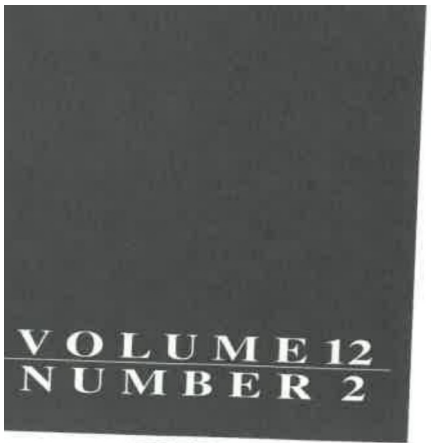

THE CYPRUS REVIEW

A Journal of Social Economic and Political Issues

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THE CYPRUS REVIEW

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NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

The Cyprus Review is an international bi-annual refereed journal which publishes articles on a range of areas in the social sciences including primarily Anthropology, Business Administration, Economics, History, International Relations, Politics, Psychology, Public Administration and Sociology, and secondarily, Geography, Demography, Law and Social Welfare, pertinent to Cyprus. As such it aims to provide a forum for discus- sion on salient issues relating to the latter. The journal was first published in 1989 and has since received the support of many scholars internationally.

Submission Procedure:

Manuscripts should be sent to the Editors, *The Cyprus Review,* Research and Development Center, lntercollege, P.O.Box 24005, 1700 Nicosia, Cyprus, with a brief biographical note, detailing: current affiliations: research interests and publications.

Formatting Requirements:

(i) Articles should range between 4,000-7,000 words.

(ii) Manuscripts should be typed on one side of A4 double-spaced; submitted in four hard copies together with a 3.5 inch disk compatible with Microsoft Word saved as rich text format. Pages should be numbered consecutively.

As manuscripts may be sent out anonymously for editorial evaluation, the author's name should appear on a separate covering page. The author's full academic address and a brief biographical paragraph detailing current affiliation and areas of research interest and publications should also be included.

Manuscripts and disks will **not** be returned.

(iii) An abstract of no more than 150 words should be included on a separate page.

(iv) Headings should appear as follows:

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Subheadings: I. Centred, title case, bold.

II. Left-align, title case, bold, italics.

III.Lett-align, title case, italics.

(v) Quotations must correspond to the original source in wording, spelling and punctuation. Any alternations to the original should be noted (e.g. use of ellipses to indicate omitted information; editorial brackets to indicate author's additions to quotations). Quotation marks (" ") are to be used to denote direct quotes and inverted commas (' ') to denote a quote within a quotation.

(vi) Notes should be used to provide additional comments and discussion or for reference purposes (see vii below) and should be numbered consecutively in the text and typed on a separate sheet of paper at the end of the article. Acknowledgements and references to grants should appear within the endnotes.

(vii) References: As the *The Cyprus Review* is a multi-disciplinary journal, either of the following formats are acceptable for references to source material in the text:

(a) surname, date and page number format OR

(b) footnote references.

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Articles and chapters in books:

Jacovides, A.J. (1977) 'The Cyprus Problem and the United Nations' in Attalides, M. (ed), *Cyprus Reviewed.* Nicosia, Jus Cypri Association.

Journal articles:

McDonald, R. (1986) 'Cyprus: The Gulf Widens', *The World Today,* Vol. 40, No. 11, p. **185.**

(viii) Dates should appear as follows: 3 October 1931; 1980s; twentieth century. One to ten should appear as written and above ten in numbers (11, 12 etc.).

(ix) Tables and figures are to be included in the text and to be numbered consecutively with titles.

(x) **Book review** headings should appear as follows: Title, author, publisher, place, date, number of pages, e.g. *Cyprian Edge,* by Nayia Roussou, Livadiotis Ltd (Nicosia, 1997) 78 pp. Reviewer's name to appear at the end of the review.

(xi) First proofs may be read and corrected by contributors if they provide the Editors with an address through which they can be reached without delay and can guarantee return of the corrected proofs within seven days of receiving them.

(xii) Each author will receive two complimentary copies of the issue in which their article appears in addition to five offprints.

(xiii) Articles submitted to the journal should be unpublished material and must not be reproduced for one year following publication in *The Cyprus Review.*

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The views expressed in the articles and reviews published in this journal are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of Intercollege, University of Indianapolis, The Advisory Editorial Board or the Editors.

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Obituary

Leonard William Doob: 1909 - 2000

It is with sadness that we announce the passing of Leonard Doob who has been a member of The Cyprus Review Advisory Editorial Board since its inception in 1989. As an established member of academia, he proved a great asset and his views on a number of related matters were extremely beneficial. *The Cyprus Review* offers its condolences to the family and friends of this learned and acknowledged member of its Advisory Board. He will be sadly missed.

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Articles

VOLUME 12
NUMBER 2

GLOBALISATION AND TELEVISION: COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES

Michael Richards and David French

Abstract

This paper examines the major debates about globalisation and television, setting them in an international empirical context. It explores varying conceptualisations of globalisation, examining common themes and significant differences, arguing that often unrecognised complexities lie behind some of the assumptions made about the impact of global television. Globalisation is presented as the most recent ex- pression of a phenomenon having a long history but a much more recent concep- tual origin in the media imperialism thesis. Using examples drawn from such wide- ly varying countries as *China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan, Pakistan and India, the paper examines the role of national governments, and media organ- isations in both exploiting and resisting global television. In doing* so *it points to the importance of studying media regulation particularly in relation to the public sphere and suggests that a greater understanding of television in contemporary Cyprus can be achieved by utilising aspects of theories of globalisation and drawing on em- pirical examples from elsewhere in the world.*

Understanding Change in World Television: A Stimulus and a Challenge

Discussions of globalisation have become a central feature of almost all considerations of the future of television. The issues associated with globalisation are prominent in the pages of academic journals, business magazines and in the political section of newspapers. But such discussions include a wide variety of themes, approaches and interests. In addressing globalisation, scholars are vigorously having to redefine and integrate a number of previously disparate concepts in order to grapple with a changing field. At the same time, entrepreneurs are operating in that field and forever trying to manipulate it in the hope of making even more money. On the other hand, governments and other policy-makers are coming to terms with processes which, often quite correctly, they perceive as threatening.

The task which all three groups confront is a difficult one; the picture of change in world television becoming ever more hectic. Television is, for most of the world, a relatively recent cultural introduction and has grown rapidly in new markets, of- fering new challenges to governments and other existing cultural institutions and presenting a range of sometimes unfamiliar images to viewers; all of this at a time when many of the societies into which it has come have themselves anyway been undergoing radical changes associated with post-colonial nation-building, urbanisation, and industrialisation, among many other things.

The enormous change associated with this has been in the perception of the future of television. With the widespread and fast-growing introduction of cable and satellite delivery, television now shares its distribution technology with the whole field of telecommunications, and thereby with the explosion of interest in the opportunities offered by information technology. This interest is not new. To quote the then Singapore Minister of Information and the Arts (Yeo, 1994, p. 104):

> A technological revolution is sweeping the world. No aspect of life is left untouched. All societies are affected and some are shaken to the core. The revolu- tion in communication, information technology and transportation has weakened the power of governments and integrated the world economy in a way never seen before. It broke up the Soviet Empire and forced open countries like China and Vietnam. All borders are now porous. National wealth is increasingly based more up- on knowledge than on land and natural resources.

This echoed the widely known views of the American Vice-President, Al Gore (Gore, 1994, p. 22), in support of:

> … the creation of a network of networks, transmitting messages and images at the speed of light across every continent, is essential to sustainable development for the human family. It will bring economic progress, strong democracies, better environmental management, improved healthcare and a greater sense of shared stewardship of our small planet.

There is of course a good deal of argument about the accuracy of these views (see for example Golding, 1994, especially pp. 469-77). Gore, in particular, is open to the charge of utopianism. But they remain as very clear indicators of the extent to which debate about television is having to open its frontiers to encompass a far wider range of applications and usages.

Globalisation: Some Definitions

The idea of globalisation is, then, not substantially new. Indeed very early expressions of globalisation are very evident, for example in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Roman Empire, the exploits of Alexander and, of course in certain

phases of the spread of Christianity. Several factors have, however, stimulated an interest in contemporary globalisation and these include a return to some of the founding ideas in discussions about globalisation. Robertson (1992) for example, points out that the spread of the nation-state as a mode of political organisation is itself a product of globalisation and that declarations of- cultural identity on the part of national or other groupings are themselves often a response to globalisation.

Golding (1994b) provides a convenient summary, listing four key aspects of contemporary globalisation. First is the decline of the nation as both a cultural force, where people begin to identify more with supra national cultural affiliations than with those of the nation, as well as the reduction of the role of the nation state as a political and economic force. Secondly, new levels of organisation both above, at the supra national level, and below at the regional level, supposedly take over the functions previously performed by national governments. Third, is what Golding calls the syndicalisation of experience, that is the emergence of major cultural and commercial symbols in the form, most obviously, of internationally traded branded goods. And finally, he points to the role of the major international languages, par- ticularly English, as the vehicle for international culture. Golding's main concern is to highlight the patterns of inequality that these global processes reinforce both within as well as between societies.

The multi-faceted concept of globalisation has a number of strands and emphases to which other writers have drawn attention. Sometimes globalisation is depicted as the march of technologies, institutions, processes and forces which inexorably extend their reach and incorporate the world into a single global market. In academic discourse, globalisation usually includes a discussion of the accelerating compression of the world along a time space dimension (Mohammadi, 1997; Robertson, 1992; Waters, 1995). This is sometimes linked to a cultural globalisation where the conglomeration of major media enterprises are emphasised (Herman and McChesney, 1997) and where the development of global television news and the increased consumption of world wide cultural icons, imagery and styles are seen to bring subordinate cultures into closer contact with dominant ones (Corco- ran, 1998). A further line of argument is that the key to understanding media and communication in the global context lies in the ways in which the communication of information is seen as being transformed into a global cultural ideology of consumerism (Sklair, 1993).

Whilst some commentators see patterns of domination as deeply entrenched (Hamelink, 1983; Schiller, 1992) others see it as a temporary state which will give way to increasingly balanced patterns of distribution as the cultural industries throughout the world increase their capacity to produce products which better meet the needs of local audiences.

The end of the twentieth century has witnessed unprecedented changes in world political and economic structures, and these, together with major technological innovations in communications, are often seen to be central to an understanding of globalisation as an expression of an advanced market economy which has had a significant impact of communication structures and policies in many countries. Frequently this has resulted in the liberalisation and deregulation of media. As Hamelink notes, 'many countries around the world are revising their communication structure. In this process the leading strategy would seem to be "more market, less state" and the buzz words have become privatisation and liberalisation' (1997, p. 96).

So, the concept of globalisation has been used to both identify and explain sweeping social, cultural, institutional and technical changes. As long ago as 1992 Ferguson alerted us to the dangers of over simplification in this project, and although now nearly a decade old, her arguments are still pertinent. She refers to globalisation as a myth, not in the sense of it being an untruth, for it is clear that there are global markets in the circulation, and distribution of all kinds of products, not just cultural artefacts, but uses the term as a way of engaging with certain as- sumptions about the role of ideas, images and beliefs, how they are created, and how they are sustained in the modern world. She identifies seven 'myths' about globalisation amongst which are that 'bigger is better', and that 'more is better' and so challenges the alleged beneficial nature of free market economies and privati- sation by suggesting that viewer choice is not increased nor is the quality of pro- gramming necessarily improved by globalisation. The myth of 'time, space com- pression' overstates the power of modern communications technologies forces for public and private good, argues Ferguson, for whilst the increased mobility of infor- mation and people does not make time and space irrelevant, it simply highlights the extent to which these areas of experience have become more inter-related and complex, and suggests, but ignores, the growing inequality between the informa- tion, rich and poor. The emergence of global, cultural homogeneity, the cultural ex- pression of inclusion that promised unity out of diversity is also called into question by Ferguson. Recent evidence from national and local television practices in many countries in Asia certainly points to the importance of local programming, ethnic and cultural differentiation and the use of local language and dialect in influencing audi- ences' programme preferences.

Ferguson's argument reminds us of the need for care in the study of the globalisation of cultural production and consumption. At its most seductive globalisation is a doctrine promoting and justifying an interlocking system of international trade. However it is not clear how far the conception of market economy determinism provides a convincing explanatory framework for the complex processes implicated in the term globalisation. Thompson (1995) emphasises this point. "One can speak

of globalisation ... only when the growing interconnectedness of different regions and locals becomes systematic and reciprocal to some degree and only when the scope of interconnectedness is effectively global" (Thompson, 1995, p. 150).

Globalisation: A Continuing Story

The globalisation debate is not a recent phenomenon but the latest in the expressions of concern about the cultural impact of transnational flows of information and entertainment programmes from the West, usually the United States to the East and the South. It has its antecedents in the controversy about media imperialism where concern was expressed at the growing dominance of Western, largely American, originated media practices and products, which were held to create Western-oriented elites in developing countries, therefore, reinforcing Western modes of practice on an ever increasing global scale.

During the 1970's and 1980's, many viewers in both developed and developing countries found themselves able to receive new television channels including more terrestrial channels and channels provided by cable, whether from near neighbours or via satellite from further afield. This increase in channels together with the number of hours of transmission available usually led to an increase in the proportion of American originated content in television schedules. The terms 'media' and 'cultural' imperialism came to be used for this phenomenon, emphasising the one way flow of products and services. Media imperialism focused upon the so-called 'mass' media, of broadcasting, film and the press; cultural imperialism addressed a wider front. Both were often linked to assertions about the perpetuation of relationships of domination and subordination between nations as surviving the passing of the overt empires of the nineteenth century and the first parts of the twentieth which stresses the cultural dimension of political and economic imperialism. See, for representations of this position, Tunstall (1977), Schiller (1969) (1991), Smith (1980), Appadurai (1990).

The concerns surrounding media and cultural imperialism focus on the damage that can be wrought to emerging nations and nation states by the increased availability of western originated cultural artefacts, which allegedly undermine the cultures, morals and values of these developing countries. This is an expression of concern about the cultural impact of transnational flows of information and entertainment programmes from the West, usually the United States, which was associated with an increase in multi national ownership, the dissemination of a limited range of media genres and content, and a down grading of cultural specificity. The result of all this is claimed to be the undermining and eventual displacement of the indigenous cultures of receiving countries.

The thesis of media and cultural imperialism suggests that powerful societies impose their values and beliefs on weaker societies in an exploitative manner, in which First World capitalist societies impose their values and beliefs on poorer Third World societies. The concept of media imperialism is tied in with this concern for if there is a dominant western, or particularly US culture, its dissemination is through the mass media which create the conditions for conformity to this dominating cul- ture and limit effective resistance to it. These perspectives can be found in the work of writers such as Hamelink (1983); Mattelart (1983) and Schiller (1992). However, critics have suggested that cultural and media imperialism is often just another term for a high level of practice of professional skills, the value of which is widely ac- cepted by practitioners no matter where they are located; that the processes of im- perialism are not the same in all countries and that national responses are varied and cannot be inferred from global patterns. In any case most countries have their own cultural and media forces which mediate the possible influences of externally produced cultural products (Sklair 1993).

Certainly a limitation of the media imperialism thesis is its assumption that media imperialism equals cultural imperialism and, therefore, that authentic national cultures will be swamped. The thesis claims that these cultures are undermined by the dumping of Western culture via slick media products. There are two problems with this argument: first, many programmes are bought cheaply and are old, dated, and relatively unsophisticated. They were made for a different audience at a different time in global history and, therefore, may appear inappropriate and unreal. Second, where there are multiple languages, religions, and ethnic groupings, overlain by so- cial class and social status differences, then the existence of any simple national and cultural identity is difficult to imagine. If it does not exist it cannot be subvert- ed. In any case the different elements in multi-valent societies respond differently to outside media influences, whose products can be 'read' against the prevailing lo- cal culture and identity. Culture is a multi-layered phenomenon; the product of lo- cal, tribal, regional, or national dimensions, which is anything but a single interna- tional culture.

Furthermore, the media imperialism thesis often fails to recognise that there are strong regional exporters of television programmes other than the United States. For example, Mexico and Argentina have a tradition of exporting media to near neighbours and to hispanic Europe, while Indian films and records go to many countries in Africa and Asia. However, countries which are strong regional exporters of media tend themselves to be heavy importers of American media (Tunstall, 1977). This suggests that whilst rejecting some of the tenets of a simple media imperialism thesis, it would be wise also to recognise that there are open and less open markets. The door which is opened to allow exports out also allows imports to pass through it.

Finally, as Hartmann and his colleagues in their intriguing study of the impact of the mass media on village life in India and the implications for development have pointed out, assumptions about the influence of media on day-to-day life often ignore social structure and structural conflict, treating audiences as an amorphous mass. In addition, there is a tendency in the received wisdom about development and the mass media to regard consumers as essentially passive. This leads to earlier assumptions about how media effects work and, therefore, misleadingly privilege research paradigms and methodologies that operate within an effects or effectiveness framework. As these authors, and many others have noted, 'in most respects mass communications are far less important sources of information and influence than interpersonal communication' (Hartmann et al., 1989, p. 259).

Globalisation in Asia: Practice and Policy

Among the mass media it is television that has changed most drastically, assisted by technological advances in cable and satellite broadcasting. Whilst these changes towards liberalisation and de-regularisation first started in Western Europe, this aspect of globalisation has, nevertheless, been affecting Asia since the 1980's (see French, D. and Richards, M. 1996, 2000). Whilst it is all too easy to generalise over such a vast area and such widely ranging countries, it is possible to characterise the Asia of the 1990's as having experienced economic growth, and as tending to adopt more 'liberal' (i.e. free market) economic strategies. In these processes the mass media and telecommunications, particularly broadcast media, are important agents for change and many Asian countries have undergone significant changes in media policies, structures and operations (Hong and Hsu, 1999). The growing commercialisation of Asian broadcast media has generally resulted in a swift growth in advertising, a significant if sometimes short term increase of foreign programmes, and an expansion in the number of channels. In some cases these changes have also featured the weakening of the ability of states to adopt ideological moral positions in the face of economic pressure from the markets (Karthigesu, 1994).

There is no denying the fact that the broadcasting environment in Asia is vastly different from what was two decades ago. But the unmistakable imprint of histori- cal choices is clearly visible even today. These choices continue to dictate broadcasting cultures in Asia. Some like Hong Kong and Japan were quick to see the logic and potential of a mixed system based on substantial autonomy for commer- cial television. Today, these enterprises function as giant cultural industries with significant interests in overseas markets. But variants of public-sector undertakings (often notably lacking in their commitment to practices recognisable as 'public service') remain a main force within broadcasting in Asia, in spite of the inroads made by commercial broadcasting over the last decade.

Satellite broadcasting, particularly the operations of the Hong-Kong-based STAR TV network which started in the late 1980s, indirectly contributed to a changed broadcasting environment in Asia. It facilitated encounters with global culture and governments in many of the South-East Asian countries and saw these new developments as potentially subversive and a threat to their control over the flow of opinion. Some, such as China, Singapore and Malaysia (see Nain, 1996, p. 176 and Hukill, 1996, pp. 133-134) clamped down on the ownership of satellite dishes, with varying success. Much of the anxiety expressed by state governments in South- East Asia stems from the widely-subscribed to but ultimately technologically-deter- minist notion that television, or for that matter new information technologies, have an in-built potential to subvert and/or 'democratise' society against ruling interests. The rather simplistic equation between CNN and democracy has become part of popular imagination since the events in Tianammen Square (see Lo, 1996). Gov- ernments in Asia, nevertheless, continue to fear both the real and imagined conse- quences of media outside their influence and control.

This reversal of priorities is in essence, the new vision of state broadcasting in Asia. Throughout the region, the lofty ideals which accompanied the establishment of television - couched in the often weary state discourses on development, education and cultural pluralism seem to have vanished in the haze of liberalisation, privatisation, deregulation and the economics of choice. Today competition is the buzz word and monolithic state-run television structures from Indonesia to India are frantically trying to redeem their sagging image through improving the quality of their productions, encouraging professionalism, opening up to private capital, cre- ating opportunities for joint productions with the private sector and actively pursuing overseas markets. It might be expected that the more obviously commercially-driven television systems in Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong would emphasise competition but, as Wei (2000) shows very clearly, even in China, the political imperatives of government policy are having to be reconciled to the need for market viability.

Broadcasting in Asia is undergoing substantial changes to its structures, its philosophies and its methods of operation. Key among these challenges is a strategy to handle the realities posed by convergence - with markets, industries and technologies and in terms of production, ownership, applications and, in particular, regulation. Asian broadcasting systems are actively being digitalised and have for many years used computing and satellite technologies in the context of production and transmission. In the UK and elsewhere in Europe there are moves to merge hitherto separate regulatory bodies in recognition of new, convergent, delivery systems. But, in Asia, it would seem in general that the trend is in the opposite direction, towards the preservation of the status quo. There seem to be two conflicting objectives: first, to actively support convergence in the high-end IT and telecom-

munications markets towards the maximum exploitation of its business potential; on the other hand, to restrict their presence in broadcasting, experimenting with convergence technologies in broadcasting only as long as this would lead to reinforcement of the role played by the state as the key arbiter of matters related to nation- al sovereignty and cultural autonomy.

This separation between telecommunication and broadcasting is bound to be a stop-gap measure. As the case of Internet-radio in India shows, the provision of online services by national and commercial broadcasters in Asia and collaboration between broadcasters and telecom and internet firms in the establishment of websites, point to the fact that convergence has a momentum of its own that is impossible to bypass and that is not restricted by political imperatives. Hukill's (1998, p. 11) comment on the options for television in Singapore in the context of two competitors, the Singapore Broadcasting Authority and Singapore Cable Television and one potential competitor, Singapore Telecom, highlights the fact that convergence, in all its manifestations, will eventually have to be reckoned with, sooner than later - "The government's strategy is to continue to strengthen the position of national broadcasters, as changes in technology, increasing audience demands, and competitive forces come to the fore, by developing systems which will continue to provide the largest audience share to government-controlled sources in the wake of changing technologies which may eventually by-pass such systems".

