard 1981). The change took place within a short period, between 1947 and 1956, and *Four Theories* reflects this change in its critical, if not hostile, view of the Soviet Communist press theory. Schramm was also rumoured to have worked for the CIA, although evidence remains circumstantial (Glander 1996, p.156). However, at the same time, the book's chapter on the social theory of the press marks a departure from Cooper's anti-government interference campaign and follows the ideas of the Hutchins Committee on Freedom of the Press. Again, it is possible to see the interplay between ideology and utopia in *Four Theories*.

Ideologies also became naturalised for many if not all of these men, who began to think that everybody supported the same ideologies as they did. The shock expressed by Kecskemeti and Speier, in their correspondence, at what they saw as the disloyalty of the 1960s and 1970s generations towards the US showed how deeply they were embedded in their own ideologies.<sup>1</sup> Writers of the 1960s and 1970s generations blamed them not only for standing for US militarism but also for accepting its capitalist and consumerist values. As Gitlin (1978, p.245) writes, referring to Lazarsfeld's work,

By ignoring the systemic and institutionalized nature of these processes, and by fusing its administrative, commercial, and social-democratic impulses, the mainstream of American media sociology has done its share to consolidate and legitimize the cornucopian regime of mid-century capitalism. That the dominant paradigm is now proving vulnerable to critique at many levels is a measure of the decline of capitalist legitimacy, commercial values, and the political self-confidence of the rulers.

This is yet another example of how one's own ideology becomes hidden from oneself and so taken for granted that only when confronted by the ideology of another person who belongs to a succeeding generation does one become aware of it. This is reinforced by the stories told by a generation itself and by following generations.

### (3) Widening the definition of ideology beyond traditional politics

By widening the definition of ideology beyond the realm of traditional politics – for example, anti-communism versus communism, McCarthyism versus anti-McCarthyism – I explore issues around gender and race. Here ideology is, by comparison, hidden and naturalised. It was taken for granted that academics, researchers and company directors would all be men, while secretaries and research assistants were not. It was taken for granted that all academics were white, that Jewish émigré scholars were almost all men, and that their spouses did not need a job even if they often had equal qualifications. All academic texts used 'he' as the only pronoun and the term 'mankind' went unquestioned.

Rogers (1994, p.474) argues that 'Schramm's gender attitudes were somewhat typical of his times'. According to him, Schramm did not treat women students as equal to men. He, for example, referred to a female assistant professor as a 'pretty little thing'. He even titled his book *Men, Messages, and Media* (1974), and only reluctantly later changed it. His attitude was no different from that of Lerner, who requested '1 man of knowledge, 1 man of power, 1 man of affairs and 1 woman of indigenous qualities' for his Itinerary.<sup>2</sup> Sentiments of male 'camaraderie' between 'brothers in arms', albeit arising not from fighting on the front but from work on analysing propaganda, also excluded women. Not only were women not hired as researchers or company managers but they were simply not considered 'one of us'. In academia, the personal affection between those who worked together for long hours, days, weeks and years was replicated professionally in job offers, invitations to write chapters in edited books, applying for grants together, collaborating on research projects, and writing reference letters and positive book reviews, among other things. Those who worked in the Library of Congress were able to use the materials after the war and to publish books or articles in academic journals. Women simply did not have that opportunity.

The personal letters that I studied in the archives reveal the important role played in their private lives by the women married to the men who feature in this book. Their shared interests are reflected in letters where their names are routinely added by their spouses and best wishes sent from both, revealing that the various couples saw each privately outside work. Speier referred to the 'Santa Monica higher society' when he gossiped about Leites' new female friend in a letter to Kecskemeti.<sup>3</sup> But we know very little about these women and this is, of course, an issue when one seeks to analyse the structure of feeling (Williams 1977) of a period when women's independent role was largely hidden. There are so many secrets, hidden sexual and political orientations included that the stories told about this generation by themselves or others, simply do not reveal.

There was also an issue of race, which is rarely discussed in archival documents. As Bessner showed (see Chapter 4), this was clearly a factor in the selection of émigré scholars and in general. When I write about race here I only concentrate on Jewishness and leave aside all other ethnic minorities, who were even further excluded. According to interviews conducted by Simonson, for example, Merton and Lazarsfeld never discussed their Jewishness and Merton even changed his name (Peters 2006, p.9). Gitlin writes of Lazarsfeld:

Lazarsfeld's insecurity about being Jewish in America was well grounded in the reality of academic anti-Semitism. His memoir (pp. 300–301) gives evidence of some of the social bases of his sense of marginality. It is worth noting that John Marshall of the Rockefeller Foundation, Stanton, Lynd, and Cantril were all white Anglo-Saxon Protestants: the most reliable sponsors to accumulate. (Gitlin 1978, p.250)

This highlights the extent to which Jewish migrants were expected to accommodate to their new life in the US. Lazarsfeld was mentioned as the most successful of all the émigré scholars at this. One of Lazarsfeld's fellow migrants said of him: 'He was very American – the most successful of us all' (Gitlin 1978, pp.230, 250). At the same time, according to Berelson, Lazarsfeld's fellow academics did not like him because he was 'too pushy, he was foreign, he was too bright, he was too self-confident, arrogant – sometimes to them – and too tied-in with the business and commercial world' (quoted in Rogers 1994, p.312). Lasswell (1937, p.311) presented six scenarios (in his view authentic, although they were anonymised) of émigré scholars in the US. The final option, and the most undesirable in Lasswell's thinking, was that of 'Dr. F':

Dr. F had been engaged upon one aspect of culture; in exile he dropped systematic work, and collected memoir and other material which was intended to prove that his native land had been victimized by conspiracies of a secret society; he also engaged in propaganda and conspiracy.



There was an expectation of becoming American, not only through citizenship but in thinking and manners, by becoming 'one of us', a good American citizen with shared values. This meant dropping one's European intellectual identity and/or at least not overemphasising one's ethnic and/or religious identity and testifying on demand that one was not a communist or a homosexual.

