



IN THIS ISSUE (MAY 2010)

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It is May, 2010 as issue # 14 of *Glocal Times* goes online. Five years have passed since the web magazine's creation in May 2005, initially named *Globala Tider*, with the intention to reach beyond the community engaged in teaching, studying and sharing practice at Malmö University's Master course in Communication for Development.

The course, started in June 2000 and bound to celebrate its 10th anniversary soon, is in the process of being revised and expanded to respond to transformations in graduate education in Europe, where Malmö University is located, as well as within communication for development and social change understood as a field of theory and practice that spans worldwide.

Glocal Times will follow.

Changes under consideration pertain to online form and functionality on the one hand: towards the end of this year, we will be updating the publishing tool to benefit from increased user-friendliness in software and incorporating an e-mail subscription option for readers in order to facilitate dissemination. We will also explore to which extent interaction with users in web 2.0 fashion would add to the web magazine's core purpose.

As regards content, over these five years we have heard the suggestion that *Glocal Times* should "grow up" to become an academic journal, or otherwise risk being forced to miss out academic contributions completely. The suggestion comes from the proponents' genuine concern for the web magazine's future in the context of growing competition for academic positions and research funding and the resulting "publish or perish" culture. It is problematic, however, in that it suggests adapting to the current climate without addressing *Glocal Times'* interest in publishing not only papers authored by professors and researchers based in universities, but also articles written by professional practitioners, as well as occasional pieces contributed by policy-makers –while always giving newly graduated Master students a chance to profile their work.

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New possibilities under consideration, if resources allow, include producing a series of guest-edited special issues, collaborating with a well-established academic publisher for a print edition, and looking into a future in which *Glocal Times* would combine both invited and peer-reviewed pieces.

In the meantime, I want to thank each and every contributor to the web magazine to date for their eager, patient and generous participation in the project. While managed by a small, part-time staff of three (Oscar Hemer, Mikael Rundberg and myself), *Glocal Times* would simply not exist without its contributors. I would also like to thank Jesper Falkheimer, Head of Malmö University's School of Arts and Communication since 2009, for his interest in the project.

And now, onto this issue.

Based on a presentation she gave to UNESCO's Information and Communication Sector in October, 2009, Silvia Balit -a pioneer in the practice of communication for development and social change in the United Nations- makes concrete proposals towards the formulation and implementation of a common strategy among UN agencies that recognizes communication as a fundamental component in development.

Rasna Warah, a columnist for the Kenyan newspaper Daily Nation and a writer, formerly editor at UN-Habitat (and a graduate of Malmö University's Master course in Communication for Development), discusses the failures of development in Africa and calls for a much-needed African perspective on the relationship between aid and poverty in the continent.

Anders Høg Hansen, senior lecturer at Malmö University's School of Arts and Communication and a staff member of the Master course in Communication for Development, approaches the concept of participation from an educational perspective, exploring ways in which users appropriate and even change topic and technology in the context of specific social practices with educational gains.

Katja Svensson, a long-time guest lecturer of Malmö University's Master course in Communication for Development with expertise in gender and human security, identifies the communicational challenges implied in working on human rights issues internationally through the case of female genital mutilation.

Last but not least, Jordi de Miguel, a graduate from Malmö University's Master course in Communication for Development and community manager at the Spanish NGO Fundación Chandra, provokingly looks into 'oppression at home' by studying an experience that applies Augusto Boal's "theatre of the oppressed" techniques to a life story of migrant discrimination in Catalonia.

The next issue of Glocal Times will be published in November 2010. In the meantime, your reactions and suggestions are welcome at florenghel@gmail.com

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