Asia has undoubtedly experienced a period of media liberalisation and deregulation where broadcasting has been given more freedom, even encouragement to become sensitive to, and often dependant on, market responses for revenue. Asian television operators have progressively been unable to rely on the financial support of government subsidies and licence fees and have seen their revenue increasingly made up of advertising revenue and subscription charges. In some cases this has meant that traditional concerns with political and social stability, cultural integri- ty and even national security have begun to take second place to market competi- tion. National governments in Asia have welcomed, and sometimes cynically ex- ploited, the global trend of media commercialisation whilst retaining a certain amount of concern about the impact on national cultures and their remaining pow- er of control of the media. Again, the chapters here concerning Singapore and Malaysia demonstrate this trend most explicitly. But the need to improve the com- petitiveness of domestic media industries has brought benefits, particularly in terms of providing programming in a variety of languages and in responding to local needs and issues. Hong and Hsu {1999) suggest globalisation has led to adjustments in Asian media policies which have stimulated new industries and therefore new em- ployment in media and software have been created; at the level of programming context, pluralism, diversity and choice have been enhanced; and audience access has been expanded.

Cultural Globalisation and Local Responses

Given this diversity of media environments and the many country specific linkages between the State, the private-sector and broadcasting, it would be unwise to suggest that there are uniform changes affecting broadcasting in Asia today. Instead we are seeing many instances in Asia of countries responding to the challenges posed by cultural globalisation in very country-specific ways. For instance in India, satellite-channels such as MTV and Star's Channel V, while couched in the playful language of post-modern television nevertheless attempt to re-locate rather than dislocate aspects of Indian popular music culture. The dominance of local-language programming in most of North-East Asia and the remarkable success of the highly uniquely home-grown cartoon-strips and 'Manga' comics in Japan are further illustrations of the real presence and influence of the local. In most countries in the region, local productions continue to provide the bulk of programming.

Such local developments are not products of a deliberate strategy of cultural protection mounted against the threat of foreign values. They merely point to the fact that the encounter between globalisation and localisation by no means results in a guaranteed swamping of local cultures. It is often the case that global cultures of consumption are opportunistically exploited by the local. Sometimes this leads to the subversion of the established order, for example, pirate cable TV in Taiwan func- tions with little or no regard for infringements of international copyright regulations [Richards (2000) and Kumar (2000)]. Most often, localisation ensures that local cultural needs are catered for in very culture specific ways. Examples of local ingenuity include the many local serials in Asia, for example, the culturally-specific version of Sesame Street produced by Shanghai Television and scheduled to go on air in February 1998 and from the world of telecommunications, the remarkable success of Muhammed Yunus (of Grameen Bank fame) in setting up Grameen Telecom, a cellular service serving thousands of Bangladeshi villages. The profusion of local language satellite channels in India is another example of localisation at work [Thussu (2000), Kumar (2000)], as is the increasing local content being produced in Pakistan (Tahir, 2000) and the channels devoted to ethnic minorities in Taiwan. But, as is shown by Chang (2000), the financial viability of this last local response is somewhat insecure, a recurrent problem in the tactic of building niche-markets as a response to global products.

Evidence in favour of localisation does not however take away from the fact that the impetus and the desire to create uniform cultural trends are global i.n design. Rather it points to the need to be wary when making generalisations about the uniformity of cultural change since change is prone to a variety of cultural inflections. In a sense, manifestations of localisation reflect the many paths of economic globalisation. The purveyors of global capital are not unduly constrained by local cul-

tures of consumption so long as these generate profits. Cultural inflections do not necessarily become a source of primary identities, nor do they become a basis for a resolutely different ethic of production and distribution. Rather, local media tend to recombine and commodity identities in line with the profit motive of global culture. There may be the occasional serial like the Ramayana in India which touched an inner chord in the audience and lead to their identification with larger realities, but such products are relatively uncommon. Soaps and sit-corns lead to further soaps and sit-corns. That is in the nature of the business. In other words, and despite its distinct unfashionableness in media circles, there is still some value in the concept of media imperialism, precisely because of the dissemination of standard, global grammars of production and standardised technologies of transmission and reception. On the other hand, Lee (2000) shows how even television which has developed within highly globalised genres in Hong Kong, has played a key role in developing a very specific national identity. (For a more detailed discussion of national identity see the paper by Richards in this collection.)

What is strikingly evident in Asia is the fact that this new climate of broadcasting is the child of global capital, nurtured primarily by the captains of industry and the politically powerful. It would seem that those who have benefited primarily from this changed environment are assorted conglomerates, global and national, who already enjoy economies of scale by virtue of their economic interests, and enjoy the confidence of the ruling elite.

It would, of course be an exaggeration to suggest that the media market in Asia has been carved up in its entirety by these types of interests and institutions. There have been a number of secondary beneficiaries including low-investment cable-TV operators, small producers and medium sized companies who have plugged into the market for indigenous software. This is a lucrative industry given the perennial problems on the supply side. There is just not enough software to fill airtime on the satellite channels. Distributors and a variety of agencies servicing the needs of the cultural industries have also benefited from this changed environment.

Independent producers are however faced with a culture of production that demands more of the same - sitcoms, chat shows, quizzes, celebrity hours, game shows, etc., that have become the metaphor for 'choice', 'good TV' and prime-time TV. Such tried and tested productions are the commodities which substantially define contemporary television. The role of advertising is important here.

Unconfirmed understandings of product marketing and impact are a vital part of the mythology of the global advertising industry. Rothenburg (1998, p. 74), alludes to what he terms the 'Knowability Paradox' in advertising, "The less we have known about how advertising and the media work, the more advertising and media there

have been. Conversely, the more advertising and media there have been, the more they have shaped the culture that they saturate. Sitcoms, 'docu-dramas', 'advertorials', celebrity covers, radio, shock jocks, drive time - the forms and conventions that are as familiar and invisible to us as the air we breathe owe their existence to the fact that we don't know what works to attract consumers, or why. Hence the continual hammer of innovation against the hard shell of tradition". Whether we agree with this observation or not, it does, however, point to the fact that media entrepreneurs have a lot to gain by nurturing this mythology of 'consumer' choice, good television and narrowly circumscribed, prime-time genres.

But there are other forces for change. The profusion of alternative media organisations in Asia committed to other models of broadcasting have the potential to make a difference. The availability of low-cost transmission technologies has enabled clandestine, ethnic and 'minority' broadcasting for groups who have been denied audiovisual space by 'majoritarian' governments. Along the borders of Myanmar, among the Mon, Shan and Karen refugee camps, the Internet is fast becoming a means to reclaim a people's right to communicate. The technologies of television production are becoming cheaper and easier to use and therefore more accessible to new interest-groups. Combined with the continuing revolution in distribution, of which the Internet is only a part, the potential for new localised services for previously marginalised groups becomes an intriguing prospect.

Globalisation and the Public Sphere

These issues are closely related to the inter-linked issues of the public regulation of the media and the concept of the 'public sphere'. The latter is defined by Habermas as 'the realm of our social life ... in which citizens confer about ... matters of general interest (quoted in Hallin, 1994, p. 2). The concept of the public sphere is one about which there is a good deal of controversy, with the frequent charge that its tenor is idealistic and utopian, bearing only a limited resemblance to the realities of media organisation around the world. To quote Hallin (1994, p. 3): 'For Habermas ... the public sphere is a realm that stands between the state, on the one hand, and the realm of private interests on the other, and it needs to be kept autonomous of both.' The public sphere is something which is in principle open to those who wish to express their views on matters of public importance and for those who wish to have access to such views.

This is not the place to engage in any lengthy attempt to summarise even the main positions in the debate, but it is clear that the concept provides a useful model to apply to the role of the media in those societies which aspire to a pluralist, participatory mode of political culture. For us the key question is: in what way does the process of increasing internationalisation in television affect those issues which

arise in discussions of the public sphere and how does this relate to the future of the existing regulatory regimes and of those which may come later?

At the national level we have already noted that theorists of globalisation stress, as a starting point, the threat to the nation-state. Insofar as this familiar thesis is correct, there is little reason to see the system of the media, and of television in particular, as in any way immune from this aspect of the process. National governments have, of course, always been particularly concerned with the 'safe' operation of the media, and indeed have been primarily responsible for the difficult task of defining the nature of the regulatory regime. Arrangements for the supervision of the media are always sensitive, whichever mode they operate in. The sensitivity concerning the definition of appropriate modes of regulation arises partly because of the evident subjectivity of the judgements to be made. At its simplest, the views of the regulators are unlikely to be accepted by those with different political or cul- tural viewpoints. It also partly derives from the very strongly competing issues of the principles that continually recur in this field: public safety and the protection of minors are forever in conflict with freedom of speech. Another frequently encoun- tered tension is between the need for some measure of creative autonomy on the part of programme makers trying to produce successful, audience-pleasing output and the concern of regulators to be certain about the details of the programmes be- ing passed as suitable for transmission.

Conclusions: and so to Cyprus...

At the beginning of the twenty first century, there is little doubt about the dominant rhetoric of television: it is that of supply and demand, the language of the free market. It would be consistent with this to expect the future of the television mar- ket in Cyprus to be a product of emergent mass market consumerism and popular television substantially supplied by non Cypriot media industries. But Cyprus, along with so many countries, is, fortunately more complex than this.

The evidence in this paper and elsewhere in this collection suggests that audiences everywhere are no more 'massified' as a result of the 'onslaught' on globalisation than they were before. There is still, even a greater, demand for local content, reflecting local culture and expressed in local languages. Whatever the forces of global developments in television there are always important pressures from within that provide an important counter-force in the developing market-place. The remaining papers in this collection provide detailed analysis of some of the most significant of these both in Cyprus and elsewhere.

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NATIONAL IDENTITY, CYPRUS AND GLOBAL CONTEXTS

Michael Richards

Abstract

Debates about media globalisation increasingly recognise the significance of national identity for an understanding of both the national exploitation of global media and resistances to them. This paper focuses on the issue of national identity and seeks to clarify its nature and ways in which it has been conceptualised in order to more precisely understand its relationship to media globalisation. It draws attention to distinctions between national identity, national culture and nationalism whilst noting continuing themes, and points to the importance of television in the construction and maintenance of these notions. Using examples from China, Israel, Malaysia, Pakistan, Singapore and Canada, the paper discusses links between national identities, the policies of national governments and the television landscape. Particular attention is drawn to the role of language in the formation and maintenance of national identity. This is examined in the context of Cyprus and provides a basis for a discussion of the relationship between television and national identity in Cyprus elsewhere in that collection of papers.

What is National Identity?

In a world often characterised as postmodern, with its multiple social connections, varied and fluid social stratification systems and the option of multiple identities, national identity remains one of the central tenets of an individual's sense of self. National identity is often regarded as a fixed, stable reference point in a world where all is changing and much is uncertain. But the supposed stability, firmness and predictability of national identity is open to question, partly as a result of challenges to the autonomy of the nation state brought about by the creation of supra national organisations, but also by the expansion of global media over which national governments are able to exercise only limited control.

National identity is one instance of an appeal to the value of the collective self, to a sense of belonging, of being 'inside' rather than 'outside'. As Smith (1991) remarks "Of all the collective identities which human beings share today, national identity is perhaps the most fundamental and inclusive .... other types of collective identity - class, gender, race, religion - may overlap or combine with national identity but they rarely succeed in undermining its hold" (p. 143). A further reason why national identity is not a fixed entity, is because it is built both on fact and fiction, which together constitute the basis of our sense of who we are, and, equally who we are not. As Thomas (1997) states "Myth, tradition and invented tradition are systematically employed towards the making of a common ancestry, the basis for shared belongings and a distinctive identity vis-a-vis the identity of other nation states (p. 3)."

National identity refers in its most simple sense to the process of identifying with the nation, which is above all else in Anderson's (1983) famous phrase "an imagined community", a focus of loyalty and a source of identity, providing a sense of belonging to something bigger than one's immediate community. In the sense of being 'imagined' nations are, therefore, more than political or geographical entities. Hogan (1999) proposes that "national identity is a discursive imagining asserting the common values and shared history and way of life of the people it addresses. This discourse is in constant flux, remaking itself in response to changing social conditions" (p. 150). Hall (1993) has characterised this type of discourse as the 'narrative of nations' (p. 293) and Fry (2000) has suggested that the question of national identity is never finally answered but always contested. In this sense changing conceptions of national identity can certainly be explored but never defined because of the shifting patterns of discourse and competing textual articulations of national identity.

Nationalism and National Identity

Despite the fluidity of national identity suggested in these arguments, particular articulations of a national identity may not always accord with the interests and positions of all members of society. Quite often national identity is based on elitist or majoritarian interests, whose symbolic power lies in identifying the nation as the natural political and cultural unit and where appeals to join are often strong and alternative definitions strikingly absent. It is here that processes of creation and recreation of national identity are significant matters of renegotiation between the nation and the people; between the state and the citizenry; between the centre and the localities; between the majority and minorities; and between official and unofficial culture. When majoritarian discourses about national identity are challenged it is then that the 'blood, roots and soil' arguments are deployed. This position as- serts that there is a naturalness to national identity, where belonging comes from a

line of descent. In this instance appeals are made to an 'authentic' national identity, coupled with appeals for protection from 'impure' blood and threats from others. This notion of national identity is closely tied to what Billig (1995) has called 'hot nationalism' and Easthope (1999) 'the bad excesses of nationalism' (p. 229). Nationalism in this sense has particular and narrow concerns, it ignores complexities and complications in order to elicit loyalty and commitment, for, as Mcloone (1995) has pointed out, complexity breeds doubt and scepticism. But nationalism and nation- al identity are complex phenomena and academic study is quite properly concerned with exploring those complexities and the social phenomena that 'feed' them.

National Identity and National Culture

National identity has become a central concept in debates about the relationship between the production and consumption of culture in the nation state. The key features of a national identity can be promoted and spread by a wide range of institutions, events, symbols and ceremonies Smith (1991) points to the importance of such varied phenomena as flags, anthems, parades, coinage, passports, war memorials, folklore, museums, odes, popular heroes and heroines, fairy tales, national recreation, legal procedures, educational practices and military codes in the construction of national identity. Hall (1996) has argued that cultural identity, so closely attached to national identity, is increasingly fragmented and fractured in the modern world, and therefore constantly in a process of construction and reconstruction, and should not be seen as essentialist and unified. The clearest perspective on collective identities, he suggests, can be achieved by situating debates about identity within those practices and developments which are seen to disturb the relatively settled character of populations and cultures, particularly in relation to the nature and consequences of globalisation. Identities he believes are the result of using the resources of history and language in order to become, in order, there- fore, to be.

Identities are, as I have argued, structured within discourses and are produced within particular sites and contexts. They frequently emerge from the exercise of power, and indeed, are implicated in it, as well as being central to the marking out of difference and the justification of exclusion. In this sense, identities are to do with our relationships to the other, whereby we make sense of ourselves by reference to something or someone else who is not us. Indeed within all collective identities there are unities constructed through the exercise of exclusion and closure (Bhab- ha, 1994; Hall, 1993). But, national identity as a specific form of collective identity is not necessarily co-terminus with one single cultural identity. It is not fixed, it changes, it is open to resistance and can be challenged and support for and ad- herence to a national identity has to be won within systems of social relations and representations. As a consequence a sense of identity, whilst perhaps experienced

in a personal manner, only becomes meaningful through acts of social communication and the acceptance of agreed language(s), symbols and rituals. In the construction of national identity, cultural nationalism provides these in abundance and the mass media are eager mediators of them.

National Identity, Cultural Production and Television

The cultural production of a national identity, which attempts to obliterate different social interests and positions of individuals and groups in order to unite them within a common national framework, is frequently fostered by television. Television provides a shared social experience which is important in the formation of any type of collective identity based on a common symbolic reference system, in which sameness and difference can be identified. Television plays a significant part in winning the hearts and minds of members of nation states through the shared experiences it offers to audiences across numerous social divides, linking them to a shared sense of background and purpose. If national identity is fostered by the circulation of significant symbols, television has become the means par excellence for achieving this as part of a complex, effective, technological interface which reach- es millions of people. As Anderson (1983) puts it "an American will never meet or even know the names of more than a handful of his fellow Americans. He has no idea of what they are up to at any one time. But he has complete confidence in their steady, anonymous simultaneous activity" (p. 16).

Many national governments have recognised the importance of television in national development, but have feared the consequences of a cultural and media imperialism as potential threats to their power, and have often clamped down on the purchase of the technology that delivers cross border television. Equally, many have used television to promote notions of national identity. This has often been achieved through the promotion of a cultural elitism that hides the identities and his- tories of most citizens. Bhabha (1990) has suggested that the continuing renewal of national identity requires a form of forgetting past origins, ethnicities and places, and television has often been implicated in denials and suppression of the past, as well as in extracting preferred features of national identity and using them to recon- stitute the present and its relationship to the future.

To some extent it is relatively easy for national government to achieve this when they have control over a monopolistic broadcasting context. The difficulty for governments occurs when national terrestrial and new trans-border services are bound together in a potentially volatile relationship. This situation has produced a variety of models of response which range from virtual suppression, to suppressive openness, to illegal openness and to regulated openness (see Chan, 1992). French, Richards and Thomas (2000) have suggested that some governments, especially

1n Asia, are reasserting national development and strategies to maintain cultural distinctiveness by using protectionist policies which deny audiences access to the technology which would facilitate cross border services. However, a more general response of national governments, particularly those which see the impact of trans-border flows as a threat to political and cultural stability, has been to increase state terrestrial services, to improve viewer satisfaction with programming and to provide regulatory legislative and financial incentive for private services to provide effective competition for trans-border television. Often these local private services have had the advantage of being able to deploy local languages which is significant in the relationship between television and national identity because of the importance of language in the process of establishing and maintaining nationhood. Even in the absence of single unifying national language, the use of local languages and dialects in programming can be important in mobilising a sense of national identity. The importance of local languages and dialect is enhanced by the fact that programmes using them seem popular with audiences which national governments recognise and often foster as an important expression of tolerated difference within a given national identity.

Globalisation, Television and National Identity

The globalisation of broadcast media has become a significant factor in understanding television's role in the creation and maintenance of national identity. Globalisation has been seen as an opportunity for change, for the creation of new ideas and new identities. Robins (1991) argued that globalisation fractures the association between cultural and geographical territory and brings with it the potential for developing new identities and the forming of new global communities with common interests, even though geographically widespread. Similarly, Hall (1991) has suggested that globalisation can increase awareness of the local and its characteristics in contrast to national and global perspectives which come from the 'outside'. There is opportunity for new cultural landscapes which Schlesinger (1991) has called 'identity by choice' when new types of communities can be created based on shared values such as consumption, ethnicity, religion or gender. In this new landscape individuals can choose their own identities and the communities to which they wish to belong.

A further development which has cast doubt on the ability of nation states to impose senses of national identity has been the notion of the active audience and of the television text as polysemic. This, together with a growing recognition of the role of gender, ethnicity and other variables in media reception, have been used to suggest that audiences are able in some senses to construct their own meanings from media messages and thus 'resist' media representations of national identity.

The notion of resistance is not unproblematic of course, but when related to Gramsci's notion of hegemony, may have more explanatory power than the Althusserian construction of ideology. For Althusser, the ability of the text to constitute people as "subjects in ideology seems to be so great that resistance is almost impossible", whereas Gramsci's theory of hegemony "characterises social relations as a series of struggles for power", where "the dominant ideology working through the form of a text can be resisted, evaded or negotiated" (Fiske, 1987, pp. 40-41). But, as Shohat and Stam emphasise "resistant readings, for their part, depehd on a certain cultural or political preparation that primes the spectator to read critically .... Whilst disempowered communities can decode dominant programming through a resistant perspective, they can do so only to the extent that their collective life and historical memory have provided an alternative framework for understanding" (Shohat and Stam, 1994, p. 354).

In addition to the notion of resistance, the concepts of heterogeneity and hybridisation have been used to suggest that globalisation can sometimes generate a cultural backlash, in turn leading to the resurgence, or perhaps even the invention, of new local traditions and identifications. This position highlights the tension between the global and the local, which has emerged as an important issue underpinning theories of glocalisation and cultural hybridisation. Hogan (1999) has suggested that an understanding of this is crucial to the analysis of the transformation of national identities under conditions of globalisation. Indeed, Robertson (1995) sees globalisation precisely as a synthesis of the global and the local, and Friedman (1994, 1995) similarly, has suggested that the global, local, dynamic opens up new possibilities for identities as balances of power shift, and, echoing Schlesinger (1991), where there is an increasing diversification of identities worldwide.

The State, Broadcasting and National Identity: Some International Comparisons

Before discussing the relevance of these issues to Cyprus I want to provide a broader empirical context by exploring some of the tensions between central control, determination, direction and resistance in other parts of the world. A particularly interesting example is China, a country with diverse cultural orientations, dialects and ethnicities, and where national identity and cohesiveness has been a key issue in the development of a Chinese sense of self. According to Pan and Man Chan (2000), in recent decades the use of television to strengthen national cohesiveness and to promote cultural heritage has become a key issue for policy makers, broadcasters and intellectuals alike. Indeed, they argue, China's television system, since its birth in 1958, has been structured as an integral part of the communist political system and has been an important means by which a political and cultural discourse has been created to reproduce national identity. However in the en-

vironment of a global television market, policy makers and broadcasters in China clearly recognise that Chinese television has two specific tasks. One is "to protect their own turf by resisting the invasion of foreign television" by providing their own high quality programmes, and the other is to export Chinese programmes to the world, "to introduce China to the world and to establish a positive image of socialist China" (Yang, 1997, p. 54). These two aims are at odds with the forces of marketisation and the emergence of a global television economy (Ran Wei, 2000).