#### (4) Ideologies and utopias are so interwoven

It is easy to concentrate only on ideologies and to forget utopias, which in Mannheim's view were as important as ideologies, although equally distorted. It is the interplay of ideologies and utopias that is so interesting, on both individual and societal levels. The difference between the two is not always clear, since ideologies and utopias are so intertwined. In the course of my research for this book, it was much easier to identify collective utopias, which were often manifested in declarations or public speeches, than individual utopias. Once utopias are communicated to others and shared, it becomes more difficult to separate them from ideologies. They do not always go together, and the ruptures between the two levels can only be seen when both micro and macro levels are studied. Understanding an ideology as permanent and unchangeable is not helpful, and adding the concept of a utopia to my analysis certainly calls into question such permanence.

When conducting archival research it is more difficult to trace utopias than ideologies. In my view, utopias are not always even shared with others but remain individuals' own. Utopias are more dreamlike than ideologies: it is difficult to dream about communism and capitalism as ideologies, but one can dream of love, as Lasswell did in one of his poems: 'If I must fly, behind the sky when I die I think I might hold a light – a satellite – high above my love.'<sup>4</sup> Nonetheless, I found the concepts of ideology and utopia helpful when analysing the comparative communications undertaken by members of the forefront generation. Coleman writes that Raymond Williams' (1921–1988) concept of a structure of feeling 'emphasise[s] a distinction from more formal concepts of "world-view" or "ideology"' and proposes an approach 'concerned with meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt' (Coleman 2018, p.606; Williams 1977, p.132). I have always liked Williams' concept because it captures three things: (1) the structural aspect of ideology (institutions play a key role), (2) the temporal aspect of ideology (dominant, residual and emergent) (Williams 1977), and (3) the emotional aspect of ideology, which Mannheim perhaps associated more with utopias. Like Williams (1977, pp.133–34), I also acknowledge how difficult it is to capture the structure of feeling of a certain period because this always disappears along with its bearers and we can only rely on the written documents that remain.

I borrow here Williams' concepts of dominance, residuality and emergence (Williams 1977, pp.120–24) and apply these to utopias. The interplay of ideologies and utopias at individual and collective levels, and defined by



their temporality, makes the task of analysis more challenging but also more interesting. A dominant ideology and a utopia, for example internationalism, might come from both macro (institutions) and micro levels (individuals), which supported each other. But there are other instances where this did not happen, for example when institutions supported McCarthyism but researchers stuck to their internationalism. Or when an organisation (the AP) supported the 'entente cordiale' with long-standing partners but an individual (Cooper) presented a new utopia that went against a previously dominant ideology. Since so many members of the forefront generation, both academics and men of practice, worked on policy science, their ideologies and utopias were often institutional ones, existing at a macro level, because of their close relationship with the institutions that supported them financially and otherwise.

Mannheim reminds us about the struggle between different ideologies. He writes that,

if we are speaking of the 'spirit of an epoch', for example, we must realize, as in the case of other factors, too, that this *Zeitgeist*, the mentality of a period, *does not pervade the whole society at a given time*. The mentality which is commonly attributed to an epoch has its proper seat in one (*homogeneous or heterogeneous*) social group which acquires special significance at a particular time and is thus able to put *its own intellectual stamp* on all the other groups without either destroying or absorbing them. (Mannheim 1936/2000, p.313)

Krause (2019, p.1) defines the notion of the *Zeitgeist*, the spirit of the time, as 'a hypothesis for a pattern in meaningful practices that is specific to a particular historical time-period, links different realms of social life and social groups, and extends across geographical contexts'. Krause is critical of Mannheim, who in her view did not go far enough in suggesting that just two opposing *Zeitgeists* define a period. According to Krause (2019, p.4), *Zeitgeists* are not necessarily shared by all and each epoch may have different conflicting *Zeitgeists*. She proposes the following properties as defining a *Zeitgeist*: (1) duration, (2) scope, (3) course, and (4) media and carriers (p.6). Krause (2019, p.8) concludes that 'more research is needed to examine how particular *Zeitgeists* extend across time, across geographical and across social space, and how they are made possible across a geographically dispersed setting'. Analysing their carriers, as I have in this book, offers an opportunity to analyse how *Zeitgeists* are formed, maintained and contested. Krause's useful critique notwithstanding, however, for me Mannheim's two concepts of utopia and ideology capture the battle for hearts and minds better than those of a structure of feeling or a *Zeitgeist*.

The interplay between ideology and utopia is clearly seen during the period covered by this study. At the same time, both are difficult and elusive

to track, for the reasons I have tried to show, and I did consider using the concepts of a structure of feeling or a *Zeitgeist* instead. However, neither of these concepts fully emphasises the struggle between different structures of feeling, the battle of wills between them, as well as do the concepts of ideology and utopia. Again, I would emphasise how important it is to study the life histories of individuals who are actors in and carriers of different ideologies and utopias.

## 7.2 The concept of a generation

I started this book by describing certain actors as the 'forefront generation', which was deeply affected by the events of two world wars. Mannheim suggested a new concept of a generation, in order not only to understand how ideologies change but to move away from an analysis of ideology solely based on structures. Mannheim's concept of a generation also distantiates him from many Marxist scholars who had argued that an ideology was something practised by the ruling class on the working class, both of which they understood as homogenous entities with little internal diversity. Much of Mannheim's work concerns intellectuals, even when he wrote about generations. Intellectuals are in his view not a class *per se*. He sees them as having more autonomy than the working class and also as having some agency in terms of societal change. In my introduction to this book, when I introduced his concept of a generation, I emphasised three views adopted from Mannheim. These were: (1) that generations are socially constructed, either by their own members or by other generations; (2) that generations are both national and transnational, and (3) that belonging to the same generation does not always result in a shared ideology or utopia but may also include intra- and intergenerational conflicts.

### (1) Social construction of generations

What is different in the experiences of the forefront generation is that, although all its members were marked by the two world wars, they all also grew up in different circumstances and had experiences they did not share, most evidently in the disparity between the experience of the *émigrés* (sometimes like Mannheim and Leites even doubly exiled) and those who were born and lived in the US. Equally important, if not more important, especially when studying past generations, is the 'story told by a generation' and the 'story about a generation' (Ben-Ze'ev and Lomsky-Feder 2009, p.1048). The discursive constructs (Timonen and Conlon 2015, p.2) that arise from these stories become the only route to understanding generations that are long gone, like the one that features in this book.

