

# Empire and Communications

HAROLD A. INNIS

Revised by MARY Q. INNIS

Edited and introduced by  
WILLIAM J. BUXTON

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## EMPIRE AND COMMUNICATIONS

Originally published in 1950, Harold A. Innis's *Empire and Communications* is considered to be one of the classic works in media studies, yet its origins have received little attention. Ambitious in its scope, the book spans five millennia, tracing a path of development around the globe from 2900 BCE to the twentieth century and revealing the cyclical interplay between communications and power structures across space and time.

In this new edition, William J. Buxton pays close attention to handwritten glosses that Innis added to a copy of the original edition and the revisions undertaken by his widow, Mary Q. Innis. A new introduction provides a detailed account of how the book emerged from lectures that Innis delivered at Oxford University in 1948, as well as how it related to other presentations Innis made in Britain during the same period. It explores how Innis sought to enrich his analysis by incorporating material related to phenomena such as war, education, religion, culture, geography, and finance. An insightful foreword by Marshall McLuhan is included, as well as bibliographical references and a revised index.

By providing a narrative based on extensive notes from Innis, this edition makes *Empire and Communications* more accessible and contributes to the broad efforts to shape Innis's legacy.

HAROLD A. INNIS was a professor of political economy at the University of Toronto and the author of seminal works on media and communication theory.

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