At the end of the day the Chinese television viewer probably experiences a more common symbolic environment than viewers anywhere else in the world because of the continued communal narrative of the Chinese as a nation. For example, television news remains highly controlled partly by the additions of previews and post-broadcast reviews but is mainly facilitated by the news monopoly of Central China Television. According to Pan and Chan (op cit) there are two problems; time and language. China's territory extends across three time zones and when CCTV starts its nation-wide news broadcast at 7:00 p.m. Beijing time the western regions are still in the late afternoon. Further, whilst all CCTV programmes are in Mandarin about 10% of the country's population do not speak Mandarin as well as living in regions that are one or even two time zones away from Beijing. CCTV overcomes this difficulty by broadcasting from Beijing towards these regions which local stations then transmit at the same time as in Beijing. In some areas the news and other programmes are then later re-broadcast with voice-overs in local languages at more appropriate times, but no local news programme can be broadcast during the Beijing news time slot. It is in this way that the 'core' of the Chinese nation, partly fostered by CCTV's monopoly, is able to co-exist alongside local identities. Pan and Chan (op cit) suggest, however, that the so-called "national audience" whilst having some empirical basis probably masks the heterogeneity and pluralism of the television audience in China, particularly in the regions. Even in China acceptance of a national identity has to be won.

In Israel, the media have been seen to be a major factor in shaping national identity and, in this respect, played a crucial role in the aftermath of the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin in November 1995. Peri (1997) argues that although Israel's me- dia had traditionally been seen as a central arena in which debates about national identity would be democratically played out, in this case, dominant groups used the event, and the media, to both reintegrate society and to reinvent it by broadening the hegemonic coalition through a deconstruction of Rabin's biography, and using martyrdom, to reconstitute the mainstream secular Zionist story (p. 436). His analysis of national media coverage of this event graphically demonstrates how the media, particularly television, however influenced, can play a major role in defining collective identity when societies are deeply divided. However, the suppression of public debate in this case produced only a temporary collective portrait of society

rather than the re-moulding of a whole collective memory and identity (p. 456).

In· countries that are multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious such as Malaysia, measures have sometimes been taken to promote integration and a sense of harmonious relations among diverse ethnic groups and in many cases this has seen a conscious effort on the part of governments to utilise broadcasting as an agent to achieve this goal. Anuar and Nain (2000) have argued that it is in this larger context of national development and national integration that broadcast me- dia, particularly television are perceived by the Malaysian state. They suggest that this policy has produced an emphasis on the Malayan language as the national lan- guage of Malaysia to the extent that other languages such as Mandarin and Tamil have become marginalised in nationa·l broadcasting. Television programmes are produced in the Malay language with a strong emphasis on the culture and religion of the Malays who are the majority and dominant ethnic community in the country. Anuar and Nain cite the perceived threats of western-originated programming, available through satellite sources, as having paved the way for even·tighter gov- ernment controls on reception with severe penalties for being in possession of satellite dishes which are powerful enough to receive forbidden channels. They ar- gue that government policy emphasises the importance of religious values to the extent that religion has become firmly entangled within the political and cultural as- pects of the country's national identity, helping to legitimise the actions of organisa- tions like the National Censorship Board, which acting on behalf of the government, has extensive powers to evaluate cultural products, not in relation to their artistic merits but, primarily, on the basis of the sensitivity of their contents. Clearly, in Malaysia there are important links between national identity and the role of broad- casting.

Similarly, religion, the state and national identity and broadcasting are also intimately connected in Pakistan. According to Tahir (2000), despite frequent changes in government and the general absence of a national media policy for Pakistan, broadcasting seems to embrace certain continuing themes. Firstly, and most importantly, is that programmes should not harm the ideology of Pakistan nor should they challenge Islam. These are enshrined particularly in the heavy control of news and current affairs broadcasting and in the codes of conduct that surround advertising on Pakistani television. But even in Pakistan, governments have not always been able to totally control broadcasting. Tahir suggests that about 20% of the population have access to foreign channels through satellite dishes which means that a quite significant number of probably quite influential viewers are in a position to switch sources if they do not like the fare of state terrestrial broadcasters. Indeed once private sources exist, national networks have to compete with them and, in a country like Pakistan, television is important because of the low levels of literacy. Radio and television have become major sources of news, information, entertain-

ment and views of the world since the number of people reached by broadcasting is far greater than the combined circulation of all newspapers and magazines in Pakistan. That is perhaps why to date successive governments have refused to allow any private terrestrial channels to produce their own news and current affairs programmes so that Pakistani based private channels have to broadcast what might be described as quite heavy doses of propaganda dished out by Pakistan Television (PTV). But Pakistan, like so many countries in Asia has responded to the growth of cross border television by launching language sensitive channels. For ex- ample in 1998 it introduced 'Inter-Asia TV' for the Urdu speaking population of the continent, and PTV World, Pakistan's informational television channel, is now avail- able to ex patriots in the Gulf region as well as in Europe.

Although in many respects, worlds apart from Pakistan, television in Singapore both reflects and reinforces a strong national agenda. Hukill (2000) argues that the political environment of Singapore is a major factor influencing much of Singapore's television, especially its news and current affairs programmes where local news presentations systematically present a positive view of national government which he suggests is partly to do with the perceived duty of local television broadcasters to uphold the importance of good stable government. This is a situation which stands in sharp contrast to notions of independent checks and balances and the freedom of individuals and organisations to offer criticism of the state and its poli- cies professed by many western democratic societies. Hukill makes the point that, more so than the press in Singapore, television is regarded as particularly sensitive to the political agenda of what Singapore is to be a nation. While there is an ab- sence of direct censorship of television programming in Singapore, whereby pro- grammes are cut directly by government official censors prior to broadcasts, never- theless a set of "out of bounds markers" have been established which promote a high degree of self censorship and keep programme acquisition and production within 'safe areas'. However, he goes on to suggest, censors at local broadcast sta- tions do sometimes edit scenes from imported programmes which they believe may possibly overstep these boundaries and furthermore act as gatekeepers on locally produced programmes through the monitoring of scripts. But whilst there has been some acceptance of more issue-based programming, open discussion and debate of political matters directly relating to Singapore is still strictly 'out of bounds' except when promoting the government's official views and lines of reasoning (Hukill, **2000).**

Singaporian national culture draws clear distinctions between cultural identity (Chinese, Malay and Indian) and national identity (Singaporean). Normally the elements of cultural identity, ethnicity, language, religion, cultural traditions are given by birth and history but Singaporean identity had to be created and nurtured after it was forced to leave the Malaysian Federation in 1965. At that time Singapore had

no sense of nationhood and was forced to re-invent itself as a sovereign nation state. The role of language in this process has been highly significant particularly in language preferences in broadcasting. Mandarin has been promoted for many years as an official language in Singapore, but the use of English is growing as the lingua franca of this city state. Many ethnic Chinese now use or:ily English and in the Malay section of the population English and Malay are used interchangeably. Further, English has become the official language in many situations and is pre- ferred by younger educated people in social settings. Whilst there is also a local patois called Singlish, which is widely used by Singaporeans in casual conversa- tion, Singlish traditionally had a low status in broadcasting and for many years was forbidden although from about 1995 it could be heard in popular entertainment. Singlish is, however, significantly absent from news and current affairs, where only 'proper' English and Mandarin are used by presenters (Hukill, 2000).

Other languages can of course be heard on Singaporean broadcasting. But the domination of English and Mandarin is a striking instance of broadcasting following the national political agenda. Whilst cultural differences can be tolerated, even encouraged, national identity in Singapore is not co-terminus with cultural identity. National identity has much more to do with Singapore's place in the global and regional economy, with its desire to position itself as a major broadcasting hub in East and South East Asia. In which case it makes good sense to encourage the use of the two most politically and economically influential languages in that part of the world. Whilst on the one hand it may seem strange to promote a national identity through the old colonial language of English, on the other, Singapore's national identity is based on its economic and political identity in which language has no intrinsic value, but is an important utility achieving national goals.

In Canada, a country divided along a language barrier, where nine provinces out of ten are English speaking with Quebec being strongly Francophone, broadcasting has been shown to strengthen this linguistic separateness, rather than to contribute to developing one national cultural identity. Indeed, broadcasting in Francophone Quebec is so successful in reinforcing the collective (national) identity of the Quebecois citizens, that it has made the quest for a single Canadian identity unattainable. Canada serves as a striking example of how language preference defines choice of programmes and how, in particular in Quebec, the cultural strength of the French language has been reinforced by audiences' close identification with it through their broadcasting preferences (Filion, 1996).

National Identity and Language in Cyprus

So far I have discussed some of the theoretical and conceptual approaches to the study of national identity, nationalism and national cultures. I have argued that

acceptance of a national identity has to be won and that discourses of identity are crucial to this process. I have further suggested that the media, particularly television, continue to play a significant part in these struggles sometimes because of the influence exerted by national governments on national broadcasters, but always through the representation of national symbols, goals and ideals. I briefly discussed some of these issues in relation to a small number of countries in other parts of the world, and suggested that they have a global significance. I contend, therefore, that the interplay between television and national identity in Cyprus, whilst to some extent having its own distinctive features, can be seen to be reminiscent of patterns found elsewhere in the world. In the contexts I examined a continuing theme was the importance of language in the construction of national identity. This is no less true of Cyprus and it is to a discussion of the relationships between language use and national identity in Cyprus that I now turn.

Language is important in the mobilisation of the feelings that underpin national identity in two important ways. Firstly, it itself is a symbol of national identity, Greeks speak Greek, the French speak French and so on, but secondly it is the carrier of most other symbols of national identity. Of course some of these, most notably a national flag are essentially visual rather than verbal symbols, and are sometimes ambiguous or the result of compromise. For example Tzermias (1994) has suggested that the flag of Cyprus, which according to its Constitution had to be neutral, was not the expression of a unified national consciousness but a makeshift solution (p. 84). Verbal language, by contrast can, according to Van den Buick and Van Poeke (1996), fulfil the double function of serving as a means of affirming oneself as a group or community in respect to others, as well as strengthening its unity and bridging differences within it (p. 220). For example, they demonstrate that in Flanders, the Netherlands and German speaking Switzerland, traditional public service broadcasters, were explicitly involved in the nation building projects of their communities through the language policies they adopted (p. 229).

National identity is a complex matter in Cyprus and the deployment of languages is testament to this. The study of language use in Cyprus provides some insights into the tensions that are inherent in the creation and maintenance of a Cypriot national identity. This section deals with two related issues. Firstly the influence of English and its dominance in Cyprus and secondly the interplay of language and identity in Cyprus.

The issue of the use of English language in Cyprus is concerned with understanding colonial legacies and the way these influence conceptions of national identity. Papapavlou writing in 1997 considered the extent of English language use in Cyprus and its implication for national identity. He argued that the lexical influence of the English language seemed prevalent in areas such as sports, entertainment

and fashion, a trend which is reported as happening in several other languages, for example in Italian, where Pulcini (1997) demonstrated that a large proportion of English borrowings in Italian are found in broadcasting and the written mass media, particularly in popular literature and the fields of sport, music and entertainment. English is of course the lingua franca of international communication and media strongly underscored by the Hollywood film industry and US television productions which are marketed globally. Indeed, without recourse to dubbing or subtitling Eng- lish can be heard practically throughout the world, and the status of the English lan- guage within a given national context can be gauged by the extent to which pro- grammes are bought from English speaking nations and transmitted in non-English speaking countries without translation. (For a discussion of English language pro- grammes on Cyprus television see Roussou in this volume.)

Papapavlou argues that in Cyprus language has acquired an important role in defining the identity of Greek Cypriots which is not to say that the problem of national identity is solely related to language use but rather that language is an important feature of the creation, maintenance and negotiation of national identity. Panayiotou (1996) further argues that in the Greek world, language change has indicated deep crises in values and that language issues often become sensitive indicators of struggles being fought against enemies or adversaries. In particular she suggests that the crisis of values amongst Cypriots originates from their attempt to acquire a western European identity. In an earlier study Papapavlou (1988) identified two factors that appear to be particularly important and significant in an openness to the English language, these were positive feelings that Cypriots have towards foreign people and towards foreign languages per se.

If English is conceived as a global language then there is no doubt that the global meets the local in broadcasting in Cyprus and that both co-exist side by side. For example Pavlou (1992) examined the use of the Cyprus dialect in radio commercials and found that products that are typically Cypriot, like the halloumi type of cheese, or products that are locally produced for example traditional pastries, or products that reflect some traditional values of Cypriot society, for example dowry items are usually advertised using the Cypriot local dialect. On the other hand where advertisers wish to create a sense of sophistication, elegance or modernity, the use of standard modern Greek or even, occasionally English is to be found. Not everyone welcomes this and Christofides (1993) criticises the media for introducing loan words and foreign expressions and argues for the use of 'proper' and 'correct' Greek. Further, Pavlou (1993) argues that the Greek language in Cyprus is sup- pressed by those who use English in their official and daily activities and that to some extent this is reinforced by media practices who use, in his view, 'unneces- sarily' so many foreign words in their reports. The implications of this may be seri- ous according to Babiniotis (1993) who has argued that it is not merely the pres-

ence and use of English loans in Cyprus that matter, but rather the attitudes and feelings of supremacy, elegance and importance that Cypriots associate with the use of English. But at the end of the day, according to Papapavlou, all of this is not terribly significant because, as he argues, the lexical influence of English in Cyprus is small with less than 500 English loans used in the dialect. This is much smaller than those used in other languages, for example Japanese and Italian. Further, the impact of English loans is lessened by the fact that they appear relatively infrequently in print and in broadcast media and offer little threat to the Greek character of the Cypriot dialect. Nevertheless, as he acknowledges, there is a fear that this usage could grow as a result of globalisation and the internationalisation of television in Cyprus and turn into an Anglo-Cypriot idioma.

The significance of language use in Cyprus has also been explored by Sciriha (1995, 1996). She argues that languages act as depositories of indigenous traditions particularly where outside influences may pose threats. She points to the history of language use in Malta, an island with not dissimilar characteristics to Cyprus and shows how for the Maltese the indigenous language spoken there acted as a repository of all that was Maltese during long centuries of colonial rule (Vassalo, 1997, p. 232). She argues that in these situations language serves as a powerful symbol of national identity, but also works instrumentally in the hands of indigenous leaders in the construction of a national identity in the struggle for independence and freedom.

It is on this basis that she discusses the findings of a quite comprehensive study of language use in Cyprus and its relationship to senses of national identity. She finds overwhelming evidence that the Cypriot dialect is the language for the family and informal occasions and that it is in this context that the language is transmitted and learnt. By contrast, standard modern Greek is the language of education and official organisations such as government departments and the Church. Language use is related to social class in that whilst the use of the Greek Cypriot dialect is widespread in all social groupings, higher social classes are more likely to declare an understanding and willingness to speak this language than those in lower socio-economic groups. This relationship is also found in relation to English. For exam- ple in her study, 63% of respondents claimed a spoken competence in English and, most interestingly, nearly 19% claimed solely to understand this language. The association between social class and English use is extremely strong in socio-economic groups a) and b) where, in both cases, over 90% of respondents spoke this language. If English is a high-status language, closely followed by standard modern Greek what is the status of the Cypriot dialect? The findings of Sciriha's survey show that, although the Cypriot dialect is overwhelmingly the most common everyday medium of communication respondents' attitudes towards it are somewhat ambivalent. Rating exercises she carried out show that standard modern Greek holds

a very prestigious place when compared with the Greek Cypriot dialect. Yet, whilst the Cypriot dialect is very robust, and alive and well, the majority of Cypriots perceive its use to be declining, although the data generated by Sciriha show the exact opposite. This discrepancy can possibly be explained by an examination of the intricate relationship between politics, identity and language in Cyprus.

On the one hand since the Greek Cypriot dialect is so widely used it is unquestionably a very visible marker of Cypriot identity. Its vitality is guaranteed not by the institutional support of official organisations like schools, universities, government departments and the Church, but rather by its numerical dominance since, overwhelmingly, this is what most Greek Cypriots speak. So, on the one hand the Cypriot dialect stands for Cypriot national identity, but on the other hand it undermines the concept of *enosis,* unification with Greece which has been a significant feature of Cypriot politics since 1960. Sciriha argues that in choosing a language people are not simply selecting an instrument for understanding and communication but are also defining a world view and portraying a sense of their position in it.

Language Use, Television and National Identity

So what has all of this to do with television? There is a wealth of evidence from around the world to show that audiences tend to select programmes broadcast in their first or preferred language. Of course, this choice is sometimes limited by programme and language availability, but the issue becomes very interesting when audiences have a choice of programming in two or even more languages in which they are competent. For many people in Cyprus this is often the case. If globalisation, deregulation and competition bring access to multiple television channels, this has important implications for national identity. The language preference of pro- gramme makers and audiences provides an important means both for explaining choice and expressing identity. The languages we choose to operate with, and the context in which we choose to utilise them, say much about ourselves and this is no less true of the television programmes and the channels we choose to watch. If na- tional identity is in a constant state of renegotiation, and if audiences are to some extent active and choice-making, then their engagement with television is important in understanding processes by which this negotiation takes place and how national identities are, momentarily at least, secured.

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THE LANGUAGE OF TELEVISION AND NATIONAL IDENTITY IN CYPRUS

Nayia Roussou

Abstract

The present article examines the relationship between the language(s) used in television programmes on Greek-Cypriot television channels and the national or ethnic identity of Greek-Cypriots, after the Turkish invasion of 1974. In a globalising world, with Cyprus sharing in the homogenisation processes, the shift of preferences of Cyprus audiences, in the last five years, from the English-language to Greek and Cyprus productions in the Greek Demotic and the Cyprus Dialect (broadcast in complementary or even competitive relationships), present interesting insights into the connection of television language with the national or ethnic identity of Greek-Cypriots. The article also renders further evidence that the notion of nationhood fading away into globalising processes, is not only premature, but in the case of Cyprus, quite unrealistic, as indigenous territorial, political and national problematics, illustrate the particular complexities existing in the globalisation processes which are universally developing today.

Cyprus and its National Identity After Independence

Cyprus is a country that emerged into the status of a new state, gaining its independence in 1960 under a problematic constitution, after four years (1955-59) of internal unrest and fighting.[1] This phase which occurred towards the end of a long period of British colonial rule (1878-1959) led the country to a state of political life during which it had to face all the problems, conflicts and difficulties of adjustment in economic, social and cultural areas, which new nations usually encounter. The issue of the formation and development of a national, social or cultural identity is very much an issue at stake in Cyprus as a result, as in any other new state.

Thomas (1997, p.3) defines national identity as follows: "National identity is often taken to mean a shared structure of feeling, a largely imagined consciousness, that is reinforced both through life's daily routines, as well as through ritualised, symbol-

laden celebrations of nationhood."

Thomas (ibid, pp. 4-5) also considers "the right to culture" or the "inherited bag-. gage of culture and its interpretation (through communication channels) as the inalienable right of every nation". He also stresses that "in our media-saturated environment the mass media are a primary source for meanings, understandings and interpretations on a host of issues including those related to the question of national identity."

Featherstone (1997, p. 109), on the other hand, stresses the importance of discourses, images and practices in building allegiance to a nation. Television, he claims, with its functions of "instanciation" and "simultaneity", can definitely promote forcefully this forming of a national totality (ibid).

As Rokkan (in Richards, 1995) proposes, one of the main conflicts in a new state is the "identity crisis", i.e. the crucial initial challenge in the establishment and development of a common culture as well as the development of media and agencies for the socialisation of future citizens into a community of social codes, values, memories and symbols - in brief a common history.

This identity crisis has indeed become a sharp issue in the historical development of nation-states and generally all new states, and is still of crucial importance in the inter-connectedness of these new states with their new technology and new media systems (all instruments of culture) all the more so, because these instruments are not indigenous essentially; they are imported from the civilisations of more developed countries - that is, America and the states of Northern Europe. The financial, social and cultural forces that have to be integrated by new political conditions, as a result, initiate, in newly emergent nations - Cyprus not excluded - an intricate pattern of relationships and priorities.

One can say that in the case of most newly-formed nation-states, there is, as in the case of classical Hellenism, a "distinction between *ethnos* (the people) and *kratos* (the state) which played a significant role in political philosophy" (Friedman, 1995, p. 118).

In the case of Cyprus, "ethnos" and "kratos" (ibid) have not been led by historical developments to a conflation and the post-colonial status of the country never allowed it, as a result, to develop into a "nation-state". But other phenomena, like that of nationalism, conventionally connected with post-colonialism, have been present in the Cyprus post-colonial years after the 1960 Independence.

After 1960, the Enosis-with-Greece movement in the Island[2] still existing at the

time, became blurred and was ultimately relegated to historical nostalgia, in spite of the fact that mainland Greeks and Greek Cypriots shared the same culture. This, according to Kyriacos Markides, was due to a number of differences in the political and economic institutions in the structure of Greek and Cyprus society: "Although mainland Greeks and Greek Cypriots shared the same culture, the structure of their societies and their political and economic institutions were diametrically different and often contradictory. Cyprus was spared the two world wars, the Asia Minor dis- aster of 1922 and the bloody Greek civil war of the 1940's. The Cypriots were able to develop their social and economic institutions relatively unhampered" (Markides, 1977, p. 78).