Generations tell their own stories in order to justify their actions vis-à-vis previous generations. A good example of this is that of Kecskemeti's and

Mannheim's generation, who saw themselves as radically different from their parents' generation. As a contemporary wrote of his and Kecskemeti's generation as compared with that of their fathers, remembering lines from a short story by Dezső Kosztolányi (1885–1936):<sup>5</sup>

We have been romantics – they have been pragmatics. No two generations ever differed as much as ours and theirs. When we were twenty, our fathers made careful calculations about the prospects of their career we might follow, about the annuities and pensions we might get when we retire after a lifetime of diligent work. With this security in the background we could easily afford to reject the routine of an ordered life ... For them, this 'very ordinary life' was adventure itself, for around them the disorder was the rule. We chain-smoked, ruined ourselves, never ceased to be born in bright or sordid loves. They do not smoke, they do their gymnastics, they marry young. We wanted to die five or six times a day. They would prefer to live: if possible.

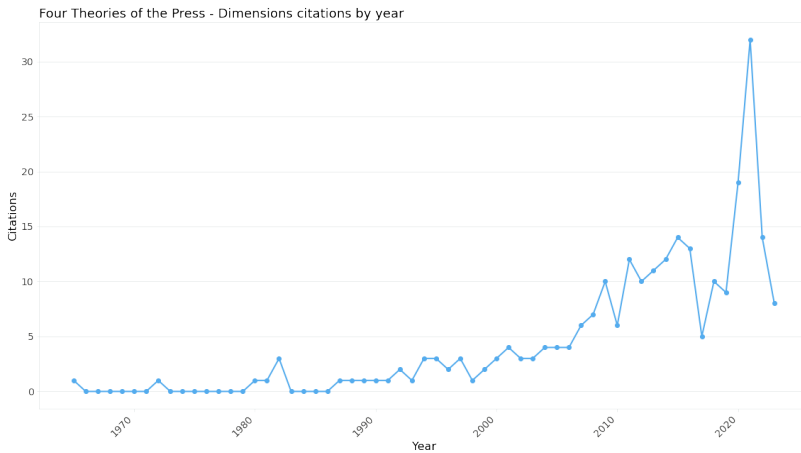
The life that Kecskemeti's generation imagined for themselves as young intellectuals in Budapest turned out to be very different from that they were compelled to live, a catastrophe beyond imagination. While the forefront generation was influenced mainly by the traumas of the two wars (although only Goldsen, Lerner, Peterson and Stoddard served in either of them), they also experienced other, less collective, generational conflicts with their own parents (Gluck 1985, pp.76–77). Lasswell's rebellion against his religious and teetotal parents is a known example of such a personal generational conflict, as is the refusal of Speier's father to pay for his son's higher education (Bessner 2018, p.288). Cooper also fought his own generational conflicts inside and outside his organisation and made of that a generational story.

Many of the European émigré scholars personally experienced the rise of Nazism in Europe and had to flee for their lives. Those members of the forefront generation who were born in the US never had that experience and could never, sympathetic as they may have been, fully understand the traumas experienced by those who had to leave their home countries because they were persecuted. Clearly, wartime research at the Library of Congress bound together a group of people with different backgrounds and experiences. However, the ideology that the forefront generation shared was also shared by others not participating in that project, such as Cooper or the Illinois Three. Mannheim writes that 'whether youth will be conservative, reactionary, or progressive, depends (if not entirely, at least primarily) on whether or not the existing social structure and the position they occupy in it provide opportunities for the promotion of their own social and intellectual ends' (Mannheim 1936/2000, p.297), thus emphasising the clear influence of social structure on those involved in comparative communications in the US.

Mannheim (1936/2000, p.296) also argues that members of any single generation can only participate in a temporally limited section of the historical process. The forefront generation, as depicted in this book, and especially some of its members, were active for many decades. One of Lasswell's first articles, for example, was published in 1925 (Lasswell 1925) and one of his last in 1979 (Lasswell and Fox 1979), a year after his death. One could argue that his influence gradually increased, but also towards the end of his life began to decrease. He was actively publishing, but increasingly only with old friends with whom he had connections, such as Schramm and Lerner (Eulau and Zlomke 1999). When Lasswell died in 1978 his friends and colleagues promoted his work, but he was no longer in the forefront. He was still being quoted seven years after the end of his academic career, but Eulau and Zlomke found that 'most references to Lasswell are superficial (perfunctory, suggestive, deferential), although a few are more substantial (critical, extending)'. They concluded that Lasswell's legacy was 'undervalued and underused, to the discipline's detriment' (Eulau and Zlomke 1999, p.75). Lasswell, like everybody else, could not choose how he would be remembered and probably thought that content analysis, which was collectively designed and developed, was not his greatest achievement. Naming him as the 'father of content analysis', while failing to understand his attempts to save democratic societies from totalitarianism (in his case mainly from communism), results in a failure to give a full picture of his lifelong intellectual struggles with a world in turmoil. But this is how collective memory works: so much of what an individual's contemporaries value as important disappears with that individual's death, until something is rediscovered decades or centuries later.

Just as Mannheim predicted, we see here the continuous emergence of new groups and the continuous withdrawal of previous participants, and a new generation of academics with new theories and methodologies appears in the period under study. According to Mannheim, this 'serves the necessary social purpose of enabling us to forget. If society is to continue, social remembering is just as important as forgetting and action starting from scratch' (Mannheim 1936/2000, p.294). Succeeding generations, when evaluating comparative communications, have certainly remembered the early work of some while forgetting that of others. As discussed in Chapter 6, one of the works that is remembered is Siebert, Peterson and Schramm's *Four Theories of the Press* (1956), which had a very slow start but then became the 'bible' of comparative communications studies. Many scholars of different generations in media and communications studies became highly critical of the book, although most of them owe to these authors the concept of a system. Its reputation was dormant for many decades before the book was woken from its sleep by these critics. It became famous because it was criticised – to the extent that it began to feel as if no book in international communication or political communication could start without first criticising *Four Theories*. Still, no matter that the attention was negative, what mattered was that it became a landmark to which everybody had to refer. *Four Theories* has far outlived its generational lifetime.

