



IN THIS ISSUE

(letter from Buenos Aires)

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ISSUE 2
October 2005

Depending on how old you are, which country you were born in, and whether you enjoy comic strips or not, you might or not know Mafalda, Argentine cartoonist Quino's character born in 1964. Mafalda –translated to many languages and adopted by magazines and newspapers in many countries as from the seventies- loved the Beatles, hated soup, and worried about the world. These days I am re-reading her, and this afternoon I spent a while thinking over one particular strip: she is laying on a “puf” [1], side by side with her globe [2], pondering: “When I grow up I'll be an interpreter at the UN”. With that thought, she sits up: “And when one delegate says to another: ‘*Your country stinks!*’, I will translate: ‘*Your country is charming*’, and, of course, nobody will be able to squabble”. Pleased with herself, and optimistic, she smiles: “And that will end all the troubles and wars and the world will be saved”. She then stares at her globe, and talks to it anxiously: “You just promise to last until I grow up!”.

If only things were so easy. Instead of Mafalda's proposition -translation as a tool to build consensus (which remains dear to my heart, since I believe, with her, that the world needs to be saved from its way too many troubles and wars), we might want to give some thought to James Clifford's point of view. In his book “Routes/Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century”, Clifford wonders: “What attitudes of tact, receptivity, and self-irony are conducive to nonreductive understandings? What are the conditions for serious translation between different routes in an interconnected but not homogeneous modernity?”. And he states: “In the kind of translation that interests me most, you learn about peoples, cultures, and histories different from your own, enough to begin to know what you're missing” [3].

October has come, and with it, the second issue of *Globala Tider*. Welcome. As we go online with this issue, the field of communication for development is undergoing redefinitions. Developments since June have included the seminar “Communication for Social Change and Development: The Role of Specialised Studies”, held in the Philippines

between September 27 and 30 [4], which we will address to some extent in our coming issue, and a worldwide call for proposals for the World Congress on Communication for Development to be held in Rome, Italy, in March 2006 [5].

In this edition of the webmagazine, once again, our guest contributors are academics –Nikos Papastergiadis, Jan Nedervee Pieterse, Anders Høg Hansen, Maja Povrzanovic Frykman-, practitioners –Eric van der Broek and Katarina Rejger-, and Malmö University's graduates from the 2001, 2002 and 2003 Master courses in Communication for Development: Helen Belcastro, Ulla Engberg and Susan Kennard respectively.

Our main theme for this edition, communication in the Balkans, is analyzed on several different levels. Art is brought into the discussion in two articles, in an attempt to productively blur –transgress- the borders of the field of communication for development. Memory, and how it is both contested and communicated through memorials, is a matter also raised. The potential -and the potential pitfalls- of the Internet as a tool for communication and development are discussed as well.

We hope that, as you read, you will learn about research, projects and approaches different from your own, engage in translating what you find relevant to your own area of expertise or specific interests, and let us know what kinds of information you are missing. You are welcome to contact us with your comments, questions and suggestions while we prepare the third issue of the webmagazine, which will be online in February 2006.

Florencia Enghel

Editor

Buenos Aires, in the spring of 2005

[1] A soft, round type of seat that was popular in Buenos Aires when I was a kid, and is now popular again in its “retro” version...

[2] She has a model globe almost her size that she plays with, meditates upon, and takes care of.

[3] Clifford, James (1999, 1997) *Routes: Travel and translation in the late twentieth century*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

[4] Hosted by the Communication for Social Change Consortium, www.consortiumforsocialchange.org, with the School of Development Communication at the University of the Philippines, Los Baños, the seminar reunited for the first time faculty and graduate students from 12 universities in Asia, Africa, Europe, North America, Latin America and the Caribbean with Master degree programmes in communication for social change and development.



[5] Organized by the World Bank's Development Communication Division, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and the Communication Initiative. Visit <http://www.devcomm-congress.org/> for more information.

2005-10-14

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FLORENGHEL(AT)GMAIL.COM
ISSN 1654-7985