The continuous modernising process in the Island, however after Independence, was not the beginning of a new era of peace in the Island, but the beginning of a sharp, inter-communal cleavage between the Greek-Cypriot and the Turkish-Cypriot communities, known henceforth, as the Cyprus conflict. This culminated in the eruption of fighting between Greek and Turkish-Cypriots in 1963 and led to the eventual self-enclavement of the Turkish Cypriots, in the Turkish quarter of Nicosia and other parts of the Island.

The inter-communal problems arising from the ineffectiveness of the London-Zurich agreements, as illustrated above, together with the powerlessness of President Makarios to solve these problems, made other issues even sharper: the question of *Enosis* was still a major issue with disloyal political Government opponents - and the existence of terrorist group EOKA B, added to the tension in the Island. Furthermore, the dictatorship at the helm of the Greek government made things even worse and eventually paved the way to the coup of 1974. This gave occasion for the invasion of the Island by the Turkish troops, in July, 1974, described by Groom (in Koumoulides, ed, 1986, p. 128) in the following words: "An important benchmark occurred in the Cyprus conflict in 1974, when, following the coup d'etat against Archbishop Makarios and the subsequent Turkish military intervention, there was a territorial consolidation of the two communities."

The de facto geographical separation between the two communities which followed, and the final consolidation of the two communities in their individual ethnic and cultural status, led to the final abandonment of any idea about a unified na- tional state.

Strictly speaking, of course, according to De Vos (1995, p. 20) "nationality is indistinguishable from ethnicity". But whereas nationhood can embrace diverse ethnic groups in the same politically unified system, ethnicity refers to common traditions among a community of people, which can include "folk religious beliefs and practices, language, a sense of historical continuity and common ancestry or place

of origin" (ibid, p. 18).

The resulting separation and consolidation in the cultures of the two communities in Cyprus, is not, therefore surprising, as cultural and national identity, for many people cannot be distinguished, again according to De Vos, (ibid) "especially when ethnic identity and a national territorial identity have been united historically." And this territorial identity, especially after 1974, with the division of the island, played a decisive role in the historical conflation of the national and ethnic identities of the Greek-Cypriots, on one hand and the Turkish-Cypriots on the other.

The result of this territorial division, and the accompanying dislocation of the national state of Cyprus after the invasion, was, therefore, not just a territorial, or ethnic, but a socio-cultural consolidation as well. The national identities of the two communities have evolved (subjectively) along parallel lines in a triple direction: on the Greek side, people tend to consider themselves either as "Greeks" (the affiliation being with Greece, the motherland), "Greek Cypriots" or "Cypriots". Generally, one could say there is a Helleno-centric drive and a Cypro-centric drive which lat- ter matured some years ago, into the formation of the Neo-Cyprian Association, that has drawn since, a lot of political criticism. Whereas Cypro-centrism was limited to the traditional left-wing movement before 1974, the spectrum was widened to in- clude followers from other political parties and ideologies, with the Association pointing out lessons to be realised by the Cypriots: love of the country by all ethnic communities, as well as a "democratic way of life", in place of the obstacles pre- sented by former chauvinistic tendencies.

However, in spite of the fact that the Association's positions were in time accepted by members of right and left wing political parties, the semiology, the values and identification symbols of the three groups ("Greeks", "Greek-Cypriots" and "Cypriots") like the Greek or Cyprus flag or religious symbols, became "radically different" (Peristianis, 1995, p. 133).

At the same time, in the Turkish sector, a similar pattern of cultural nationalism, appears to exist with people identifying themselves as 'Turks", "Turkish-Cypriots", (strongly affiliated with mainland Turkey) or just "Cypriots", with a strong emphasis on their "Cypriotness" (citizens of the Cypriot state).

Other than this common identification trend however, there are more ethnic/cultural differences between the two communities today, than there are similarities in spite of their common wish for self-determination.

So, whereas the conflation of ethnicity and nationhood is a natural process among ethnic groups claiming self-determination (Gillespie, 1995, p. 10) in the case

of Cyprus citizens, this claim has brought about the opposite result - a cleavage between the ethnicity and nationhood, of the two communities (Greek/Turkish), contrary to the conflation of ethnicity and nationhood within each respective community. This is not surprising, as Gillespie (ibid) herself suggests that "ethnicity, as consciousness of shared ethnic identity tends to crystallise in situations where people of different backgrounds come into contact or share the same institutions of politi- cal systems." This sharing of similar political or cultural systems was absent in the case of the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus, after 1963.

Grossberg (1989, p. 33) defines ethnicity as the "the astonishing return to the political agenda of all those points of attachment which give the individual some sense of place and position in the world, whether these be in relation to particular communities, localities, territorialities, languages, religions, or cultures". This kind of crystallisation has been absent, as to the nation of Cyprus: its ethnic communities - Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots - have been and still are caught in a painful process of survival, counter to a political problem and a climate of dispersed communities, drawing strength from their individual language, religion, territoriality and culture, sometimes beyond the borders of the state of Cyprus: Greek-Cypriots - looking to Greece - and Turkish Cypriots to Turkey.[3]

It is no coincidence, therefore, that the two communities in Cyprus have, for one, developed distinct cultural elements that have given them, especially after 1974, a feeling of separate ethnicity and "place-bound nationalism" which has negated the other side. This has been one of the main impediments in the way of forming a unitary nation-state in Cyprus, as would have been the case in any other country coming out of colonialism. A nation-state involves "coherence and integrity of identity" according to Morley & Robins (1995, p. 24). This has been lacking in the newly established state of Cyprus, as the differences between the two communities did not allow them to respond to the requirements for the construction of a nation-state: "The construction of nation states involves the elimination of complexity, the extrusion or marginalisation of elements that compromise the 'clarity' of national attachment. This process was about the purification of space and of identity. The nation state does not easily tolerate difference" (ibid, p. 23).

Kyriacos Markides, referring to Cyprus realities, describes this decisive lack of homogeneity, which was one of the historical cornerstones of the modern nation-state in Europe, in the following words: "A durable republic cannot be maintained when Turkish Cypriots celebrate the twentieth of July, the invasion date, as a national holiday and Greek Cypriots treat it as a day of mourning. Nor is the diligent commemoration by Greek Cypriots of the Greek War of Independence of 1821 and the Greek Cypriot rebellion of 1955 conclusive to intercommunal trust" (Markides, 1977, pp. 185-6).

Plamenats (1973, pp. 23-24) has proposed that nationalism is a "cultural phenomenon and a desire to preserve or enhance a people's national or cultural identity, when that identity is threatened, or the desire to transform or even create it, where it is felt to be inadequate or lacking". So the phenomenon of nationalism in post-colonial conditions is not strictly speaking distinct from the cultural identity of a people. In the present volume, the article by Professor Mike Richards titled "National Identity: Cyprus and Global Contexts", contributes further approaches to the above, much discussed issues about national identities in our times.

Having established, however, in the present paper, the overall problems of national, versus ethnic identity in Cyprus - a new dichotomised state with modernising Western institutions - it will be interesting to move on to the recent media developments in the Island, as the media is a powerful tool in socialisation, but also in the spread of western practices in contemporary times.

Media Developments in Cyprus and Globalisation Issues

The radical changes in the electronic mediascape, brought on by independent broadcasting in Cyprus, after 1990, with the introduction of pluralism and the commercialisation of both radio and television placed a new set of values before Cyprus audiences.

The end of the monopoly by the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation, in 1990, signified two things: on one hand, this station had to review its policies and broadcast contents in order to effectively face competition, in the context of an unfolding, antagonistic scene. This also meant that with the de facto partition of the Island and the illegal television stations functioning in the occupied areas, there was not much use for programmes addressed to the Turkish community and the only station broadcasting any programmes in Turkish, was the public station CyBC, which aired the minimum broadcast time demanded by its Constitutional requirements: a brief news bulletin in Turkish, daily and two half-hour weekly magazine programmes, in Turkish. On the other hand, the complex realities of local-global dialectics and tensions had to be handled not only by the CyBC, but by all the channels that were called upon to contribute to a discourse of media power and authority, with the encounter of the local and the global, the particular and the universal. Globalisation has often been identified with westernisation and the connection of westernisation and the media has been made by many writers: "When people talk about 'Westernisation' they are referring to a whole range of things: the consumer culture of Western capitalism with its now all-too-familiar icons (McDonald's Coca-Cola, Levi Jeans), the spread of music, the adoption of an urban lifestyle consuming extensively the information and entertainment products of the electronic mass media, a range of cultural values and attitudes regarding personal liberty, gender and sexu-

ality, human rights, the political process, religion, scientific and technological rationality and so on."

The use of English in a global context is, of course, another widely accepted practice.

The above range of western or global elements is present in Cyprus realities, as much as it is in the life of many other countries.

One of the proponents of the cultural homogenisation thesis is Meyrowitz, in Gillespie (1985, p. 16). He argues, that "the electronic media, particularly television, has led to a radical restructuring of social life by disrupting the traditional link between culture and geography, allowing people to escape from forms of identity forged by the relation between persons and the 'symbolic place' identical with geographical locality." Meyrowitz (ibid) proposes that the media are destroying our sense of "locality" and the "popular search for 'roots' and the resurgence of concern with ethnic identity, are signs of the decay of group identity, rather than of its regeneration."

Mckay and O'Sullivan (1999, p. 2) further propose that "Culture cannot be understood without foregrounding the media." And almost a decade earlier, Arjun Appadurai (in Featherstone, 1990) argues that "communication systems and the media have been deeply implicated in the development of modernity" and that "modern times are constituted partly through their *mediascapes,* as the media not only provide information but also have profound implications for forms of identity" (ibid). Meyoritz (1985, p. 308) will specify the concept even more definitively by arguing that television has led to a new reconfigured social order: He uses the notion of a 'sense of place' which raises questions of identity and mediated versions of space and place to explain the profound change caused by television - i.e. identities arise and are shaped in part through changing mediated versions of space and place. Television with its own generic semiotics (camera shots and movement, lighting and props), as well as the broadcast language contents are therefore, today, a vital factor in the cultural and national identity of any country.

The commercialisation of television in the Island, therefore, with its inherent commodification has bestowed upon thirsty audiences all the boons of an imported, Western culture with global (simulacrum) models and trends and lifestyles mediated on a number of channels, in English-language programmes. Parallel to this, of course, Cyprus television has also been featuring programmes in Standard Modern Greek (the Demotic) and the Cyprus dialect, or in a combination of the two. These are programmes respectively imported from Greece or produced in Cyprus. It is also appropriate to indicate at this point that after 1974, no programmes in the

Turkish language were broadcast by any channel, apart from the CyBC, as mentioned earlier.

Hall in Gillespie (1995, p. 18) maintains that "globalisation does have the power to contest and dislocate national identities, in that it has a pluralizing impact, opening up new possibilities and positions of identification". Gillespie (1995, p. 21) herself, further epitomises the role of the media in the global/local dialectics as follows: "Media" she says, "mediate cultures; and as cosmopolitans read media, they translate between territorial, local, diasporic, national and global cultures and identities."

Patterson, in Richards (1995, p. 57) further reinforces the relationship between identity and television when he comments that "it is clear that national identities are one expression of collective identities, complex in their formation and widely represented on television."

Preston (1997, p. 6) in emphasising the role of language in our lives, will point out that: "Our idea of what belongs to the realm of reality is given for us in the lan- guage that we use." The tensions therefore between globalisation and localisation are not irrelevant to the use of language on television.

"Glocalisation", a third term initially used in marketing to roughly signify "global localisation" (Robertson, 1994, p. 174) has also been taken up in the media and also seems to apply to Cyprus- produced programmes which try to use global techniques or appeals. Some such glocal programmes produced by other countries - e.g. Latin American tele-novelas, have succeeded, while others have failed. The "site-specific" histories of individual countries are certainly a factor to account for, and so are their particular economy, the politics, society, ecology and culture. This should not be surprising, as Smith says (in Ferguson, 1995) because the Media "must operate within an historically defined context; and today that context is one in which national identity and ethnic community, far from withering away, is the dominant mode of human association and action."

One of the primary building-blocks of national identity is language. The significance of language as an expression of resistance and a core-symbol and core-value in the process of identity - national, ethnic, or cultural - according to Van den Buick and Van Poecke (1996), reflects the fact that language is the carrier of all other notions or symbols of nationhood, partially because it is made into a prime symbol by intellectuals and other influential figures adept at its interpretation. The same authors (ibid) are very specific when they maintain that "language often constitutes the most important embodiment of ethnicity and the means for distinguishing 'us' from 'them'."

Television language and identity processes, are therefore strongly related factors in the life and identity of any nation, the relationship always emerging upon close examination.

Television Language and Identity in Cyprus

Naisbitt (in "Megatrends, 2000") quoted in Doyle (1993, p. 82) states that "language is the frequency on which culture is transmitted." And Sarup (1998, p. 156) believes that "communal memory is sustained by language."

This complexity therefore, in the formation and representation of national identity on television cannot be separated from the use of language, even though semiotics on television are a complex system of communication, involving, as they do, images, sounds, colour, lighting and production techniques, a distinct audio-visual system of prosody, beyond the use of words to define the televisual representa- tion or reconstruction of reality.

In Cyprus, language itself and, as a result its use in television programmes is, in essence of crucial importance, as there are three languages prevalent on Cyprus home screens: English, Standard Modern Greek and the Cyprus Dialect. This is in perfect accord with language as part of the cultural identity of Cypriots, a theme studied by Lydia Sciriha (1996) in "A Question of Identity: Language Use in Cyprus."

In Cyprus English is widely spoken, while Standard Modern Greek is the basic language of instruction in formal education, on all levels. The Greek-Cypriot Dialect is, on the other hand, generally spoken by the Greek-Cypriots, while Turkish is also a language spoken by only a small part of the Greek-Cypriot population.

Sciriha's research (1996, pp. 104-105) concluded that while English is in reality widely spoken, only about 4% of Greek Cypriots know Turkish, leaving the two languages - Standard Modern Greek and the Greek-Cypriot Dialect, in competition with each other.

It is interesting to identify at this point, the doubts existing around the use of the Cyprus Dialect, in television programmes, in Sciriha's research (ibid, p. 86), bearing in mind that it was conducted after 1990, when independent television with its pluralistic presence had already changed the media scene in Cyprus: Sciriha's conclusions established that the Greek Cypriot Dialect should not be used on television as a language medium, it should not be acquired by children as a first language and that is also considered to be spoken by uneducated people" (ibid).

Furthermore, it is also interesting to refer to Prodromou's (in Tsangaras & Peris-

tianis, 1995, p. 87) argument that the Cyprus Dialect has been losing ground in industrialised (modernised) Cyprus for half a century now. "As it was a dialect corresponding to an 'agricultural traditional society', without great demands on written communication and intellectual (participative) education, it could not be an adequate language instrument or horizon of thought". This "gap", according to Prodromou, was filled by a foreign, international language (English in this case). This has survived colonialism and the "pseudo-dilemma" as he terms it, is whether Standard Modern Greek or English will be the languages of contemporisation in Cyprus.

The above triglossic canvass - English, the Greek Demotic and the Cyprus Dialect - on Cyprus television has, since 1995, gone through significant changes. In a survey conducted by the author (Roussou, 1995), among a sample of 400 11-13-year-olds, the highest percentages for programmes being "regularly" viewed by them, were distributed as follows:

1995	
Programme	%
1. Beverly Hills	57.5
2. Married with Children	49.4
3. Knightrider	41.3
4. Miami Vice	19.7
5. Afetiries - Cypriot	19.7
6. Santa Barbara	13.2
7. Vice Squad - Greek	11.7
8. Anatomy of a Murder - Greek	8.5
9. Adult Zone	7.4

Five of the above top nine programmes were English-language, imported productions and only one was a Greek-language Cyprus production, Afetiries - a youth competition programme, discontinued after 1996 and resumed again in 1998. Two of the productions were Greek programmes with considerably lower percent- ages than the English productions.

In 1997, in a Field Survey conducted again by the author as part of a doctoral dissertation,[4] among a sample of 600 13-18-year-olds, the following programmes led the sample's preferences:

1997			
Programme	**Regularly**	**Always**	**Total%**
1. News at 8.30	32.3	23.7	55.00

2. To Kafenion (The Coffee shop)	20.8	26.0	46.8
3. Kalimera Zoi "Good morning life"	21.3	22.9	44.2
4. Efharisto Savvatovradho (Pleasant Saturday Night)	7.3	16.9	43.12
5. Pater Imon (Our father)	27.5	15.7	43.2
6. Beverly Hills	18.8	21.1	39.9
7. Athlitikes Idhisis (Sports news)	14.2	25.2	39.4
8. Epitelous Mazi (At last, together)	29.0	9.9	38.14
9. !stories tou horiou (Stories from my village)	19.9	19.3	38.12
10. Costas Costa stis Okto (Costas Costa at Eight)	24.4	13.2	37.6

The picture was entirely different in this research. The only English-language programme in the top ten was "Beverly Hills", all the rest being Greek (imported from Greece) and local, Cyprus productions. Even though there was an age differ- ence in the two samples - 11-13 (1995) and 13-18 (1997), subsequent ratings among a more inclusive age-group, indicated similar patterns.

In a Ratings Research report conducted by AMER, for the CyBC.1, among a Pancyprian sample of 1011 people, from 13 to 70 years old, this time, between 25 - 31 May 1997, with the use of the Day-After-Recall Method, the top twelve programmes consisted mainly of Greek-language and Dialect programmes, with only two imported productions in the top list: "Viva" (Latin American) and "Look at the Year" (English). It is of interest that five programmes in the top preferences of the 13-18 age-group were also in the top list of the above sample - 13-70 year-old: Kalimera Zoi, Manolis ke Katina, Epitelous Mazi, Efharisto Savvatovradho and To Kafenion.

In a more recent AGB Survey, among 250 households, between 20 - 26 March 2000, about 900 respondents over 6 years, from all areas of Cyprus recorded their programmes of preference, in the form of Audience shares. Results did not differ very much from those recorded in 1997:

2000

Programme	**Audience Share**
1. Grafio Taxi (Taxi Office)	39.2
2. To Kafenion (ANT.1)	37.5
3. Ke I Pantremeni Ehoun Psihi (Married men also have a Soul)	36.7

4. Angigma Psihis (Touch of the Soul)	35.0
5. Kalimera Zoi	35.2
6. Anaconda	33.2
7. I Lampsi	33.2
8. Konstantinou ke Elenis	32.4
9. Hercules	32.4
10. In the Line of Fire	29.1

Again only "Anaconda" and "In the Line of Fire" are Latin American and American programmes respectively, the rest being Cyprus and Greek productions. The conclusions from all three reports, taken at different time-periods, over the last five years, among different age-group samples, leave no doubt that Cyprus audience preferences have changed over from English-language programmes to Greek and Cyprus productions, a matter which seems to be in consonance with the crystallisation of the national (or ethnic) identity Cyprus society, more especially after 1974, with the territorial consolidation of the ethno-cultural identity of the Greek-Cypriot population.

Television Language Encounters in Cyprus

It is obvious from the above figures and information, that the first level of competition, or encounter between languages on Cyprus television screens - i.e., between English and Greek-language programmes, is also paralleled by the encounter between Greek and Cyprus productions. On the other hand, however, the latter is paralleled by another tier of confrontation, that which occurs between Greek language programmes in the Standard Greek Demotic and the Cyprus productions in the Dialect. A third level of competition presents itself within the Cyprus productions themselves, where the Demotic and the Dialect are juxtaposed through the characters and their relationships in the programmes.

Two examples of this confrontation can, perhaps give us an idea of the tie between the Demotic and the Dialect: "Para Pente" is a funny series featuring both well-known Cyprus actors - and some not so well known, or even completely unknown, but made popular by the series. Sophocles Kaskaounias, playing the fool of the bar, as well as Elena Sawa are such examples of newly-emergent actors in the Cyprus scene. They all keep their real names in the series and the set-up is that of a modern bar which reminds the viewer both of "Kafenion" and could also be considered as the "glocal" version of the popular American series, "Cheers". Standard Modern Greek is used parallel to the Cyprus dialect which at times is the very rough, almost vulgar version, that is used in the villages. Two of the charac- ters who are often in conflict - perhaps also embodying, a cultural encounter, are Sophocles (a Cypriot, using the heavy type of Cyprus dialect and Ntinos, the bar-

man, using Standard Modern Greek).

The presence of Ntinos, a Greek barman and of an outlandish (but refined) lady - Elaine - using the Demotic, versus Sophocles, using the heavy Dialect, create a subterranean linguistic and cultural tension in the programme. The two characters mentioned, consider many Dialect expressions bizarre and incomprehensible and frequently (and ironically) ask Sophocles for clarifications of idiomatic meanings. This tie between the two languages is probably an extra attraction for Cyprus audiences, as this is really what happens in real society: Greek Cypriots are called upon to switch back and forth between the two languages, the struggle for dominance creating a continuous, but unidentified struggle for power.

Another example of the mixed use of the Demotic and the Dialect occurs in one of the most popular programmes on Cyprus TV channels during the last three years "The Coffeeshop." The "Coffeeshop" inmates mostly use the Dialect, except for Mikis, who uses the Demotic. He is also the only person referred to, and addressed by all other characters as *Mr.* Mikis. Apart from his rich social background, or per- haps parallel to that, this could be an indication that anyone speaking Standard Modern Greek (not the Cyprus Dialect) can be considered more learned and com- mands more respect. Another indication that the Demotic is the legitimate lan- guage, the Dialect being the vulgar one, as indicated earlier in the present study (Prodromou, 1995, p. 87). All the rest speak the Cyprus Dialect and throw in, like Stavris does - the leading character of "Kafenion" - phrases in English and Italian. Again, as indicated before, this could be an indication of the substitution of the Cyprus Dialect with foreign languages - English, mostly, or Italian and other lan- guages, as well, instead of the Demotic. One can almost detect a subvert tie in some of the episodes, in the juxtaposition of the Demotic - represented by Mikis - and the Dialect - by all the others: Mikis comes off as the educated but naive fig- ure, essentially a misfit, the others (using the Dialect) come off as pragmatists, tuned to Cyprus social realities and openly enjoying life's pleasures and opportuni- ties.