**Figure 7.1: How *Four Theories of the Press* was cited between the 1970s and the 2020s**



Source: Figure created by Paul Flannery using data obtained on 16 October 2023, from Digital Science's Dimensions platform. <https://app.dimensions.ai>. See also Vartanova (2018, p.6) for Google Scholar data on citations.

Note: Data prior to 2000 is incomplete.

Its influence on subsequent generations has extended beyond the 30 years that Mannheim estimated to be the active span of a generation (Mannheim 1936/2000, p.278).

In this book, I have divided the forefront generation in terms of their experience and of their utopias, but also of how their careers developed and how they were remembered in the stories told by others. Professional success is conventionally often measured by promotions, money and fame (not necessarily in that order). In these terms, we could say that some members of the forefront generation were more successful than others. For example, Cooper, Lasswell and Schramm certainly achieved fame through their writings, combined with their positions, and many led a financially comfortable life, especially when compared with their peers in post-war Europe. But many also valued the freedom they enjoyed in their professions. Cooper achieved 'fame and fortune', nonetheless noting how little he earned compared with competitors who worked for the United Press Associations, while emphasising how he valued the principles of AP more than anything. Lasswell became a professor of law at Yale, had a house in New York and was paid handsomely by RAND Corporation. Schramm died watching television in Honolulu, where he worked at the East-West Center's Communication Institute (Rogers 1994, p.470). The émigré scholars Leites (who died in Paris) and Kecskemeti lived, probably comfortably, in California and were probably well paid by RAND Corporation. They could consider themselves lucky since from 1935 onwards graduate faculties in the US received over 5,000 requests every year

for positions (Bessner 2012, p.115) and American men coming home from the front were competing for those same positions. It is likely that RAND Corporation offered them a better life than academia.

## (2) Generations are both national and transnational

A generation has most often been defined in the context of a single nation, especially when writing about the history of an academic discipline. In this context it has become, almost without exception, a part of a national – for example, of US or German – history of communication research. There is something about writing a history of a discipline that almost automatically nationalises it, to the extent that foreign academics are not seen as Insiders but rather as visitors or even Outsiders. Since I am not writing a history of a field or a discipline but about early comparative communications before it became 'disciplined', it has been easier for me to see its transnational connections. These transnational connections had already been recognised by the writers of early histories of communication studies as a field, and of its so-called four 'founding fathers' (Berelson 1959; Rogers 1994; Schramm 1980; Schramm, Chaffee and Rogers 1997), although this has since been contested many times (see, for example, Pooley 2017), with the inclusion of two émigrés in the history of communication studies in the US. Lazarsfeld and Lewin were émigré scholars, while the third 'founding father', Harold Lasswell, spent long periods in Europe after World War I. This leaves only Carl Hovland as a thoroughly 'US-born-and-bred' academic. Even so, in this book, I try to show that the role of other émigré scholars in comparative research has not been adequately acknowledged and Mannheim, Kecskemeti and Leites have been written out from intellectual histories of media and communications studies by the 1960s and 1970s generations.

In making the argument that generations are both transnational and national it is not enough to look only at the nationalities of a generation's members, which often change during their lifetimes. There are other important factors, including the academic and intellectual traditions they come from, their knowledge of languages, their intellectual upbringing, the theories, concepts and methodologies they use, the objects of their study, and who they collaborate with. Cooper's work could be used as an example here. Although an American by birth, education and experience, his business ventures and professional conflicts were also international by their very nature. Or take Lasswell, with his early European experiences and collaboration with émigré scholars. But the overall narrative becomes almost without exception a national story, a history of US communication studies or of news agencies in the US, where the early pioneers may have been from somewhere else but eventually the 'national' takes over. This happened with Schramm, who not only decided in the books he edited who was 'in' or 'out' but also, having visited Korea, made himself an expert on Soviet Communist theories without having ever visited the USSR or being able to speak

Russian. One can nonetheless say that he made an attempt to see the world outside the US, if only through US eyes.

Does comparative communications cosmopolitanise the research process, making it more than two separate fields of the national and the international? Blumler, McLeod and Rosengren (1992, p.3) famously wrote that comparative research opens up an existing field, goes beyond existing boundaries and thus cosmopolitanises the field. According to them, 'comparative inquiry cosmopolitanizes, opening our eyes to communication patterns and problems unnoticeable in our spatial and temporal milieux' (p.3). This is not entirely different from what Tillich was writing as early as in 1937 of *émigré* academics:

They seek the foreign not for the sake of the foreign but in the hope that through the foreign they will find a higher realisation of what is their own. And, conversely, the factor that makes people receive those who are migrating is the belief that in the foreign humanity their own humanity is enclosed and that both may be increased by a creative synthesis. Humanity, existing beyond the cleavage between our own and the foreign, gives meaning to migration and justifies separation from soil and tribe, condemns tyrannic seclusion, gives hope to the creative mind, which is the permanent *émigré* in the world. (Tillich 1937, p.305)

However, this does not always happen, especially when academics need to choose sides, as in times of a conflict or a war. As this book has shown, nationalism always seems to win out over cosmopolitanism when a new academic field is being established. The process of mutual reliance becomes a key issue here at both individual and organisational level. Merton (1972, p.10) writes:

Michael Polanyi (1958, 1959, 1964, 1967) noted, more perceptively than anyone else I know, how the growth of knowledge depends upon *complex sets of social relations* based on a largely *institutionalized reciprocity of trust* among scholars and scientists. In one of his many passages on this theme, he observes that in an ideal free society each person would have perfect access to the truth: to the truth in science, in art, religion, and justice, both in public and private life. But this is not practicable; each person can know directly very little of truth and must trust others for the rest. Indeed, to assure *this process of mutual reliance* is one of the main functions of society. It follows that such freedom of the mind as can be possessed by *men* is due to the services of social institutions, which set narrow limits to man's freedom and tend to threaten it even within those limits. (my emphasis)

One needs to ask the critical question of whether comparative communications cosmopolitanises those who work within it, or those who fund it, or



those who make use of its results. Comparative communications did open up new opportunities for researchers from outside the US but after their arrival they were asked to commit themselves to the goals set by the US government and US universities, organisations and funders. From the chapters featured in this book we can see how émigré scholars were trusted when they were needed to work on policy science. Not all of them undertook this, but those who did became policy researchers serving US military goals. In the Cold War atmosphere, their research may have strengthened rather than broken boundaries (Blumler, McLeod and Rosengren 1992, p.2).