The above language encounters on television may indicate a tie or competition, but as a whole, they also indicate a language use on television which is coincidental with the territorial division between Greeks and Turks: In spite of sporadic indications of global trends in their television preferences, Greek Cypriots generally prefer programmes both in the Demotic and the Dialect (Greek and Cypriot) this being another indication of the cultural identity coinciding with the national (ethnic) identity (De Vos, 1995, p. 20) as this identity {Greek-Cypriot) has been historical- ly reinforced by both the political and territorial dichotomy of the Island, after 1974. And as Sarup (1998, p. 156) believes, it is "through language that national culture organisesand sustains communal memory."

Television Language and National Culture: A Tie Within a Tie

The use of the Dialect in any country, parallel to the legitimate or more refined language in a country, could, perhaps not carry any special significance, if its juxtaposition with the Demotic, which is the officially adopted legitimate language in Cyprus, was not so pronounced and popular in Cyprus television programmes, for some years now.

Language being an expression of social and cultural values, however, it is important to investigate the matter of this linguistic encounter on television, which, as Kellner (1995, p. 5) points out, "provides materials out of which we forge our very identities."

So the triglossic encounter on television is taking on new dimensions, as English the Demotic and the Dialect seem to be in direct competition on Cyprus television channels, the latter two frequently in the same programme. As a result the strug- gle for the "social distribution of power" through the use of language as an expres- sion of ethnicity, seems to be rising in importance in the struggle of cultures in the Island and in the overall role language on television can play, in the formation and maintenance of national identity. This significant role of language in the latter part of the century is underlined by many authors and more especially, language as resistance, or as the ground on which different cultures (or national lifestyles) thresh out their differences. Bourdieu (1991, p. 60) has his own proposition: "Language is a locus of struggle for power and authority in that some types of language (styles, accents, dialects, codes and so on) are presupposed to be 'correct', 'distinguished' or 'legitimate' in opposition to those which are 'incorrect' or 'vulgar.' Those who use (in speaking or writing) the varieties ranked as acceptable, exert a degree of control over those with the dominated linguistic habitus."

In Cyprus, apart from the tie between Greek and English, both in social realities and in television programmes, we can refer to another tie within a tie, the encounter between the Demotic and the Dialect.

The Standard Greek Demotic and its official use in Cyprus and the inferior standing attributed to the Cyprus Dialect - in spite of the complementarity of their relationship, both in real life and on television, formed one of the issues taken up in the author's already mentioned doctoral study. Here are some of the responses given by the Interviewees in the Study, as to the Demotic and the Dialect and the two respective cultures of Greece and Cyprus: "The programmes we view in the Cyprus Dialect are becoming more usual, like the Greek serials we view. Yes, I think we should maintain the Cyprus Dialect, as it is tradition and we must preserve it."[5]

Other respondents on the other hand, whose parents had a higher level of education, discriminated between the heavy village type of Cyprus dialect and the one spoken in the cities. Phanourios Tamanis,[6] whose parents are philologists, was an example: "At home we speak the Cyprus Dialect, but not the old type, as my parents are philologists and they try to improve our vocabulary. In school, we also speak the Cyprus Dialect, but not the very old, heavy type of the village kind. We speak the Dialect used in the town". This sounded like a direct under-estimation of or apology for the heavier dialect, spoken in the countryside.

Another respondent, Anastassiades,[7] spoke directly of words that must be taken out of the Cyprus Dialect, in an effort to clean it up of foreign words, like, for example, "tsaera" for chair, which comes from English (he said) or "tzisves", the coffee-pot, which comes from Turkish. This of course is true, as there are many foreign influences in the Cyprus Dialect, resulting from different foreign occupations, even though "tzisves" doesn't come from English. This concern, on one hand sounded strange, as it indicated that the sample were not aware that all living languages contain foreign words in their vocabularies. On the other hand, though, it seemed to point back to the fears discussed earlier in the study i.e., that there is an influx of English words in the Greek language, or in the Dialect, which is a type of colonial language dominance that - according to Papapavlou (1997) - threatens the "Helleno-patriotic feelings" of the Greek-Cypriot society with "erosion and eradication of its national identity".

Beyond the Demotic and the Dialect as languages, however, the two cultures behind them - of mainland Greece and of Cyprus - were also compared by respondents interviewed in the author's doctoral study with the following, among other, comments: "Our culture differs from that of Greece. I don't think people care much for each other. I haven't been to Greece, but my father has and he tells me that people walk down the street, angry and thoughtful, or not having this gentle, hospitable disposition, that we in Cyprus have."[8]

Anna Zamba put it differently[9]: "I feel I am a Cypriot, as I was born in Cyprus, but Greek also. We have differences from Greece in language, also the way of life in Greece. Sometimes we copy them, their way of dressing, their habits, their entertainment styles, etc."

And Phanourios Tamanis: "I would say I am a Greek-Cypriot. There are differences between our culture and that of Greece. Not because the spirit is different, but because the economy in Greece is declining, it is not as healthy as the Cyprus economy. So they don't have the same opportunities like we have. They try to safeguard what they have. We - in Cyprus, don't hesitate to give what we have, to help others."

Other views about the two countries, however stressed differences even more: "In Cyprus we are a little oriental. The Greeks are more European in mentality. We are more passive than Greeks. We do not fight for our rights, we accept situations more easily."[10]

Thomas Anastassiades who mostly viewed Cyprus productions stated: "There is a Greek element in me, but I will always remain a Cypriot, a citizen of the Cyprus state and will support Cyprus matters." This is a very clear indication of the strong direction of localism, or particularism versus universalism, in the local-global dialectics around which a lot of television public discourse is conducted.

These strong and repeated reverberations about differences between the cultures of Cyprus and Greece, seem to be in support of views already presented by Markides (1977, p. 78): "Although mainland Greeks and Greek Cypriots shared the same culture, the structure of their societies and their political and economic institutions were diametrically different and often contradictory."

Tzermias (1994) will agree with Markides, in describing the complexity of the Cypriot identity: "It is true, the Greek Cypriots are Greeks. But they have their own peculiarities, in the same way as, for instance, the Cretans have their own features in comparison to the continental Greeks. The same goes for the Turkish Cypriots."

So the encounter of Demotic and Dialect in the national and cultural realities of the Greek-Cypriots, has, for the last five years also developed into a television language tie, within the wider encounter of global English versus Greek, a matter that does deserve further attention and discussion.

Conclusions

In an elaboration of the concept of nationalism and its relationship to globalism, Preston (1997, p. 11) suggests that nationalism has been forced to adjust to the ongoing changes of globalisation, the result being, the supersession of nationhood itself.

Perhaps it is, though a little too soon to subscribe to this supersession in view of the onset of globalisation. One should bear in mind the ways in which nationalism expresses the unique truths and values of a group constituted by some given natural features (via a race, or a language, or a religion, or an ethnicity, or culture or whatever) which must necessarily be asserted and defended against the claims of other different and inferior groups (ibid).

Hall (1992) suggests three possible consequences of globalisation in the dialec-

tics between roots and cultural identities: erosion, strengthening and the emergence of new identities or "new ethnicities" (Gillespie, 1995, p. 17).

At this time and point in their history, it is obvious that Greek Cypriots feel they must defend and reinforce their culture and national identity in view of the territori- al dichotomy and pending political Cyprus conflict, but also in view of the globalis- ing forces they are facing today, by a more widespread use of their language - the Greek Demotic and the Cyprus Dialect. There is, however, another complicacy or even encounter, within an encounter - the Demotic, representing the Greek culture, the Cyprus Dialect, representing the Greek-Cypriot culture, these two languages bearing their own national and ethnic insignia in the locus of struggle between the two cultures, of Greece and Cyprus.

Perhaps the definition of E.P. Thompson of a "culture as a struggle between ways of life" instead of Raymond Williams rendering of culture as "a whole way of life" (Turner, 1996, p. 63) is more to the point in the case of Cyprus national identi- ty. The indications of globalisation versus localisation do not seem to detract from the ongoing processes which sustain a national (cultural) identity based on lan- guage, tradition and roots, even though these processes carry their own local prob- lematics. So the phenomenon of particularisation - with the use of national or eth- nic language - is, at present, parallel to that of globalisation which uses the English language. The competition on one hand, between English, and the Greek Demot- ic and the Cyprus Dialect, is thus matched by a competition between Greek and Cyprus productions, with the cultural norms and concepts transmitted by the pro- grammes in these three languages creating different socio-cultural discourse plateaus. The Greek-Cypriot national identity, is, today, in harmony with the lan- guage and culture mediated in the majority of Cyprus television programmes paral- lel to English-language programmes which are usually platforms for globalised ways of culture and life. The tensions existing between these three types of preva- lent television programmes, has its counterpart in the Cyprus expression of social realities. Developments towards more globalising trends, or the tilting of the bal- ance towards more Greek or more Cyprus productions, are possible future stages in the continuous discourses between identity and television language.

Featherstone (1997, p. 114) describes global-local tensions in the following words: "..The changes which are taking place as a result of the current phase of intensified globalisation can be understood as provoking reactions that seek to redis-*cover* particularity, localism and difference which generate a sense of the limits of the culturally unifying, ordering and integrating projects associated with Western modernity."

Identity, according to Hall (1997, p. 3), is not a matter of "being" but of "becom-

ing", especially in the modern, post-colonial world, where the search for identity is "not the so-called return to roots, but a coming-to-terms with 'our routes', which is a more definitely discursive approach to identity."

Hall (in Gillespie, 1995, p. 17) also suggests three possible consequences of globalisation in the dialectics between roots and cultural identities: erosion, strengthening and the emergence of new identities or "new ethnicities". In spite of the globalisation trends present in Cyprus realities and Cyprus television, the present study about the use of language on television and its relationship to Cyprus ethnic or national identity of the Greek-Cypriots has indicated a strengthening of its Greek-Cypriot identity and an emergence of the Cypriot identity, in the augmenting preferences for Cyprus Dialect programmes.

The above indications of ethnic or national consolidation, traced in the relationship between the Cyprus television language and national (cultural) identity of Greek-Cypriots, with interspersed global elements, leaves the Turkish-Cypriot population, completely out and this was to be expected in the course of developments. After all, the two communities have developed their ethnic or their national identities along separate lines, for forty years now, after Independence, as they were unable to unite their ethnic identity in a common, national state. The prefer- ence for Greek and Greek-Cypriot programmes is a loud statement of the desire for the distinction between "them" and "us", with other underlying ties or encounters, and it is indeed too soon to celebrate the passing away of nationalism or the con- cept of nationhood, versus the homogenisation process of globalisation, in coun- tries where troubles and problems constitute an ongoing crisis. It is however, as all identity processes a matter to be revisited as identities are always in the making and the constitution of identity, is, according to Friedman, "an elaborate and deadly se- rious game of mirrors". Historical or political changes in Cyprus realities will prob- ably not leave television language unaffected, as globalisation must still operate within the "site-specific histories" of nations and within the national frameworks of individual countries.

Notes

1. The 1960 independence constitution, came after the four-year liberation struggle by the patriotic, underground organisation of EOKA. It institutionalised communal dualism in government activities and in the judicial system. Moreover, it also provided for the establishment of separate municipalities in which the members would be elected by each ethnic group. It is hardly surprising that this constitution proved, in practice, unworkable, since it had been drawn by three foreign countries (Britain, Greece and Turkey) and not by the Cypriots them- selves. In 1963, the amendments to this constitution, as proposed by President Makarios sparked off a rebellion by the Turkish Cypriots who decided to withdraw from the government and who, from then on, pressed for the physical partitioning of the island into two. Following a *coup d'etat* by the Greek military junta in 1974, Turkey seized the golden opportunity to in- vade Cyprus and annex the northern part (38% of the island). According to Iannides (1993) a Turkish army of 35,000 soldiers occupy the north and a further estimate of 74,000 Turks from Anatolia have migrated to the newly conquered area and together with 98,000 Turkish Cypriots, live on what had been (and still is) property owned by the 200,000 Greek Cypriots, who had no alternative but to flee and start anew in the unoccupied areas, as refugees in their own country! In 1983, the occupied area was declared the Turkish Republic of North- ern Cyprus, a republic which no country, except Turkey has recognised (Sciriha, 1996, p.3).

2. *Enosis:* Union of Cyprus with Greece. This movement dates back to a revolt against the British colonial government on 21 October 1931. In 1950, a plebiscite on *Enosis,* rendered an almost 100% vote for union with Greece, on behalf of the Greek-Cypriots. The same goal initially was present in the EOKA liberation struggle of 1955-59. But the problems faced with the Turkish minority during this struggle, made Archbishop Makarios adjust the original goal, to one of independence for Cyprus.

3. In March, 1997, in a series of lectures, by the title ("The Cracked Mirror"), the Turkish-Cypriot journalist and poet, Nesie Yasin, referred to the existence of the above identity ramifications in the Turkish-Cypriot community.

4. The theme of the dissertation was "Television and the Cultural Identity of Cyprus Youth". It covered the period 1997-2000 and was submitted to Coventry University UK, in November, 2000. It consisted of three stages of original research: A Field Questionnaire among 600 13-18-year-olds, a textual and discourse analysis of five television programmes in the top ten list of the Survey sample and 23 personal Interviews and 2 group discussions with respondents, selected by the random sample method.

5. Andreas Savvides, 13, in an interview to author, 11 November 1998.

6. Phanourios Tamanis, 16, in an interview to author, 13 November1998.

7. Thomas Anastassiades, 15, in an interview to author, 5 November 1998.

8. Marina Polyviou, 17, in an interview to author, 5 November 1998.

9. Anna Zamba, 13, in an interview to author, 11 November 1998.

10. Eleni Efthymiou, 17, in an interview to author, 13 November 1998.

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LANGUAGE HYBRIDISATION AND GLOBALTELEVISION: THE CASE OF HINGLISH

Daya Kishan Thussu

Abstract

This article aims to explore how language can play a central role in the process of adapting global media cultures into regional and national contexts. The role of television - as the leading and most international media - is examined, focusing on the emergence of new media languages in countries such as India, one of the world's biggest media markets.

Language has been a key factor in the success or failure of new television channels in India, where the expansion of Western television as a result of media globalisation and availability of new technologies, namely satellite and cable television, have transformed the broadcasting landscape. The article analyses the emergence and steady growth of a new mediated language - Hinglish, a mixture of Hindi, the most widely used language in India, and English, the medium of international communication and global media.

The hybridisation of the national to the global culture is examined with the case study of India's private television networks - such as Zee TV. The article looks at the factors which have been responsible for hybrid television. The cultural economy of the phenomenon is explored and the question is posed - is hybrid language the future of television? If so, who benefits from programming in hybrid languages and who loses out? For centuries, language has defined national, regional or ethnic identity? Will hybridisation lead to blurring of identities? What role will the global im- age industry have in it?

Hybrid Television

A prime example of this cultural hybridity can be found in the case of India where television networks have appropriated Western, or, more specifically, American TV

programme formats and Indianised them to suit local tastes and languages, creating a new model of hybridisation. This global-local media interaction has contributed to the emergence of Hinglish, a mixture of English and Hindi. The growing popularity of this new media language has earned the disapproval of language purists, while critical analysts view it as yet another example of the media and cultural imperialism that the West, led by the United States, exercises over the developing world. Those subscribing to a post-modernist view of the world see this as a positive sign, arguing that Western television networks operating in India have had to adapt to Indian conditions, exemplified by the growth of Indian-made programmes in Indian languages, broadcast on foreign-owned satellite channels.

To contextualise this global-local interaction, it would be useful to examine the background of the profound changes that Indian television has undergone since the early 1990s, accelerated by the combined impact of new communication technologies and the opening up of global markets. Economic liberalisation, deregulation and privatisation have contributed to the expansion of Indian media corporations, facilitated by joint ventures with international media conglomerates.

Such developments have revolutionised broadcasting in what used to be a heavily protected media market, certainly the most regulated among the world's democracies. Gradual deregulation and privatisation of television has transformed the media landscape in the country. This is evident in the exponential growth in the number of television channels, in the post-Cold war era - from *Doordarshan* the sole state-controlled and rather bland network whose programmes were seen to be 'in- sipid and uninspired,' (Gupta, 1998, p. 31) in 1991, to more than 70 in 2000. Out of these, 20 are in Hindi or English and therefore national in reach, while others cater to regional audiences in their own languages. Table One lists some of the main bilingual channels operational in early 2000.

Table 1 The Main Bilingual Channels in India

Channel	Type	Languages
MTV India	Music	Hindi/English
Music Asia	Music	Hindi/English
Channel V	Music	Hindi/English
Disney	Animation	Hindi/English
Star News	News	Hindi/English
Star Plus	General	Hindi/English
TVI	Entertainment	Hindi/English
Star Sports	Sports	Hindi/English
SET MAX	Sports	Hindi/English
*Zee TV	General	Hindi/English

*only a few programmes are in English

Source: Adapted from *Satellite* & *Cable TV,* June 2000

The privatisation of broadcasting encouraged many Western transnational media players to enter the 'emerging market' of India - potentially one of the world's biggest English-language television markets. Not least of the attractions were the existence of a huge middle class - estimated between 200-300 million - with aspi- rations to a Western lifestyle; a well-developed national satellite network, linking the vast country, and a fast-growing advertising sector.

Since its inception in the 1950s as a government propaganda organisation, television was seen as a means of disseminating state policies, and its main aim was to foster a feeling of national identity. The ethos was based on the public-service model of broadcasting, with clear emphasis on education and information at the ex- pense of entertainment (Chatterjee, 1991). Borrowing the best traditions of the BBC, the broadcasting of high and 'authentic' Indian culture, in the form of classical dance and music, was encouraged, to raise the audiences' cultural tastes and val- ues in preference to popular or populist forms of television (Gupta, 1998).

The entry of global media conglomerates into India, first through the live coverage of the 1990-91 Gulf crisis by the Cable News Network (CNN) and later through Hong Kong based Star (Satellite Television Asian Region) TV, part of Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, opened up a new window for transnational visual experience for Indian audiences. Star's five-channel satellite service in English (Plus, Prime Sports, Channel V, the BBC World and Movie) started in 1991, became a major hit with the English-fluent urban elite and the advertisers, who saw in these channels a way to reach India's affluent classes.

The rapid growth in advertising revenues ensured that cable and satellite television extended their penetration of Indian market substantially - from 1.2 million homes having cable and satellite television in 1992 to more than 25 million cable TV homes by 2000. Among the main channels were major transnational broadcast- ers -CNN, Disney, CNBC, MTV, Star, Sony Entertainment Television, BBC, and Discovery - and scores of Indian channels, operating both at regional and national levels.

After an initial infatuation with Western English-language programming, especially with its liberal attitudes to sexual subjects, hitherto a taboo on Indian airwaves, it became apparent that the Indian audience preferred television in their own languages, prompting global media companies to adapt their programming strategies to suit the local marketplace. Star started the process of hybridisation when it realised that its mainly US-originated programming was being viewed by only a very small urban elite. It therefore started adding Hindi sub-titles to Hollywood films, and dubbing popular US soaps into Hindi. In 1996, Star Plus began telecasting locally made programmes in English and Hindi, in addition to Western programmes.

The sheer logic of market pressure - localising the products to reach a wider consumer base and increase advertising revenues, was at the heart of this localisation strategy. 'Instead of positioning itself as covert imposition of Western culture, characteristic of the nineteenth and twentieth century imperialism, globalisation appears to undercut Western authority through the cosmopolitan culture it promises for the Indian upper middle class and a stress on the local' (Pendakur and Kapur, 1997, p. 201).

The Language of Television in India

In studies exploring the impact of media globalisation in India (Pendakur and Kapur, 1997; Melkote, Shields and Agrawal (eds), 1998; Gupta, 1998), the issue of media language has largely been ignored. In a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual country like India, language is a crucial element of cultural self-expression. Reflecting its colonial history, English remains the link language in India - of national judiciary and bureaucracy, higher education and corporate sector - while Hindi, with its regional variations, is the most widely spoken language. It is also the language of India's film industry, which annually produces more films than Hollywood. However, the usage of English in India signifies a particular social class, with its attendant power and influence. Competence in the language privileges the user in the most important social areas - for example in acquiring top jobs in government and commerce, especially with transnational corporations.

With a well-established oral tradition of communication, 400 languages are spoken across the country, while the Indian Constitution recognises 18 languages. Based on the 1991 census figures, Hindi is spoken as a first language by nearly 40 per cent of India's population - more than 337 million (Government of India, 1999). India is a country where multilingualism is the norm. According to government figures, nearly 20 per cent of the population is bilingual, while just over 7 per cent is trilingual. For 90 million Indians, English is a second or third language; 8 per cent of the population use English as a second language and more than 3 per cent know it as a third language (Vijayanunni, 1999).

In a country with low literacy levels, a medium such as television acquires additional significance. In a diverse and multilingual country such as India, The role of state broadcaster has been to promote national integration and a unified language was seen as a crucial element of that strategy. Though *Doordarshan* tried to cater for regional feelings through its local centres which broadcast in India's various languages, its 'National Programme,' aimed at a pan-Indian viewership, launched in the mid-1980s, was only in Hindi and English. The Hindi and English telecast were not universally liked. They were seen as being Delhi-centric and privileging Hindi over the other languages just because of the sheer number of its speakers. Re-

sentment also arose even among the Hindi-speaking areas about the kind of Hindi being used on the national broadcaster - it was pure and literary, alienating the majority who spoke a version of 'bazaar' Hindi. Similarly, the English used on television was elitist, the so-called 'Queen's English'.

The Coming of Hinglish

Western-owned or inspired television recognised this language 'problem' and therefore encouraged mixing of English and Hindi and the evolution of a hybrid media language - Hinglish. The emergence of a mixed media idiom, characterised by the growth of Hinglish, has dominated cultural production in the India of 1990s. Hinglish has been identified by the burgeoning mass media as the language of the youth of a 'liberalised' and 'modern' India. The language of the mass media reflects prevailing cultural trends in a society and if Hinglish - both in its verbal and visual version - has become a key element of media language - it signifies the growing importance of English language in the media discourse. By regularly using it, televi- sion constantly gives the new language currency and ultimately legitimacy.

While a form of Hinglish had been in existence in urban north India for decades, it was popularised by Zee TV, India's first private Hindi-language and most successful satellite channel (Thomas, 1998). Launched in 1992 by the Essel Group of Indian entrepreneur Subhash Chandra and targeted at the mass market with its pioneering Hindi-films-based television entertainment, Zee TV broke new grounds in nationally produced entertainment - adapting derivatives of Western programme formats such as quiz contests, game-and-chat shows and its own version of MTV, *Music Asia.* This music-based channel has contributed immensely to the popularisation of Hinglish, particularly among youth. Music Asia used Indian languages with elements of popular Indian culture, regional and folk to rework them around the rhythm and beat of Western popular music with accompanying visuals located in India and Indian milieus. Having entered popular youth music, Hinglish has also become the language of music albums for children, for example, *Jantar Mantar,* a fusion of indipop, rap, reggae, samba and party songs, catchy rhymes and narrative stories.

Zee was following a trend which began in India's film industry, the so-called Bollywood, where use of Hinglish in dialogues and in songs has steadily increased in the 1990s. The advertising industry too contributed significantly in popularising the new hybridity, with such hugely successful commercials using Hinglish as *Yehi hai* (only this is) *right choice, baby* for Pepsi.

Zee was the first network to elevate this new language by using it in a more serious genre such as news, which had always been in either pure Hindi or in 'BBC

English'. It received a boost when Zee News adopted the style of Hinglish. By using English words, Zee aimed to expand its reach beyond the Hindi-speaking regions of India to cater to regional audience, and the South Asian diaspora, who may be more amenable to a hybrid variety of television. Like other commercial channels, Zee is dependent on advertisers, and is therefore acutely aware that language can influence people in their buying choices, a contributing factor why it used Hinglish, the language of the urban middle class.

Other channels, even those originally targeted exclusively at the English-fluent Westernised Indians, followed on the footsteps of Zee, and were forced to use Hinglish to widen their reach. One example of this global-local hybridisation is to be seen in the way Star Plus, the main India-specific channel of the Star network, was marketed, with its motto - *'Aapki boli - aapka* Plus Point' (Your own language is your Plus point).

Indian television software companies such as *Television Eighteen,* which make English-language entertainment and informational programmes for transnational broadcasters such as the 'India Show' on Star Plus or the 'India Business Report' on BBC, increasingly use Hinglish (Datta, 1999). There have even been arguments put forward by advertising executives to sell Hinglish as 'a brand, an identity, an individuality'. According to one senior advertising executive: 'As English gets too boring a language to use in our colloquialisms, there is bound to be an urge to discover the truly regional and the truly 'desi'(native). As this urge translates itself into patterns that dictate choice and appeal, the truly Indian brand names will start happening' (Bijoor, 2000).

Another area where Hinglish has emerged as a major source of communications is on-line media. In chat-rooms and India-related Internet portals, the use of this hybrid language is increasingly visible. One of the most talked-about web-based magazines is *Tehelka.com* (sensation) which gained national and international attention when in the summer of 2000 it broke the story about alleged involvement of Indian cricketers in match fixing. There are also bilingual computer programmes such as *Sulipi,* in which each Hindi character is mapped onto a similar sounding English letter, to cater to the Hinglish savvy 'netizens' (Anand, 1999).

Although television schedules remain dominated by Hindi or Hinglish programmes largely based on Hindi films and film-based music, which have traditionally held a prominent place in India's popular culture, Western cultural influence is still subtly present, detectable in the types of programmes, the borrowing and mixing of genres, in the kind of cultural messages being broadcast in a language which promotes itself as liberating, 'modern' to be contrasted with traditionalism of a deeply conservative society. The 'loss of language' that seems to afflict popular mu-

sic is resented by many. Jagjit Singh, India's best known semi-classical singer, feels television channels are primarily responsible for the current impurity. 'Why are they trying to popularise Hinglish as the language of the youth?' (quoted in Kazmi, 1999).

Like other hybridised forms of language, Hinglish does not have a clearly defined phonology, grammar and lexicon. The degree of language mixing is also varied, given the linguistic complexity of a country of continental character. Such a phenomenon is not typical to India. It can be seen as a part of the globalisation process for the homogenisation of language (Mohan, 1995). In other multilingual regions - for example in Hong Kong - a hybridised language, 'Chinglish' (a mixture of Chinese and English in Hong Kong) is in use, especially among the middle class. Mixing codes and conventions of other languages is a normal feature of bilingualism. In countries where English is used alongside other languages, some amount of code-mixing inevitably takes place, more in spoken than in written varieties. The hybridised languages are given blended names to show their origins such as *Japlish, Anglikaans,* and *Angldeutsch.*

Hinglish - The Language of Postmodern Television

Given its domination of global media, commerce and communication, English has emerged as an important vehicle for the globalisation of the Western version of capitalism. This unrivalled domination has an historical context, as a well-known scholar of English language notes: 'The present-day world status of English is primarily the result of two factors: the expansion of British colonial power, which peaked towards the end of the 19th century, and the emergence of the United States as the leading economic power of the 20th century. It is the latter factor which continues to explain the position of the English language today' (Crystal, 1995, p. **106).**

It is now fashionable to use the phrase 'Englishes' to describe the international varieties of English prevalent in the world. The 'messiness' characterising current international English has created 'many kinds of English and many other languages, producing clarity here, confusion there, and novelties and nonsense everywhere. The result can be - often is - chaotic, but despite the blurred edges, this latter-day Babel manages to work' (McArthur, 1998, p. 22).

This capacity of English to transcend differences of culture, geography, race and religion has ensured that many countries consider it to be their own language, as one Indian analyst noted: 'We must note that English does not necessarily mean British English or American English. There are a number of standard Englishes, for there are several English-speaking countries in each of which there is a standard English peculiar to that country' (Verma, 1982, p. 175).

Arguing for a *swadeshi* (native) variety of English, Verma, a senior academic based in India's Central Institute for English and Foreign Languages, insists that the Indianness of the English used in India 'lies in the fact that, within the overall general framework of the systems of English English, it displays certain distinguishing phonological, lexico-semantic, and also syntactic features. In terms of linguistic efficiency, these patterns are as good as any other. They are not corrupt, but rather different forms of the same language' (Verma, 1982, p. 180).

Although only three per cent of Indians use English as a first language, it carries a disproportionate degree of social and intellectual prestige, perhaps a reflection of the colonial hangover, prompting some to view English as hegemonic (Kachru, 1996). It has also been argued that given the long history of contacts of English language with India - the first interactions took place during Elizabethan time - the language has been Indianised to the extent that it has become an 'indigenous language and therefore available to all Indians' (D'Souza, 1999, p. 103). A hybridised variety of English language, it is now being argued, is breaking down linguistic, caste and class barriers. In the past two decades, a new confidence and aggres- sion in the use of the English language can be detected, notably in the birth of post- colonial idioms in Indian writing by highly commercially successful and critically ac- claimed authors of Indian origin writing in English.

The Expansion of Hinglish

Globalisation and the advent of satellite television has ensured that the migrant communities of South Asians in the Middle East, Europe and North America have become a new target as consumers or audiences. The language that seems to address this hitherto unexplored market is Hinglish, a language with which the migrants feel more at ease. By using English words, networks such as Zee aims to expand its reach beyond the Hindi-speaking regions of India to cater to regional audiences, and the South Asian diaspora, who may be more amenable to a hybrid variety of television.

There is a certain amount of empathy with hybridised languages and culture among the South Asian diaspora. The members of this ethnically, linguistically and religiously diverse group want to keep their links with their countries of origin. Though these groups speak a myriad of languages, most of them at least under- stand some Hindi, due largely to the popularity of Hindi films. Among the second and third generation Asians who have grown up within other cultures, Hinglish is the language they can relate to relatively easily. The use of Hinglish has been a con- tributing factor in the expansion of Indian television outside the borders of the coun- try.

Zee was among the first to recognise the potential of overseas markets for its programming.In its zeal to rope in pan-Indian audiences scattered throughout the world, Zee developed a new idiom which by virtue of sheer reach of the medium contributed to democratising Hinglish. After Star TV purchased 50 per cent of *Asia Today* (the Hong Kong-based broadcaster of Zee *TV)* in 1993, it became Zee's partner in India, facilitating the Zee network's expansion within India and outside (Tobin, i 999).Following their 1992 launch in the Middle East, Zee TV entered the lucrative British market in 1995, when it bought *TV Asia,* which was already established in the UK. In 1999, Zee was available on the Sky network and claimed to have one million subscribers in UK and continental Europe. It was one of the first channels to go digital in the UK, offering programming in Hindi and other South Asian lan- guages, namely Bengali, Urdu, Gujarati and Punjabi (Balakrishnan, 2000). Having acquired a base in the UK, Zee is expanding into mainland Europe - already its UK- based feed is available on Portuguese cable platform TV Cabo, Norwegian cable operator Telenor, TeleDenmark in Denmark and on the Casema cable system in the Netherlands. In 1997, Zee entered into a joint venture with a South Africa-based platform operator, MultiChoice, and within two years, it had 50,000 subscribers, mostly in South Africa.

By 2000, Zee claimed to be 'the world's largest Asian television network,' covering Asia, Europe, US and Africa, catering to the 24 million strong Indian diaspora. In Asia, where it says it has a total viewership of 180 million, the network spans more than 43 countries and offers round the clock programming. Having reached more than 23 million homes in the Indian sub-continent and United Arab Emirates, Zee's strategy now is to expand its operations in the lucrative North American mar- ket.

Zee considered its strength to be its indigenous programming in Indian languages. After Star started making programmes in Hindi, it became a direct competitor for Zee, creating business rivalry between the two operations of News Corporation in India. In September 1999, in an unprecedented action, Zee bought back Star's 50 per cent share in the company, establishing Zee has a major media player in its own right. By 2000, Zee's media and communication empire included cable and satellite channels in three continents, along with interests in film-production, publishing, cable distribution and satellite telephones. In mid-2000, Zee had three subscription channels - *Zee Cinema, Zee Movies* and *Zee English* as well as four regional channels under its Alpha bouquet - Alpha Marathi, Alpha Gujarati, Alpha Punjabi and Alpha Bengali. In addition, the network also had three free-to-air channels - *Zee TV, Zee News* and *Music Asia (Satellite* & *Cable TV,* 2000).

Other channels are also increasingly going global. Already, Star *TV* supplies daily programming to an ethnic American pay channel, EABC, and to Channel East in

Britain. Following their parting of ways with the Zee network, in January 2000, Star Plus, the flagship channel from the Star TV network in India, announced that it was repositioning with Hindi and 'Hinglish' as its medium. As Indian media businesses begin to integrate with global economy, Indian television could become an international player, though the question must be raised whether global status would be acquired at the expense of a hybridised language.

Towards a Political Economy of Hinglish Television

Media transnationals operating in India have recognised that to communicate effectively with the majority of Indians, a mixture of Hindi and English will do as a first step towards overcoming the complicated linguistic reality of India. Advertisements too have used this idiom to target a bigger market. The anchoring of popular programmes on TV in Hinglish is with an eye on widening the base of the target audience - a youthful, confident and modern Indian. It has been said that English is 'no more the language of the imperialist, a tongue better spoken by Indians than many Britons themselves today. It could hasten our progress, making us the envy of the world' (Joseph, 1997).

By merging the two languages, the transnational media corporations and the advertisers aim to widen the base of participants in televised consumerism. In a ratings-driven media environment, television channels are seeking to create a global community of consumers who are basically unequal and without genuine empowerment. The emergence of new languages on television is generated by the globalising media market, made possible by rapid changes in communication technologies.

Hinglish television is also helping to create new common markets among those who aspire to Western lifestyle and its culture of consumption. As a recent study argues: 'the US media in general and Hollywood in particular have provided, and still provide huge support in other areas of American international leadership. One is the general field of fast-moving consumer goods; America's fast-moving consumer media have promoted and exported the popular culture of which these consumer goods are a central part' (Tunstall and Machin, 1999, p. 5).

There is a tendency to view the growth of Hinglish as a sign of the coming of age of India, a traditionally backward country finally joining the West, singing its songs, wearing its clothes and thinking its thoughts. The acceptance and the legitimization by Westernised or Western-owned television of what may be called 'mediated modernity' excludes a large proportion of India's population. Though Hinglish can be seen to be more inclusive as a communication vehicle than traditional English, its mixed idiom has not done much to effect a restructuring of power relations that

the command over the English language has created in countries once colonised by Britain or the United States, in its formal or informal empires.

Not surprising, therefore that the Hinglish-oriented television networks have for- gotten the rural poor (Thussu, 1998). Those who do not communicate in Hinglish are remarkably absent from dramas and serials on channels such as Zee – according to a 1998 survey, less than two per cent of Zee viewers live in rural areas *(Sate llite* & *Cable* TV, 1999).

It is important to remind ourselves that domination through language is one of the ways in which hegemonies can be perpetuated. Despite its populism, Hinglish remains an elite idiom and excludes the vast majority of television viewers. A socially relevant television agenda, therefore, does not fit well with the private television networks, who are interested in the demographically desirable, Hinglish-speaking urban middle class, with the disposable income to purchase the goods advertised on the commercial channels.

Those without such sums can be conveniently forgotten, even by the state broadcaster, which increasingly has to compete with commercial television networks. Development-oriented television remains largely marginalised, primarily because it does not interest advertisers. It is ironic that the country where 40 per cent of the population is still illiterate, has ignored the educational potential of television. Widespread poverty and equality still exist in India, where primary education has fared particularly badly. According to the United Nations, 30 per cent of all Indian children aged six to 14 years - about 59 million children - are not in school (UNDP, 2000).

Though by 2000, *Doordarshan* was operating 20 channels, and claiming that total number of viewers who watch its programmes at least once a week to be around 500 million, it is under constant commercial pressure to provide entertainment of a hybrid variety at the expense of educational programmes. Crucially, Hinglish-led television could adversely affect the public-ser.vice role of television, whose egalitarian potential remains hugely underexplored in India. More importantly, it can help legitimise a corporatised worldview, which champions neoliberal capitalism.

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NATION STATES IN THE WORLD AUDIOVISUAL MARKET: CYPRUS AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

David French

Abstract

Technological convergence and the increasing liberalisation of world trade have changed the relationship between governments and national television systems. This paper sets the discussion of such relationship in terms of a review of the conditions that have given them their particular character and that will determine the likely direction of any change. It evaluates the significance of the international trade negotiations of the GAIT and the establishment of the World Trade Organisation, identifying aspects that will be particularly significant for audiovisual trade. It suggests that the trade exemption gained by the EU in the GATT negotiations will offer less protection to European markets than is often assumed and that the internal EU market will be dominated by large commercial companies. The opportunity for small countries, such as Cyprus, to achieve national distinctiveness in their televi- sion services is seen as limited.

Introduction

This paper explores some of the factors that will determine the future of the Cypriot television system. It mainly focuses on the international context and some overall characteristics shared by small countries, rather than the particular characteristics which make Cyprus uniquely distinctive. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, there is a question of expertise: the community of scholars who can claim specialist knowledge of Cypriot culture and its media system has a rather limited membership; the present author cannot claim a more than peripheral status in this elite group. Secondly, there is the strong probability that the unique characteristics of any country, whether large or small, are becoming of secondary importance in comparison to major current changes in the world economic system. This paper will assert that the audiovisual sector is increasingly being recognised as central to

world trade and that individual countries, however distinctive they may be in other ways, will, in this area of national culture, be increasingly constrained by the pressures of the global market.

The position of Cyprus as a state which is firmly locked in to the process of joining the European Union has a number of important implications. Its choice of the EU as a supranational body with which to affiliate, subordinates it to the policies of an organisation which has a powerful pre-existing agenda in terms of world audio- visual trade. The paper concludes with a discussion of some aspects of the audio- visual policies of the EU and the implications of these for Cyprus.

Broadcasting Policy and the Power of the Nation-state

Marjorie Ferguson (1995, p. 440) was undoubtedly correct to assert the continuing importance of the nation state as a key determinant of broadcasting policy:

> Nations are still the nexus for an oscillating dialectic of complex political, economic, technological, cultural, and social relations within and across systems of symbolic meaning and institutional power. As such their continuance challenges notions of globalisation as unidirectional process or omnipotent force.

It should also be emphasised that national governments and other interest groups are very sensitive to what they perceive as the social and political impor- tance of television. Concern over the possible effects of television is common cur- rency across the world, particularly in relation to 'vulnerable' young people; govern- ments everywhere also worry about the supposed role of television in forming po- litical ideas. In new countries, or those the stability of which is threatened, television is often seen as key to nation-building and the construction of national identity. These considerations, among others, have often led governments to seek to inter- vene in the operation of national television systems.

National Governments and National Media Policies

But the ability of national governments to intervene successfully in television is changing in line with changing technology and the increasing importance of international organisations.

Terrestrial television (i.e. in which signals are transmitted from ground stations through a network of ground-located antennae) is a greedy consumer of 'bandwidth'. Space on the electro-magnetic spectrum is limited and the transmission of television channels without undue interference requires a large part of the available space. The international agreements of the WARC (the World Administrative Radio

Convention) have been designed to control against such interference from overlapping signals. The value attributed to band-width is shown by the very high prices that companies have been willing to pay in recent government auctions of space in the spectrum for mobile phone networks.

During the period when terrestrial transmission has been the dominant mode for most television, spectrum-scarcity has severely limited access to the television market, making it a much simpler target for governments to try to control and for other interest groups to try to influence. Whether by means of directive, public campaign or hidden inducement, the fewer the targets the simpler it is to achieve a measure of control.

Similarly, although terrestrial television signals inevitably cross national frontiers, the extent of this may be quite limited and only of importance in cases where population centres in different countries are geographically close to each other. In an island such as Cyprus, terrestrial transmission was effectively contained within national boundaries. Even in less geographically isolated countries, terrestrial television was predominantly a phenomenon confined within their borders and often little concern needed to be paid to inward transmissions from other countries.

Governments have also, in the past, been substantially able to form their media policies without political interference from outside. While the international broadcasting system has always been subject to international agreements, these have been restricted to measures designed to avoid the services of one country unintentionally spilling over into another, causing 'noise' and interference with the quality of reception. The WARC conventions have been essential in bringing order to the airwaves, but they have not interfered with how any country chooses to use the channels allocated to it. The difference now is that new agreements, within the EU and at the global level are directly concerned with international access to the airwaves of individual countries and therefore with the material transmitted on them.

Neo-corporatism Is More Effective Than Overt Intervention

If the previous section identifies some of the necessary conditions which enable any given government to exercise control over the media in its country, these conditions are by no means sufficient to permit effective control. Communication media are always two-way affairs. Television, in particular, has to work for its viewers, to provide them with something they need, or feel they want, in order for them to continue watching.

In effect, this means that governments and other interested parties have had to recognise that there are significant limits beyond which interference becomes sub-

ject to the law of diminishing returns. These limits derive from two sources, the need to retain viewers and the need for television services, if they are to retain any degree of effectiveness, to maintain authority among viewers.

To consider viewing figures first: most television services are funded through advertising, and so are dependent for income upon audience share. If clumsy intervention leads to a loss in ratings, then the channel will lose money and may even need direct subsidy. Similarly, if fewer people watch, then the audience will be reduced for whatever message those to whom it is responding are wishing to get across. This may be less likely if there is little competition (audiences are less likely to stop watching than to turn to another channel) but it becomes crucial when more choice is available. The ability of governments to compel television compa- nies to transmit politically acceptable programmes, which achieve only low ratings because viewers reject them as boring or biased, is a very expensive luxury.

But clumsy intervention is even less likely to produce the desired results because the more overt the interference the lower the credibility of the service is likely to become; services which retain the highest levels of authority are often those which manage to maintain a perceived distance from political control. Exceptionally there may be support for intervention. Examples might include censorship in wartime or intervention against portrayals of violence or sexually explicit content at times of moral panic. But such occasions will be limited; more commonly, explicit public intervention leads to a downward spiral, in which the attempt to use the medium for overt political or other purposes destroys the trust upon which its acceptance by viewers depends.

The argument so tar, then, is that a key feature of established television systems has been a tendency for them to exist in a state of unstable equilibrium with governments, in which the propensity of governments and other interest groups to intervene in services and other activities was constrained by the inherent tendency for such action to be counter-productive. This has often resulted in 'behind-the- scenes' alliances, in which nominally independent broadcasters have in fact lived in an atmosphere of close understanding with their political masters. However, previ- ously well-established alliances have become less stable as the political and cul- tural compromises on which they depend have been made more fragile by outside forces of technological change. At the same time, the continually-reducing cost of television reception has stimulated a huge increase in audience size, increasing still further its perceived social importance (see Pan and Man Chan, 2000, among many others for evidence).

These changes have not removed the pressure for governments to make alliances with broadcasters, even if the allies they find are new ones, reflecting the

new circumstances determined by their policies towards the global communication market. Indeed, there is a case for suggesting that the need to manage international competition has encouraged governments and some broadcasting interests to move even closer together. Marjorie Ferguson called this relationship 'neo-corpo- ratism', a condition 'in which industries, governments and favoured firms' act ' to- gether for mutual economic benefit' (Ferguson, 1995, p. 447). Zaharom and Anwar, for example, analyse a position in Malaysia which in some ways seems to exempli- fy the neo-corporatist model (see, Zaharom and Anwar, 2000 and Zaharom, 1996). In these circumstances, the need for overt, public, intervention can be reduced.