Thus, comparative research does not automatically have a cosmopolitanising effect. It is potentially cosmopolitanising, but this potentiality is dependent on several issues outlined by Merton and mentioned above. There is always an expectation that the émigré scholars will be the ones to change, not the nationals, as I know from my personal experience as a Finnish migrant to the UK. Beck (2009, p.17) writes of cosmopolitan moments:

when Kuhn's (1962) concept of a paradigm shift, first renders the novelty of social facts describable and knowable. For uncovering the empirical facts of the world risk society not only presupposes the availability of a corresponding theory but also *practical* changes in the social and methodological organization of the social sciences.

His concept of a cosmopolitan moment can be combined with Blyth's (2006) concept of a punctuation that potentially transforms our conceptions of what research is about. World War II provided a moment, a punctuation, when research could potentially be done differently both content-wise and organisationally. To an extent it did so, but the difference between the national and the international would again become evident with the new subfield of international communication.

### (3) Not always a shared ideology or utopia

The concept of a generation was helpful to me in analysing the forefront generation in this book. Despite the differences in their biological ages, it shared traumatic experiences of two world wars. Still, like ideologies and utopias, a generational experience is never universal. If we think, for example, of émigré scholars and of how their experience divided them into the members of the Frankfurt School (see, for example, Jay 1973/1996) and the RAND Corporation scholars, we can see how the same experiences can result in espousal of contradictory ideologies and utopias.

As pointed out in Chapter 1, the making of unfounded generalisations is a potential pitfall of analysing both 'a story told by' and 'a story about' generations as supposedly homogenous units that share the same ideologies and utopias. In particular, intergenerational conflicts are made visible by the

telling of a story about a generation, be this by the generation itself or by those who followed it. This is why Kecskemeti and Speier, for example, were so disheartened by Jay's (1973/1996) book, which, in their view, told a story only of some members of their generation. The use of the concept of a generation, when labelling earlier generations as 'the first generation' and then justifying writers' own approach by labelling themselves as the next generation, is something that is present in many books about media and communications studies (see, for example, Nordenstreng and Schiller 1979, p.4). The labelling of a previous generation as homogenous gives an opportunity to criticise its research and to present one's own work as representing a whole generation.

Analysis of intragenerational conflicts often presents these as paradigmatic conflicts inside and between generations. Intragenerational conflicts inside the forefront generation, as evidenced in the archival materials I studied, concerned mainly methodologies (qualitative versus quantitative) but were also between different approaches (psychoanalytical versus behaviouralism, history versus 'modern communication studies'). In their own time, however, these were not paradigmatic in the sense that they took place inside an established discipline. Cooper's intragenerational conflict was made very public by him for political reasons. In this way, we can see both hidden and public intra- and intergenerational conflicts, but awareness of these depends on who is telling the story. This, again, emphasises how important it is to study the intellectual histories of the Insiders and Outsiders of a particular generation in order to understand what is neglected when we concentrate only on a few Insiders without highlighting the role of Outsiders, whose voice was not heard.

### 7.3 Insiders and Outsiders

Merton (1972, pp.11–12) further complicates the idea of a unified concept of a generation by introducing the concepts of Insider and Outsider, and the question of whether members of the intelligentsia can be Insiders or Outsiders in relation to society. The concepts of Insiders/Outsiders have also helped me to explore the *power relationships* of individuals and research groups not only vis-à-vis society but also between themselves. Merton (1972, pp.11–12) argues that 'particular groups of Insiders, at every moment of history, have enjoyed monopolistic and/or privileged access to particular kinds of knowledge, while Outsiders have been excluded from these'. Applying this to the early development of comparative communications lets me now address the question of who became an Insider or an Outsider, and whether an individual's position could change during their lifetime.

Being or *becoming* an Insider or an Outsider depends very much on who establishes the criteria for this and is also much influenced by dominant ideologies concerning what is valued in a particular society. There are two aspects to consider here. The first is how Insiders and Outsiders see themselves in these roles, and the second is how others see them. When émigré scholars

arrived in the US, they lost their status as Insiders within European academia. Shils (1995, p.226), for example, observes that many German émigré scholars suffered from sensitivities of rank in the relatively loosely stratified structure of Anglo-American universities. The fame of Mannheim's *Ideology and Utopia*, which inspired many members of the forefront generation, did not travel well to Anglo-American academia. Shils observes that, in the US,

in the mid-1930s, with the possible exception of [Robert] Merton and a handful of German refugees in the social sciences – I was the only person who had read Mannheim's sociological writing. (Shils 1995, p.228)

Mannheim himself was at LSE in London, and not happy there. Here is the testimony of one contemporary:

Upon arriving in London, I began attending his [Mannheim's] lectures and one of his seminars [at LSE], but these were a faint echo of those given in Frankfurt. There were few students, the teacher still struggled with the language, and the intellectual curiosity that had once united teacher and student was totally absent. Mannheim's seminars for advanced students were attended mostly by Americans, and they too displayed little of the alertness of Mannheim's previous students ... Mannheim did not hide his distress, but neither did he complain. (Kettler and Meja 2012, p.236)

It is important to analyse both what it means to become an Insider and what it means to lose that position. Many European intellectual émigrés lost their position and never felt that they had regained it. There is also the question of feeling an *emotional* Outsider, which never leaves a person, no matter how successful they are. Merton (1972, p.29) writes of 'Outsiders who have been systematically frustrated by the social system: The disinherited, deprived, disenfranchised, dominated, and exploited Outsiders'. However, it is revealing how little sympathy émigrés received, even from someone such as Lasswell, probably one of the more sympathetic ones, who wrote in 1937:

In retrospect, intellectual exiles have played important parts in the diffusion of skill and attitude, notably in the spread of skills of political analysis, and of attitudes of political importance. When they deteriorate their skill or devalue the intellectual life (despite favorable opportunities in their second country), they express in themselves the lack of self-respect and self-containedness of the intellectual life of their time and place. (Lasswell 1937, pp.315–16)

The issue of becoming an Insider was a difficult one for émigré scholars. Many had left behind successful and established careers in Europe and now needed

to restart those careers, as did Mannheim as a lecturer at LSE (Shils 1995, p.226). The 'Silent Decade' (Horowitz 1996, p.357) of the McCarthy era further silenced people and made them denounce or hide their pasts. According to Horowitz (1996, p.358), there is no question that McCarthyism's greatest successes were within academic institutions and the cultural media. However, many émigré scholars such as Leites and Kecskemeti made their early careers in the US through having access to wartime and post-war classified materials that very few academics had access to, and thus became Insiders. And they survived, protected by the force of RAND Corporation, less vulnerable to the forces that marginalised those like Stoddard who were at universities. And, of course, each of them was, from experience, hostile to Soviet Communism, which had been responsible for the diasporic uprootings each had suffered. As Merton (1972, p.37) observed, the boundaries between Insiders and Outsiders can be very permeable, especially in such exceptional circumstances.

Becoming an In- or Outsider is also associated with the prestige, or lack of prestige, of different academic fields. Communication studies did not exist as a field of its own, and many academics who became interested in communication stayed in their own fields. Those who became early communication scholars took a risk but also had an opportunity to define the field, as Schramm did. Cooper's example shows that one could have a successful career even without an academic degree and achieve a post at the top of a powerful organisation, but in his case only by first climbing slowly through its ranks and then going against dominant thinking inside and outside his organisation.

Merton remarked that the most stringent version of the distinction between Insiders and Outsiders maintains that they must arrive at different and presumably incompatible findings and interpretations even when they examine the same problems. The less vehement version, according to Merton, argues only that they will not deal with the same questions and so will simply talk past one another (Merton 1972, p.16). The forefront generation, as depicted in this book, all dealt with the same questions and did talk to one another, mainly because they shared the same experience of the two world wars that brought the world to chaos. This made them members of the same generation despite their differences of age, personal history, nationality and location. One could also raise the question of whether Outsiders in fact have more freedom than Insiders. Of course, they lack recognition, material or symbolic, but at the same time they enjoy a freedom that Insiders do not always have to choose topics that do not attract Insiders' attention.

Certain groups, such as émigré scholars, can seldom become full Insiders. The only hope of such Outsiders is that generations to come will find their work, after the work of Insiders has perhaps been forgotten. The relationship between Insiders and Outsiders is not fixed across time. There is always movement between the two, and Insiders can never be sure of their position or how long their influence will last, even if during their lifetime they may be financially and academically rewarded with many accolades. In contrast, Outsiders tend to have a high degree of psychological robustness, not needing to worry about their changing status. Insiders need Outsiders to appreciate

their work, as much as they need other Insiders to 'scratch their backs' in the hope of favours returned. Outsiders can also become known for being critical of Insiders' work and thereby themselves become Insiders. The boundaries between Insiders and Outsiders thus need to be porous, but they cannot be too porous. The elite position of Insiders can only be maintained if access is limited and if the group remains relatively small. By definition, not everybody can be an Insider.

In order to evaluate the usefulness and relevance of knowledge about a particular period, one always needs to take into account evaluations of who was then an Insider and who was an Outsider. The sociology of knowledge must include critical historical analysis in order to avoid the very fallacies of the period under study. If it concentrates only on the Insiders of a particular period, it often thereby misses the critical voices of that same period and is thus unable to renew itself. It closes the door to any collaborative or incremental development of understanding. Merton's Insider/Outsider concept also gives us an opportunity to review the issues of equality, diversity and inclusion within these two categories, and to apply these to knowledge production.

## **7.4 Merton's four criteria for evaluating comparative communications – plus one new one**

Finally, we need to ask how Merton's four criteria can be used to help us understand how comparative communications was born. When Merton (1949/1968, p.494) compares sociology of knowledge with mass communication research, he uses the following criteria: (1) their characteristic subject matter and definitions; (2) their concepts of data; (3) their utilisation of research techniques, and (4) the social organisation of their research activities. I can also suggest a fifth criterion, that of funding. Let us now try to evaluate these criteria while analysing how comparative communications started in the US. It is important to remember that comparative communications was not founded only by academics but was brought into being under exceptional circumstances of war and Cold War by both academics and men of practice, who developed comparative approaches to communications as a practical, policy-science-oriented and war-fighting exercise.

### **(1) Characteristic subject matter and definitions**

The word propaganda was used in early comparative communications, especially during World War II, just to study war propaganda. Propaganda as a concept was defined, even academically, as something deceitful, something hidden in the message. Lasswell's work especially tried to reveal hidden, underlying messages within messages. For Cooper, no definitions were needed: propaganda was something issued by others, not by the United States. Likewise, for research teams during World War II, the propaganda

they studied was foreign propaganda and no further definitions were needed. For Schramm, Peterson and Siebert, propaganda was not a key concept, but at the same time the difference between press systems was also reflected in the content of messages, in whose interests were being served. In short, what was later called international communication studies was born out of propaganda studies. It has a heritage of defining 'us' against 'them', by nationality and by values, just as press systems were also defined in national and value terms. Theoretically, international communication has mainly followed the theorisation in international politics, taking nation states and their media systems and international organisations as naturalised starting points (Rantanen 2010).