But the availability of choice, the opportunity to encounter material directly originating elsewhere, will tend to expose intervention and reduce the probability of its acceptance by the audience. As an indicator, the phrase Galperin borrows from Hoskins and his colleagues is very useful: the 'mushrooming of channels... has shifted the market from a situation of spectrum scarcity to one of content scarcity' (Galperin, 1999a, p. 629, Hoskins et al 1996). In other words, the massive expansion in broadcasting opportunities associated with cable and satellite transmission, has led to the intensive international marketing of content to fill the space newly available. Even if Rupert Murdoch's over-blown statement, that satellite television would be 'an unambiguous threat to totalitarian regimes everywhere' (quoted in French and Richards, 1996, p. 22) has become absurd in the light of his later actions, the core proposition retains some truth. If viewers have more access to alternative views, they are less likely readily to accept limitations imposed by their own governments.

But if governments are finding it increasingly difficult to achieve the level of control over television that they might desire, this does not imply that the motivation to do so is reduced. To reiterate the arguments made earlier, the ascribed qualities of television make it something special, a communication instrument which occupies a central place in relation to the major concerns of all societies. Major changes in television are assumed necessarily to have significant implications and whether a government pursues 'conservative' alliances with existing broadcasters or seeks to build links with new interests, reflecting the new economic battlefield, the inducement to work together remains powerful.

Overlying these historic concerns about the social and political roles of television, at least in countries which have a significant stake in television production, is the concern with their place in the audio-visual market. Not only are the 'traditional' television and film sectors becoming ever more financially important, the convergence of television, computing and telecommunications ensure that awareness of the future potential of the sector is a key determinant of government policy in all countries which aspire to retain or develop high-technology industry.

Although these pressures have somewhat disparate origins, they have a common effect, that is to encourage governments to develop close relationships with their televisual companies. Governments may achieve more by quietly 'steering' the production policies of companies with which they have a friendly partnership than they could by overtly directing them. In effect, the myth of an independentme- dia continues to be maintained by behind-the-scenes co-operation. While this has been a common pattern with indigenous media, it is increasingly also demonstrable in terms of implicit alliances governments have made with the newer transnational conglomerates. The relationship between the Murdoch empire and the government of China is only the most high-profile of such deals. As is evident throughout this paper, Ferguson's notion of 'neo-corporatism' is very helpful in describing this type of relationship as evident in the links between governments and nominally 'independent' audiovisual industries in international market negotiations. But it is important to recognise that neo-corporatism is not something which has only recently emerged. It has roots which have been long-established in the structure of nation- al media polices.

Negotiating the Global Communication Market

The technological changes outlined above are crucial to understanding the way in which the world communication market is developing. But it is important not to get carried away with the fallacy of technological determinism, making the assump- tion that everything is to be explained by the changing technology. In fact, the con- ditions under which this market functions are directly determined by negotiation be- tween governments. The outcomes of the international trade negotiations during the Uruguay Round of GATT (the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade), which led to the establishing of the World Trade Organisation, mark a crucial stage. The negotiations over trade in audiovisual services and other relevant matters demonstrate important changes in the priorities governments attach to their traditional concerns with national cultures as against other factors such as the role of telecommunications in international trade. They also established fundamental market principles, which will become determining features of the context within which the future of television will unfold.

For present purposes, the most important distinguishing feature of the feature of the Uruguay Round (negotiations within GATT, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, are normally named after their initial location) was the inclusion in the negotiation process of trade in services, previous agreements having been limited to goods. For background on the Uruguay Round, The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and the audiovisual negotiations, see Dasgupta (1998), Debroy (1996), Venturelli (1998), Michaelis (1999) and Galperin (1999a and b). The overt purpose of the sequence of GATT negotiating rounds (beginning at the end of

the Second World War) was to reduce tariff and other barriers to trade across frontiers. Its driving force was the assumption that free trade would encourage competition, thereby increasing the efficiency of domestic producers, and offer consumers a wider range of choice. This, proponents of free trade argue, would lead eventually to increased wealth for all, even if the process of adjustment to open competition might cause some short-term difficulties. The power of this argument had persuaded an increasing range of countries to join the process and by July 1995, 100 countries had become members of the World Trade Organisation. Others have joined since.

The inclusion of the service sector in the Uruguay Round reflected both an increase in its overall importance in world trade, (19% overall in 1994, according to Broadman ,1994, p. 283) and an increased awareness of the crucial role of internationally-traded services in the process of commercial development. But the move was not straightforward: trade in services mattered much more to some states than others. The service sector has come to make an increasingly important contribution to the balance of trade in some leading economies (54% of GDP in the USA, employing 79% of the workforce (Broadman, 1994, p. 283). A regime of free trade in the service sector may be seen as a good way for countries with an advantageous position in to take advantage of this and the way that the Uruguay Round negotiations were conducted would tend to support this view.

The argument for free trade in services was built upon two particular assertions: that modern communication networks are creating new world markets in services which should be developed along the most efficient lines and that the opening-up of national markets in services could be an important factor in both international competition and national economic development.

Telecommunications is an important example. In the past, telecommunications has chiefly been the province of national, publicly-owned, monopoly-providers; the role of telecommunications in international trade has been very much in the background. But the agreement on free trade marks an important change, in which they have come to be recognised as having a central place in trade, analagous to shipping, airways and other vital networks.

> Barriers to access to electronic transmission facilities also provide barriers to the cross-frontier "transport" of services as well as being barriers to telecommunications and other services in themselves. Viewed in this way telecommunications is just another form of transportation, although one that is particularly important for cross-border trade in services (Snape, 1998, p. 284).

Similarly, services such as telecommunications are essential to the communica-

tion of information about other products - goods and services - and so to the efficient operation of the overall world market. But there are additional reasons why less industrialised countries welcomed the liberalisation of trade in telecommunica- tions. Just as efficient systems bring improved communication in the international market, so they support the internal development of national economies by enabling producers and consumers of local goods and services to communicate to each other (see Hukill,2000). Modern telecommunications and the overall information sec- tor in such countries therefore represent a key instrument of economic development and a market opportunity for international suppliers of hardware and software. As Venturelli puts it:

> Because participation in the information economy is now the revised standard and fundamental precondition for economic development, the growth of the infor- mation sector in less industrialised countries has been established as the *latest* en- trance barrier in access to capital and development resources (1999, p. 22).

Telecommunications accordingly took a prominent role in the Uruguay Round, although negotiations were difficult. Agreement between 69 countries was eventually reached in 1997, for implementation on 1 January 1998, three years after the founding of the WTO. In the light of continuing technological convergence, the significance for television of the liberalisation of the global telecommunications market should be clear. Not only will television signals increasingly share the same transmission systems as telecommunications, but also any distinction between their content and patterns of use will become much less clear.

Another important and closely related part of this sequence of international trade negotiations concerns the regulation of trade in intellectual property. The need to mediate between those who develop new ideas and new products and the public who are the beneficiaries of such innovations has long been recognised in the form of patent protection and copyright laws. Typically, the source of the new idea is given the right uniquely to exploit it for some fixed period, after which it becomes 'public' property, open to others to imitate and freely compete. Bargaining over TRIPS ('trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights') began before the main Uruguay Round negotiations and was closely linked to pressure from the pharma- cological industry, anxious to protect its expensive investment in new products (see Groome, 1995, pp. 130-137) . Agreement on TRIPS was reached earlier than oth- er elements of the Uruguay Round, being 'effectively over' (Groome, 1995, p. 319) in 1991.

These negotiations may have been relatively easy but their implications are far-reaching for the rest of the information technology sector, which of course includes television. The rapid expansion of this sector means that it is dominated by hard-

ware and software which have been developed recently enough to have copyright or patent protection and, in the twenty years TRIPS allowed before innovations pass into the public domain, their usefulness will have declined to nothing. Rights over such material give the companies which have developed it effective monopolies that governments and local producers will be unable to resist. In a period where technologies converge, in which the boundaries between television, telecommunications and information technology are eroding, the importance of TRIPS to the future of television should not be underestimated. In effect, TRIPS regularises, even requires, the commodification of knowledge and this will extend, in television, from hardware through operating systems to content, just as it does in computing.

This process of commodification will harmonise neatly with the increasing use of encryption technologies and the commercial attractiveness of pay-per-view and subscription television. Both create a conventional trading relationship between the supplier and consumer, which can be expected to gain far higher revenues for those with relevant claims to the intellectual property involved.

The Uruguay Round and the Audio-visual Sector

Negotiations about audiovisual services were the most difficult part of the Uruguay Round. Despite the acceptance by participating countries of the principles of free trade and despite the agreements on telecommunications, TRIPS and other services, the audiovisual sector became a sticking point.

The main source of resistance here were the countries of the European Union (EU), which negotiated as a single, powerful, block, within which France was the most important advocate of protectionism: in effect, the negotiations were a two-way affair between the EU and the USA. The EU claimed a concern with the protection of national film and television production as a means of protecting national culture. In contrast, the USA 'refused to concede recognition of (any) special cultural characteristics' (Groome, 1995, p. 376) of audiovisual services. The conduct of the negotiations was characterised by brinkmanship on both sides and the effective outcome of the negotiation was to leave trade in this sector on one side, to avoid stalling the whole process. The principle of free trade in audiovisual services remains on the WTO agenda, but in practice nations are exempt from the implementation of free trade procedures pending some future round of negotiation.

The difficulty in the GATS negotiations is replicated in other free-trade agreements. As Galperin puts it:

'The issue of the cultural industries has proved one of the most controversial in regional integration agreements ... No other final-goods sector has received so many

> safeguards ... or has aroused so much debate about the scope and legitimacy of integration processes' (1999a, 627).

But has the so-called 'audiovisual exemption' in GATS give television a secure position outside the immediate pressures of a free world market? Armand Matte- lart attributes central importance to the assumption, seeing it as demarcating a 'clear rift between the defenders of cultural identities and the partisans of an intran- sigent application of market criteria to all forms of production.' (1999, p. 4). This po- sition is echoed by O Siochru, when he writes that 'liberalisation basically trans- forms communications into a commodity like any other, bought and sold on the mar- ket for commercial gain'. Given, he argues, that the role of the WTO is to open 'new markets and reduce barriers to trade' (1999, p.18), the exclusion of cultural prod- ucts from its ambit is essential if national arrangements for television services are to survive.

In reality the audiovisual exemption in GATS is less powerful than such authors assume. First it is articulated in terms only of 'old' technology and currently familiar cultural forms. Free trade in telecommunications and in information technology is at least as relevant in a future of converging technologies and free trade in these areas will be backed by powerful sanctions. Any country or commercial interest which can make a case that its trading rights have been restricted can now take punitive retaliatory action through the WTO. As the 'banana war' of the late 1990's between the EU and the USA showed, the latter has not been slow to use interna- tional sanctions in support of its major companies. If it will do so in support of com- panies producing fruit in Central America, there is little reason to expect any greater reluctance to support Microsoft, Disney or IBM.

Secondly, it must be remembered that the negotiations chiefly reflected a dispute between the two main world producers in international cultural trade: the EU and its bigger rival, the USA, leaving the rest of the world on the sidelines.

The European Union's opposition to the inclusion of audiovisual trade was mo- bilised by a concern for its established media production industry. The priority which the European Union attaches to this is also reflected in the number and range of European Commission initiatives which provide financial support to the sector, while liberalising trade in broadcasting services within the EU (see Humphreys, 1996 and Collins, 1994). In Galperin's words:

> ..the EU's audiovisual policy has been more preoccupied with strengthening au- diovisual producers in the face of rapid structural changes in media markets than with promoting a culturally diverse audiovisual market for European citizens (1999, p. 637).

The EU, therefore is far from resisting any idea of the commodification of cultural trade. Rather, its position is one in which it was seeking, in classic neo-corporatist fashion,to look after local business interests. Indeed, the creation of free markets ;n this area is a pillar of its internal audiovisual policy, having previously with its failed attempt to promote a European high definition television system, (see Humphreys, 1996) had its fingers burnt when trying to intervene. directly in the market. The EU has moved to a position in which it seeks to gain competitive advantage for its audiovisual sector by encouraging its large players to draw strength from a large, liberalised, internal market the better to compete abroad. Consequently its position in relation to the Uruguay Round is best understood as an attempt to protect its own industry as part of a strategy to build its ability to compete in world markets. This is not a secure foundation on which individual countries might build national policies which require the development of relationships with big media companies. Ferguson (1995, p. 446) provides an illuminating quotation from Miller (1993, p. 96): 'the signified of "free trade" is the self-interest of the most powerful'. The same might be said of negotiations on the audiovisual exemption.

Within the EU, as elsewhere, transnational companies have been actively developing business strategies which cross the boundaries between distribution technologies and which draw together the supply-chain from production of content through to its distribution. In this they can expect to receive support from the broadly neo-corporatist strategies of most governments.

Increasingly countries using neo-corporatist strategies do so as much or more by deregulation than by investment in cultural institutions (such as public broadcasters) or information infrastructure....Or they do so by working with a diminishing band of global media agglomerates, such as Bertelsmann or News Corporation, and a growing number of telecommunications consortia led by firms such as British Telecom, Cable and Wireless, or AT&T to achieve their territorial or turnover expansion (Ferguson, 1995, p. 447).

The argument will be advanced below that such strategies have just as powerful attraction for supranational bo. dies such as the EU as for national governments.

Large multinational companies will continue to dominate global trade, whether because of the kind of back-room manipulation that Ferguson points to or the 'realities' of hard economics, as suggested by Wildman (1995). But public sector organisations which are active in the international market will themselves be subject to its logic. Varan's fascinating description of the aggressive commercialism of TVNZ (the New Zealand public broadcaster) in selling programming in Polynesia may be an extreme case, but it highlights the extent to which the demarcation be- tween commercial and public sectors has been eroded. It also shows how an or-

ganisation like TVNZ, insignificant in global terms, can play the part of an aggressive corporate agglomerate when dealing with the smallest of national governments.

Governments which are looking to restrain public expenditure can be expected to encourage income from the global market, even at some cost in terms of local relevance: many governments would share Wildman's views:

> Expanding domestic opportunities for indigenous media by relaxing restrictions on commercialisation is probably the best way to ensure their vitality and further their international appeal... (and)... the more obviously domestic is the content, the poorer are its international prospects (1995, p. 386).

The conclusions to which this account leads are that the radical changes that we have seen in the relationships between governments and national television regimes are only in their early stages. Although audiovisual services have been a sticking point in international free trade negotiations, any belief that this will mean continued protection is illusory. International agreements in telecommunications and intellectual property rights are better indications of the future. In any case, to quote Ferguson again 'competitive economic nationalism focused on information and cultural industries is driving global capitalism into the twenty-first century' {1995, p. 440). The dominant ideology of global capitalism is of course free trade and the existence of the WTO expresses very clearly the willingness of governments around the world to sign up to it.

Liberalisation in World Audiovisual Trade: An End to the Power of Governments Over Television?

It is important to have looked in detail at the world trade negotiations because too often their real significance is obscured by generalisations which neglect to give sufficient attention to their inherent complexity. One key overall lesson from the long sequence of international negotiations might seem to be that the future global audiovisual market will be dominated by the competition of commercial enterprises, seeking consumers wherever they may find them, untrammelled by the policies of national governments or other 'barriers to trade'. From this point of view, the process may be delayed by the 'audiovisual exemption' but the underlying logic and the influence of other agreements, such as those in telecommunications and intellectual property, will determine the long term position. In the long run, this may indeed be so and the balance of power in the relationship between media agglomerates and national governments must be expected to change in favour of the former. But in the short and medium term, the role of governments will continue to be of importance. The era of trade negotiations is not over and even the largest commer-

cial organisations will continue to depend upon governments to represent them at the conference table. Where problems in access to local markets *arise,* companies will have to choose between trying to resolve them by discussion and compromise at national level in the country concerned, or by enlisting the support of their own governmentalsupporters (e.g. the government of the USA or the European Commission) in demanding international sanctions against the 'offender'. But in neither circumstance can the commercial operator achieve its objectives purely by means of the market relationship It has to deal with those who fix the rules which determine how the market functions.

All of this tends to support a view of the future in which the intimate relationships between national broadcasters and national governments are substantially transformed into a hierarchy of nee-corporate alliances between transnational agglomerates and governments, where the power of the government determines its level in the hierarchy. The big players, such as the USA and the EU will be at the top, the smaller or more isolated countries will nestle in the lowest levels. One way in which small countries can attempt to improve their position is by seeking alliances with bigger neighbours. The purpose of the concluding section of this paper is to explore the reality of this in relation to the EU and Cyprus.

Cyprus the European Union and the Position of Small Countries

Burgelman and Pauwels (1992) provided a useful overview of the position of small countries in terms of their audio-visual policies. Although dated in some ways, their overall analysis of the relationship between Europe as a source of transnational policy and the smaller members of the EU has stood the test of time. First, however, it may be useful to recall Morley's (1998) comments about the need to avoid assuming an absolute conception of 'Europe'. As he points out, the 'as- sertion of a common cultural identity is clearly assuming a strategic importance for the present attempt to restore European self-confidence' (p. 343). But, he sug- gests, 'Europe' *is* most easily defined in terms of what it is not, a response to ex- ternal threats, whether these come from American cultural industries or the so- called *'t ide'* of asylum seekers. Add to this the complexities of a supra-national en- tity itself made up of a number of nation-states, each eager to bargain for national self-interest while, in many cases, having to struggle to maintain national legitima- cy against competing regional and ethnic identities within. It is clearly plausible to see this as a recipe for uncertainty and inconsistency *in* cultural policy, rather than as one of coherence and continuity.

Burgelman and Pauwels (p. 174) make a powerful case for the maintenance of a strong public sector: 'it is our conviction that a small country can only viably af- firm its cultural identity by defending the role of public service'. Their contention is

that commercial channels, in small countries will, particularly if financially successful, become at best off-shoots of larger groups based elsewhere. This will be particularly so in markets where the rules require open boundaries, prohibiting barriers to capital investment from abroad. But their prognosis for national television is gloomy.

> We can summarise the situation of small states as follow: they have too limited a market and too meagre financial resources and possibilities of exploitation to be credible and profitable in a unified market. What results are amateurish, but costly productions on the one hand and negligible distribution on the other (p. 175).

Cyprus is not only a small country, but also one which is in the process of joining a pre-existing club, with established rules. There is little reason to expect any concessions in the rules to meet the needs of new members. As Field (2000) points out, 'The European Commission has made compliance with EU law in the audiovi- sual sector a condition of entry to membership' (p. 98); even if some minor excep- tions or delays may be negotiated, the main principle of open frontiers within the EU will obtain.

Michalis (1999) demonstrates this in a way which echoes, in terms of the EU, an issue raised earlier in this paper at the global level, when she draws attention to the extent to which EU audiovisual policy is being formulated in terms originally formulated for telecommunications. In part, this is because telecommunications are seen, within Europe, as a vehicle tor industrial development and economic growth (see Venturelli, above) . But also (Michalis, 1999, p. 150) because 'telecommunica- tions has come to be regarded as a significant force behind EU integration'. Harmonisation of standards and the liberalisation of the market, with an end to the protected public monopoly providers, are key elements in this policy.

As will be argued below, EU audiovisual policy is itself contradictory in terms of its notion of the common European cultural space and the encouragement of national cultures within this space. But one element is straightforward, that major elements in EU policy-formation strongly favour the encouragement of commercial as against public televisual enterprises: 'because of legitimacy problems, opposition and inability to come up with a compromise, the EU has treated broadcasting as a purely economic industry, largely neglecting its cultural aspects' (Michalis, 1999, p. 153). In these circumstances, local regulatory regimes are just the type of limitation which a single audiovisual market requires to be swept away. Burgelman and Pauwels (1992) are only one voice emphasising the extent to which EU policy has privileged:

> .. the emergence of large multi-media groups to the detriment of minority players like the small countries. In effect, only large enterprises able to operate throughout

> the entire European market and to intervene in world markets are in a position to compete with the Americans and the Japanese (p. 176).

On the other hand, the EU does claim a concern with small countries and with the encouragement of small-scale production. The main material vehicle tor this is the MEDIA programme, which is, in overall terms, designed to support and encour- age European audiovisual production, with particular emphasis on producing for the European market. This is not the place for a detailed review of the MEDIA programme: it is sufficient here to point out that its budget is limited (e.g. 200 million ECU for the five years from 1991; 310 million tor the following five years), large sums in absolute terms, but small when compared to the budget of American block- buster movies and that it has to cover a wide range of activities.

The tension between overall European dynamics and the more local concerns is manifest in the language in which the notion of European culture is discussed. Venturelli (1993) identified two conceptions of Europe which jostle side-by-side in the debate. One is that of Europe as a multiplicity of cultures, which may themselves be expressions of the nation or of other groupings within or across national frontiers. The other is of a transnational public sphere, in which the merging common con- cerns of Europeans find expression at a level which transcends national concerns. That the difficulty of the relationship between these conceptions has not diminished in the seven years since Venturelli's paper should not be surprising; it replicates fundamental conflicts in the founding ideas of the EU, in which governments whose primary loyalty lies with their national electorates, are expected, where necessary, to subordinate national interests to the development of the single market.

Among many others, Burgelman and Pauwels (1992) and, more recently, Michalis (1999) and Galperin (1999b) point out that national audiences *have* re- mained fairly resilient in their demand for a measure of local production and the re- flection of local cultural concerns in television. (Cyprus may be particularly distinc- tive in this respect.) But, as Galperin (1999b) and Venturelli (1998) emphasise, the primacy of the single European market is the major determinant in EU audiovisual policy and, within this market, it is the big players, best able to compete, who take the primary place.