Political science probably had more influence than any other field on early comparative communications, and we can see its long-standing influence not only in international communication but also in political communication, which brings together communication scholars and political scientists. The forefront generation established the ways in which research would be carried out, including its key concepts, methods and data, and continues to do so today. Theoretical and conceptual thinking was largely absent, or at least weak, in early comparative communications, since one of its main emphases was on the development of new methodologies. Some concepts originating from that early research are still dominant, such as the concept of a flow as used by Cooper. Lasswell's work was probably the most theoretical, especially his attempts to define propaganda and to combine psychoanalysis with propaganda studies. Like comparative politics, the international communication research that came after comparative communications has often been criticised for its weak theorisation (Lee 2015, p.4).

Comparative communications was open from its very beginning to outside influences because most of its funding came from outside academia. The forefront generation was aware of its policy science orientation and promoted it, along with an oppositional relationship with the Frankfurt School. Adorno (1945/1996, pp.229–30) refers to 'exploitive administrative research' and 'benevolent administrative research'. Several authors have since pointed out that the division into administrative and critical schools does not do justice to the research carried out in both 'schools' (see, for example, Katz and Katz 2016; Lang 1979). The division is, however, helpful, since it shows us how researchers at the time themselves reflected on their own work and wrote their own generational story. It also shows how powerful the critical school has been in its story of a generation, since this debate has lasted for several decades (see 'Introduction to the Special Issue' 2016). The division, although admittedly unjustified, nonetheless helps us to discuss policy science and its legacy in international communication. Policy science, in my view, is a much better term than administrative research because the former actually reveals something about its outcomes. As Lasswell (1951a, p.4) writes, 'policy science is the term often used when researchers are providing policy-makers with pragmatic, problem-solving recommendations'.

One of the reasons for weak theorisation, apart from the practical orientation of early comparative communications research, is the utopianism embedded in this and also in international communication. There have been periods, such as that following World War II, when research tended to overemphasise the role of communication, and especially of news, in promoting world peace. When this becomes a doctrine, as it did in the UN Charter, research becomes more policy-oriented, with more theory-oriented research possibly prevented because the results are needed for political decision-making. This was again seen when research was needed to support the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) in the 1970s and 1980s (Carlsson 2003). In the early 1950s, Merton and Lerner (1951, p.282) wrote of policy scientists:

How does the man of knowledge influence the society in which he operates? Here we need to consider the functions which the man of knowledge typically performs in any society: scientist, teacher and advisor. As scientist, he advances knowledge beyond the limits within which he found it. As teacher, he diffuses knowledge among his contemporaries and their progeny. As adviser, he applies knowledge through policy guidance to great men and small, to men of affairs, to princes and presidents.

In their view, this combination was possible in the democratic society in which they thought they lived. What they could not see was the influence of policy science on comparative communications that exceeded national boundaries. The fields of political science and communication studies shared several academics whose work contributed to both fields. Blyth (2006, p.493) argues that political science's inability to predict any of the great events of the 1930s had proved a serious embarrassment and paved the way for those who followed in the 1940s, the behaviouralists, and their attempt to rebuild political science along explicitly predictive lines. Because comparative communications was established during a period when communication research did not exist as an independent field, it naturally attracted both scholars and men of practice from different fields including political science, psychology and sociology. International communication indeed became a popular topic and, according to Hanson, by the mid-1950s the bibliography of *International Communication and Political Opinion* (Smith and Smith 1956) contained almost 2,600 entries on relevant research since 1945. The categories included political persuasion and propaganda activities, channels of international communication, audience characteristics, and methods of research and intelligence (Hanson 2020).

## (2) Concepts of data and (3) utilisation of research techniques

What was defined as data greatly influenced the key theoretical conceptualisations of propaganda. Researchers needed to go where propaganda was to



be found, and it was primarily to be found in what came to be called the mass media, including newspapers, notably elite newspapers and broadcast news. Lasswell's first article (1925) studied propaganda in Prussian school books, while the main interest of the research covered in this book was the news media of that period. Propaganda research gave birth to media and communication studies in general and to comparative communications in particular. If we look at later studies carried out in the 1950s, we see that these often concentrate on elite newspapers and news (International Press Institute 1953; Schramm 1959a). Another aspect of the concept of data relates to access to the data. The propaganda researchers active during World War II set a precedent for close collaboration between academic and policy science when academics needed policymakers to secure access to data. This close collaboration continues until today, when academics voluntarily collaborate with policymakers.

Perhaps one of the most influential areas where those conducting early comparative communications played a key role was the development and utilisation of research techniques. One technique stands out: that of content analysis. It was not Lasswell alone who invented and developed this but the whole research team at the Library of Congress, who worked on it collectively. It was, again, practically oriented, geared to winning the war. The success of content analysis, in both communication studies and comparative communications, has lasted until this day, with many students using it in their theses. It would probably be fair to say that content analysis has become the most used research technique in communication(s) studies around the world.

Eventually, largely because of the behaviouralism that became popular in the 1950s, content analysis became primarily quantitative. When it was later used in international communication, especially in news flow studies, it was adopted almost without any questioning of its premises (International Press Institute 1953; Sreberny-Mohammadi et al. 1985) and would continue to be used for decades. As Chang (2015, p.60) argues, international communication research has produced a body of knowledge through empirical studies that have mostly followed the same school of thought. For example, Hur (1984, p.374) found that 90 per cent of international news flow studies used content analysis. This trend continues today: quantitative content analysis is by far the most popular method in comparative journalism studies (Hanusch and Vos 2020).

#### (4) Social organisation of research activities

Comparative communications started when there was no such discipline of communication studies, not even a field. It started when individual researchers and men of practice in existing fields became interested in it and men of practice promoted it for organisational and political purposes. Its beginnings could perhaps be fairly described as informal, taking place partly outside academia. It was spontaneous, sometimes short-term, and deeply influenced by the needs of organisations and governments. Much of the work was done by foreigners, and it was collective work.

International communication is still a field where academics and non-academics work together. It is often funded by organisations outside academia. Because international communication never became a fully institutionalised subfield of communication studies, there has always been a heavy reliance on outside funding. Many major research projects in international communication have been funded by organisations such as UNESCO or the International Press Institute, with a different but not necessarily less normative agenda of research from the US foundations (see, for example, International Press Institute 1953; Kayser 1953; Sreberny-Mohammadi et al. 1985). Mowlana's (1973) study covering the 1950s and 1960s in international communication research shows a heavy concentration of research on Western European countries. According to Chang (2015, p.55), his research revealed that almost all publications in the field were in English, with the remainder in only three other languages: Spanish, French and German. Hanusch and Vos (2020) show in their study of published articles in comparative journalism research that authors from non-Western countries are still on the margins.

Unlike comparative politics, comparative communications failed to institutionalise itself in university departments. In political science there are countless departments around the world that teach comparative or international politics or international relations. There are also numerous academic journals devoted to these fields. In communication and media studies international communication is a subfield with a recognised status, but there are very few departments dedicated to it. Unlike in political science, where comparative politics is accepted as a field of its own, in media and communication studies there is no distinctive subfield called comparative communications: comparative research is carried out separately but as part of international communication, political communication, and global media and communications studies. As a result, as Chang (2015, p.61) argues,

in international communication, comparative research has generated more heat than light. Part of the reason is that, over the past four decades, the field as a whole has engaged in research activities that are stuck in an outdated mode of replaying past experience without any serious intellectual attempt to go beyond the conceptual boundaries of existing frameworks in knowledge production.

Perhaps all this can help us to understand why comparative work did not institutionalise itself – in the same way as the sociology of knowledge never became established as a productive part of sociology (Shils 1974, p.86) – as a field or even as a subfield, although it was given the name of international communication. It did, however, become generally accepted within communication studies, where comparative research has been and is done, but this is not labelled 'international communication studies' or 'comparative research'. At the same time, this shows how comparative communications, because of its informal start, was never a closed field and even accepted foreign academics as long as they were willing to take positions that were not permanent

and were outside academia. It was also open enough to accept non-academic work, such as Cooper's, when mutual interests met.

### (5) Funding

It is important to remember that comparative communications was not alone in its policy science orientation. In the 1930s and 1940s, comparative research in politics was mainly policy-oriented – what Cox (1986, p.208) calls, in international politics/international relations, the ethos of 'problem-solving' (Griffiths and O'Callaghan 2001, pp.190–91). The problem-solving ethos also characterised early comparative communications and the field of international communication as a whole, mainly due to its funding. It was funded by foundations and government for very practical reasons: to win the psychological war (Simpson 1994). The Rockefeller Foundation (see, for example, Buxton 2003) and the Ford Foundation were even considered the 'best and the most plausible kind of funding cover for [the] CIA' (Saunders 2000, p.135). As Saunders (2000, p.139) writes about the Ford Foundation,

the architects of the foundation's cultural policy in the aftermath of the Second World War were perfectly attuned to the political imperatives which supported America's looming presence on the world stage. At times, it seemed as if the Ford Foundation was simply an extension of the government in the area of cultural propaganda.

However, even the foundations came under suspicion. Funding was a factor that Merton (1949/1968) did not take into account in his evaluation of early communication studies, although it contributed to the overall ideology of the time.

The importance of funding ran throughout the archival materials I studied. Comparative communications research was born outside academia, although many academics worked on it together with men of practice. It would not have been possible without funding from foundations, governments or international organisations. That funding meant that researchers were not completely free to choose their topics or methods, and the funders were not in general very interested in developing theory at the expense of practical applied results. Many researchers lived from one project to the next, before ending up in research institutes like RAND Corporation rather than being given chairs in universities. This may have affected the prestige of communication research in general and thus prevented it from developing the status needed for further development as an academic field of study.

## 7.5 Why does this all matter?

In this book I have examined comparative communications in order to understand how knowledge was produced. I have studied, using Mannheim's and Merton's concepts, the life histories of those who produced it. But we need

to ask: why does this matter now? It matters, to quote Merton (1972, p.9), because, 'as the society becomes polarised, so do the contending claims to truth'. We are now again living through a period of extreme polarisation, both internationally and nationally, and again we see contending claims to 'truth'. When the times are polarised, to again quote Merton (1972, p.19), 'groups in conflict want to make their interpretation the prevailing one of how things were and are and will be'. However, there are times when the struggle over 'the truth' becomes more intense, such as in war or conflict.

I have explored periods of polarisation in the US when internationalism was briefly favoured after World War I, and again during World War II, when there was a shared enemy (Nazi Germany), which was followed again by a brief period of internationalism, and then by the new shared enemy of communism during the Cold War. In all these periods, many academics and men of practice followed the government-promoted ideology, even though in principle they had academic and institutional freedom to do otherwise. This shows how powerful ideologies are, even in a country where freedom and liberty are demonstrably part of the national ethos.

Comparative communications was vulnerable because it needed financial support from outside academia, but at the same time its importance was at least acknowledged outside academia. It was not as successful as comparative politics, for example, in being legitimised, as was Almond and Verba's (1963) study, by academic funders. This had long-term consequences for future research in the field, which remained dependent on external funders including international organisations, governments and private funders. It did not achieve its full potential because of this lack of institutional and financial support. Nonetheless, many academics and men of practice share a utopian view that international communication plays a major role in promoting peace and understanding among nations. This utopia divides as much as unifies them because it is difficult to reach an understanding on how to achieve these. This is probably the longest surviving legacy of early comparative communications. Being or becoming an Insider depends very much on access to data, on working together with organisations or institutions, but at the same time it potentially reduces the freedom of individual researchers who may choose the status of an Outsider.

International communication still exists as a field of battle between ideologies and utopias, often mixed together. This takes us back to the importance of *Wissenssoziologie* and sociology of knowledge, and especially to its historical approach. In my view, it is almost impossible to critically review the value of knowledge while members – and especially Insiders – of a generation are still alive. One can only attempt impartially to evaluate knowledge after a generation is gone, and probably not even then if the intellectual span of a generation is longer than its biological span. Thus, the concept of a generation and its division into Insiders and Outsiders has been paramount, both for *Wissenssoziologie* and for the sociology of knowledge, when trying to understand utopias and ideologies in comparative communications, a field yet to be institutionally born. One can only hope that new generations

will in time discover the research neglected by the Insiders of previous generations and that nobody will be treated in the way that Károly Mannheim was.

## Notes

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