In turn, this has direct implications for the position of the EU in international negotiations. The EU has been resistant to the liberalising of international audiovisu- al trade, as shown earlier in this paper. This should not, *however,* be perceived as a resistance to the commodification of culture . Nor, despite the rhetoric of EU representatives (see, for example Jacques Delors, quoted in Burgelman and Pauwels, 1992, p. 176) should it be seen as chiefly motivated by a concern to protect national cultures and local interests within Europe. Heather Field (2000) provides a very

useful exposition of the extent to which European policy in trade negotiations reflects the outcome of conflicts between protectionist and liberalising interests with- in Europe. These conflicts between European policy-makers were actively going on while EU representatives were engaged in the Uruguay Round negotiations. But the protection which even the most ardently protectionist countries, most notably France, were seeking was strictly protection at the frontiers of Europe, not anything which might amount to barriers to trade within it. The fact that, within the EU there were strong voices in favour of free trade, such as the UK, Germany and the Netherlands, suggests that continuity in such European 'audiovisual frontier con- trols', cannot safely be assumed for the indefinite future.

In other words, the position within the EU substantially replicates that of the global economy. It is a system in the audiovisual sector which is increasingly being driven by the same logic as that of telecommunications, in which any claims for special protection for trade in cultural products are made increasingly difficult. It is a stage in which the interests of the big players take a central place. While these features are partly the product of public policy, they are also driven by many of the same liberalising trends which the EU did not resist in the Uruguay Round, such as free trade in telecommunications and the TRIPS rules on intellectual property. The logic of the situation is one in which an increasingly free trade environment within Europe will, at some point in the not-far-distant future, find that the barrier of the au- diovisual exemption has decayed in significance to the point where its point will have been lost. The concerns of small countries, such as Cyprus, in this process cannot be expected to have more than marginal status. The survival of national television will be directly related to whether its provision will be economically viable and in a small country this is may be limited to specialist areas, such as news and some low-cost features and drama formats. There are plenty of precedents in Eu- rope for small countries and small language communities (of which francophone Belgium is a good example) receiving as 'their' main television service a package which is, in effect, an off-shoot of the output of a company based in a larger neigh- bour, that happens to share the same language.

Whether such a position is likely in Cyprus, or whether it would present a satisfactory outcome for the country, is beyond the scope of this paper. Membership of the EU will make at best only a marginal difference: the MEDIA programme will provide some help for local production but overwhelmingly EU policies favour competition, between big players, across the single market. The neo-corporatist deals and alliances of the future will increasingly be conducted at the level of big companies, large countries and the EU itself.

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FLEMISH- AND FRENCH-LANGUAGE TELEVISION IN BELGIUM IN THE FACE OF GLOBALISATION: MATTERS OF POLICY AND IDENTITY

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Abstract

Belgian broadcasting clearly reflects the country's sociological make-up as well as its changing political, ideological, linguistic and regional map. The country comprises three regions (the Flemish, Walloon and Brussels Capital regions) and three Communities (The Flemish, French-language and German-language Communities), each of which has its own legislative and executive institutions. Above them, we find the Federal Government which exercises power in national affairs. The country is almost always governed by a *coalition, and broadcasting policy is invariably the result of compromise and seldom reflects a straightforward vision. In its structure, broadcasting reflects developments in state structure: the movement from a unitary to* a *fully-federalised model. In the meantime, the three Communities have also developed their own separate policies on private broadcasting companies, each fitting into the framework of its own policies on the media. While Flanders has only experienced* a *competitive television system at the end of the eighties, French-speaking Belgium has experienced* a *de facto internal private/public television duopoly since the early seventies.*

Introduction

The first Belgian television broadcast took place on 31 October 1953. Exploitation rights were equally assigned to the ·INR/NIR *(Institut National de la Radio/Nationaal Instituut voor de Radio).* French- and Dutch-language programmes on different channels were opted for from the very beginning and even the line systems

used were different. Public broadcasting was given a new statute in 1960 as a result of which its *de facto* monopoly and further decentralisation was ratified. The NIR/INR was split into two separate organisations, i.e. the *Belgische Radio en Televisie, Nederlandse Uitzendingen* (BRT) for Flanders, and the *Radiodiffusion-Television Beige, Emissions fram;aises* (RTB) for French-speaking Belgium. Also a public radio and television service was created for the German-speaking cantons of the country under the name of BRF *(Belgisches Rundfunk- und Ferneshnzentrum fur deutschprachige-Sendungen).* Government intervention was limited in theory, but in practice the Government exerted a lot of influence through its appointment procedures. This resulted in the Board of Directors being composed of members of the three main political parties.

From the seventies onwards, audiovisual media in Belgium had to deal with two levels of legislature. On the one hand, public broadcasting became part of Cultural Affairs as a result of the act dated 21 July 1971 and was therefore under the pow- er of the Communities. On the other hand, technical areas still remained in the hands of the national Government: revenue from radio and TV licences, govern- ment announcements and commercial advertising. The phases of state reform that followed further undermined government power by transferring these areas of competence to the Communities. The 16 July 1973 act, better known as the *Culture Pact,* had far-reaching consequences for public broadcasting, its intention being to ensure the protection of the various ideological and philosophical movements in the country. From then on, administrative bodies had to be formed in proportion to the representation of the political parties within the Community Assembly. This system consolidated the politicisation of public broadcasting. At the end of the seventies, French-speaking Belgium (in 1977) and Flanders (in 1979) passed their own decrees on broadcasting. During the eighties they developed their own separate broadcasting policies. Public broadcasting organisations then lost their monopoly both in Flanders and in Wallonia. Meanwhile, because of its ideal position and of other geographic and demographic factors, Belgium became one of the most densely cabled countries in the world (98%). Though the number of Belgian broad- casting organisations was limited, Belgian viewers were soon supplied with a wide range of foreign stations.

The Development of a Flemish Broadcasting Scene

The first Flemish decree on public broadcasting dates from 28 December 1979. The BRT was thereby attributed a fourfold task, i.e. education, information, training and entertainment. The decree was amended a couple of times during the eighties, but it was only in the nineties, as a result of pressure from commercial channels, that public broadcasting was to undergo a profound change. According to the 1987 federal law on radio and television advertising, the flemish Cable Decree confirmed

that only one commercial TV company could be set up and allowed to broadcast via the cable network and as such address the whole Flemish population. The *Vlaamse Televisie Maatschappij* (VTM), launched in February 1989, was issued a license for no less than 18 years and soon gained a larger market share than the public station. A point of interest here is the regulation on programme transmission by cable. Each cable network operator is required to transmit programmes from both the Flemish and French-speaking public broadcasting organisations as well as those from VTM and the local station in its area (Decree of 23 October 1991). The showing of all other programmes is subject to prior agreement by the Flemish Government and to any other conditions it may see fit to stipulate.

Commercial Company VTM Secures a Strong Position in the Market

In order to anticipate foreign stations targeting Flanders and broadcasting on the Flemish network from outside the country, a number of limitations on these stations were built into the Cable Decree, one of which was that they would only be allowed access to the cable if they broadcast in one of the languages of the country of origin. This limitation was explained and justified from a threefold cultural point of view, i.e. the maintenance of press multiformity, which profited directly from TV advertising; the maintenance of artistic heritage, and finally, the continued viability of the public broadcasting organisations. In 1992, these reasons were found by the European Court of Justice to be in conflict with art. 59 of the EC Treaty, because they were in fact measures of economic protection. The language stipulation was also removed from the amended Cable Decree.

VTM is required to provide a balanced and diversified set of programmes which should consist of information, education and entertainment. At first, it mainly focused on entertainment but gradually invested more and more in information. In order to prevent its viewing time from being filled with cheap programmes - mainly from the US - VTM had to set aside some time for Flemish and European produc- tions. The 1988 Performance Decree stipulates that, following a period of five years, half of VTM's programmes should consist of Flemish cultural productions. No clear definition had been given of what this meant precisely, so in 1994 a quota regulation was put in place. From then on, news, games, sport, ads and teletext could not be considered as Flemish cultural programs. The Flemish Government would determine which quotas were to be respected. This decree also obliged VTM to allot one tenth of its viewing time to independent producers.

When it was launched, VTM immediately gained 27% of the viewer market. This rose to 37% by the end of the year, at the expense of Dutch stations and the Flemish public broadcaster (TV1 and TV2). While the average Flemish viewer already had a wide range of programmes on the cable network, it was only in the nineties

that the viewers market became really fragmented.

Table 1: *Flemish Television Market Shares since 1989*

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
TV1	22.5	21.8	25.7	25.5	25.0	22.5	17.5	19.3	21.3	24.3
TV2/Ketnet/ Canvas	9.0	7.0	4.1	4.6	4.5	6.4	5.1	5.7	6.5	8.9
VTM	27.4	35.6	38.1	37.3	38.3	36.4	37.1	32.8	28.9	30.6
Ka2							3.9	6.5	6.5	6.6
VT4							6.1	7.9	8.7	9.1
Netherl.	17.1	11.5	9.4	9.1	9.0	8.7	6.4	5.3	5.0	4.5

Source: VAT Research Department

VTM's monopoly on advertising was ended *de facto* in February 1995 by the creation of VT4. A subsidiary of SBS, VT4 is officially a British station which nonetheless targets Flemish viewers and Flemish advertising. By broadcasting from Great Britain, it can get around VTM's monopoly on advertising. Furthermore, as a British station it is not obliged to comply with Flemish Government stipulations on advertising, which are much more limiting than those laid down for commercial stations in Great Britain. Because of the competition created by VT4 from 1995 on, VTM's turnover and profits dropped significantly. VT4 not only creamed off part of the advertising market, it also forced VTM to make investments to counter competition, by setting up a second channel (Ka2), for example. Both stations initially targeted an unserved audience by showing prestigious programmes, but soon had to adapt their policy because they failed to reach the number of viewers they expected. In December 1996, the European Commission declared that VTM's monopoly was in conflict with European Community regulations. Flemish legislation on the matter would therefore have to be amended and stations such as VT4 would also have to be allowed to be shown on the Flemish cable network. But even after the adapted Advertising Decree of 28 April 1998 had ended the monopoly of VTM, VT4 chose to stay British.

The Public Broadcaster Fights Back

These rapid and profound changes in the media landscape made a review of the legal framework of public broadcasting necessary. The fact that the 27 March 1991 Decree changed the name BAT to BRTN was highly symptomatic. The intention of the decree was, among other things, to give public broadcasting more autonomy and more scope not only to face the recent increase in competition at home, but al-

so to meet new technological, economic and legal developments on an international level. It would soon become apparent that an even more drastic approach was needed if the BRTN was to remain a strong broadcaster and worthy partner in the final years of the century. Though the arrival of a commercial competitor had been spoken about for years, public broadcasting was not really prepared for the event: the arrival of VTM initially caused panic. Only in 1990, did the BRT decide to restyle itself completely. Entertainment was increased within prime time and on TV1 in general, while it was reduced on TV2. No consistent programming policy was followed for the two channels in the following years. When a strategy aiming to turn TV2 in- to a channel for "a specialised niche of passionate viewers" failed to deliver the expected result right away, the two channels underwent a new make-over intended to create a specific image for each. In the meantime, VTM acquired a record market share (over 40%) in prime time. Moreover, all these programme changes had to be made in keeping with BRTN's legally outlined tasks both for radio and television, i.e. to provide a balanced set of programmes which consisted of information, education and entertainment. Particular attention had to be paid to information, which had to be truthful and impartial. Moreover, since 1994 all programmes had to be free of discrimination, while special care had to be taken in projecting and promoting the cultural identity of the Flemish Community.

The 22 December 1995 Decree clearly took the McKinsey report into consideration as far as programming was concerned. The general task now presented was to reach the largest possible number of Flemish people by supplying a diverse number of programmes. Priorities were information and culture, as well as a sufficient number of sport, contemporary education, Flemish drama and "tasteful" entertainment programs. Youth and children's programmes should also be on offer. Quality is the key word in programming, next to universality and complementarity. What is new is an obligation as to result: the organisation is required to clarify its tasks with- in a mid-term plan (several years) and to set measurable objectives for itself. In 1996, a policy plan was drawn up for television in cooperation with research agency Censydiam. One of its points of departure was the division of Flemish viewers into six more or less homogeneous groups based on expectations: *TV addicts* (15%), *family viewers* (15%), *seekers of added value* (22%), *active discoverers* (17%), *spontaneous enjoyers* (22%) and *the restless* (9%). According to Censydiam, the needs of two of these sections do not match the tasks set for a public broadcasting organisation by the decree, i.e. the *restless* (mainly VT4 viewers) and the *TV addicts* (mainly VTM viewers). The BRTN therefore decided to tune its programmes to the four remaining groups. In doing so, they opted for an integral mixture of serious programming and entertainment, but also created a clear differentiation between TV1 (the broader channel) and TV2 (the in-depth channel). Regarding their com- mitment to quality, they drew up a number of parameters in keeping with the decree which did not only involve quantities: they included not only conventional viewer

numbers and market shares but also range, ratings, the number of viewers of informative programmes and programmes meant for specific target groups.

On 29 April 1997, the so-called "Maxi Decree" was accepted by the Flemish parliament, concluding the overhaul of the BRTN, started by the "Mini Decree" of December 1995. This overhaul took longer than expected, so that it fell to new Administrator Bert De Graeve to sketch the new decree in broad outlines: new statute of the public broadcasting service and its personnel, and introduction of a management contract with the Flemish Government, setting out the public broadcasting service's mission and budget. De Graeve's proposal was largely accepted by the Flemish parliament: the BRTN became a public limited corporation from 1 January 1998, under the name "Vlaamse Radio en Televisie" (VRT).

In May 1997, the Flemish Government and the public broadcasting service entered into a management contract for a period of five years (1997-2001). The contract includes a number of measurable goals concerning public broadcasting. The first channel, TV1, has to be a lively and easily accessible channel offering a large dose of family conviviality. Moreover, it must be the leader in information. Culture and education must be part of the programme supply but foremost in mixed programme formulas. The entertainment value of TV1 must be high, but voyeurism and sensation should be avoided at all costs. The second channel (called Canvas from 8:00 p.m. on) must be informative, instructive and built upon expertise shown in in-depth news and current affairs programmes. This second channel is also aimed at children and teens during pre-prime time (until 8:00 p.m. under the name "Ketnet"). Concrete production aims are two yearly Flemish drama productions of thirteen weeks, two yearly Flemish comedy productions of thirteen weeks, news around noon, and a youth series block with youth news on week days. In terms of viewing figures, the VRT aims at a weekly reach of 76 per cent of the population, one and a half million viewers for the news and other information programmes together, and at a mean appreciation of 7.5 on a scale of 10 for entertainment and fiction programmes, for a weekly reach of 15 per cent for culture programmes, and of 1O per cent for educational programmes, and at a ratio of 50 per cent of Flemish productions in prime-time (6:00 to 10:00 p.m.). Most of those objectives had already been achieved by 1997: appreciation figures for entertainment and fiction were 7.7 and 7.8 on a scale of 10, the mean reach figures per week hit the 78.1 per cent mark, and weekly reach figures for educational and cultural programmes were 21.2 and 16.8 per cent. Only with the target of one and a half million viewers for the various news programmes did actual figures fall slightly short of expectations: a means of 1,413,900 viewers were reached every day. All these far-reaching measures and the incertitude they bring with them have caused unrest among the VRT staff. Yet, a clear dynamism can be detected in a programming which succeeded in preventing the number of viewers from bottoming out.

The French-Language Broadcasting Landscape

Competition from Outside

Let us now look at the French-language end of the Belgian TV spectrum. In the late 1940's, when television did not yet exist in Belgium, the owners of the first TV-sets were receiving programmes from a French transmitter located in Lille. When Belgian television did finally emerge, the habit of consuming programmes broadcast from abroad was already entrenched. The public television service found itself immediately in a situation of competition with French television, some of whose programmes it even relayed.

Subsequently this subordinate role to the French media world would remain a feature of the RTBf, which opted for a policy of complementarity with the French channels rather than attempting to compete with them, not realising that the competition which would affect it most directly would in fact come from Luxembourg. While Europe was dominated by monopolistic public television services, it was from that tiny state East of the border that competition was to come, supported in its targeting of Belgian audiences by cable television. Born in 1961 in Namur, the first European city to benefit from this new technology, cable television was at first only used to supply deep valleys with the images which otherwise they had great diffi- culty in receiving. But very soon cable television enabled all Walloons to receive *TV* broadcasts from all neighbouring countries: France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Germany and Luxembourg. Suddenly Luxembourg television - intended until then only for viewers in France's Lorraine region - also reached several hundred thousand Belgians. For *Tele-Luxembourg,* this arrival on the Belgian market was something of a life-saver as, from its foundation in 1955 by the CLT (*Compagnie Luxembourgeoise de Telediffusion),* it had been limited in its Hertzian transmission range and had never succeeded in reaching "critical mass" from an economic point of view. As for the cable distribution companies, the inclusion of this channel among the programmes on offer (the only means for almost all French-speakers to tune in to this station) became an indisputable commercial advantage as the television of the Grand-Duchy was characterised by the attractive nature of its range of drama programmes.

Competition from Inside

In the early nineteen eighties the politicians then in power (Christian Democrats and conservative Liberals) began to perceive differently the future of radio and television within the French Community. Accusing the public service of being too politically committed to the left and too influenced by the unions, some parties challenged the internal pluralism system in force at the RTBf, favouring a kind of "ex-

ternal pluralism," including private media, which it was asserted would better guarantee a balanced representation of the range of political opinions. This occurred at a time when the RTBf was beginning to be aware of the competition it was facing from the Luxembourg channel, a time also when the legitimacy of the public service found itself increasingly under fire. Despite the authorisation it received in 1983 to broadcast "non-commercial advertising," the public sector was slow to react and lost significant audience shares to its increasingly aggressive Luxembourg com- petitor.

Realising that it could only conquer the French-language market by giving a "Belgian" content to its programme supply, the CLT created a specific channel for Belgian audiences in the late 1970's and then, in 1983, it secured from the Belgian Government a Hertzian beam enabling it to broadcast to Luxembourg programmes produced live in Brussels. If it were not for the fact that Hertzian transmission of the RTL signal originated in Luxembourg rather than in Belgium and that the revenue from Belgian advertising on this channel ended up in Luxembourg hands, French-speaking Belgium could be said to have had from then on a true private channel competing directly with public television. At any rate everything was now in place that would lead to the deregulation of the existing media system.

Official Deregulation

This official deregulation took place under another government made up of Christian Democrats and Liberals, both at the central ("federal") level and at the level of the French Community. In February 1987 the Federal Government introduced an act authorising advertising on radio and television, something which in theory had been forbidden until then. In July of the same year, by means of an ambitious de- cree embracing all radio and television related issues, the Government of the French Community redefined the radio-television scene to the benefit of new private operators. Allowing the creation of private television stations within the French community, it awarded them a monopoly for advertising revenue. In practice this recognition was granted to RTL-TVI, a company incorporated in Belgium and controlled by the CLT and most of the daily press groups in French-speaking Belgium.

However, a few months after this act had been passed, elections sent home the current government and brought to power a Christian Democratic/Socialist coalition whose credo was a so-called "return of the heart." Legislation adopted by the preceding government was therefore amended by several new laws (mainly in 1989 and 1991) intended to balance resources and influences between the public and private sectors as part of what can only be termed a "Belgian-style compromise." The different components of the media scene laid out at the time of the deregula- tion were therefore preserved, but the positions established were modified. This

compromise remains the key feature of the radio and television sector in the French Community even though changes have been made with respect to advertising.

The Public Service: An Independent Company Under Contract

In order to avoid new cost-saving plans and cuts in the public service, it was necessary to ensure its public funding and to stabilise it. Thus a decree dated 14 July 1997 transformed the semi-public RTBf into an independent cultural company responsible for public service radio and television in the French-speaking part of Belgium. Although it did not fundamentally change the institution's mission or internal workings, this new decree made it possible for the relationship between the RTBf and the State to be contractualised, by defining both the nature of the financial undertakings conceded by the authorities and the obligations and constraints that this funding imposed on the RTBf.

In return, the management contract defined the RTBf's obligations. The independent cultural company thus undertook "to produce, co-produce, acquire, programme and transmit federal radio and television transmissions," to provide access to everything that is eventful, "whether it be important live current affairs, major sporting encounters, cinematographic works or significant cultural events," "to contribute to the strengthening of social values, especially through a code of ethics based on respect for the human being and for the citizen" and "to provoke, whenever possible, debate in its programmes and to clarify the democratic imperatives of society." The management contract stipulates that the company is to operate at least five radio and two television channels. For radio, this relates to one general- interest station, two general-interest channels offering programmes intended for the Brussels region and the Walloon region, including a programme "reserved for every kind of ancient, classical or contemporary music." For television, this includes one general-interest channel and one general-interest or specialised channel.

The RTBf television channels must broadcast an average of more than seven hours of own-production or co-production transmissions, including a regional news programme and two general news programmes. The television channels are to ensure that an annual average of 3,000 minutes in current affairs debate and dialogue are broadcast. In application of the European legislation, at least 51% of airtime, apart from the exceptions envisaged in the directive, is to be devoted to European works; 33% of airtime (excluding news, sporting events, games, advertising, teletext and test card services) is to be reserved for works whose filming and production are carried out by French-language professionals.

There are less specific requirements in terms of annual volume, as far as the cultural, scientific and continuing education transmissions, magazines and documen-

taries are concerned. However, in television, the annual number of musical, lyrical, choreographical and dramatic shows, with priority given to those produced in the French Community, cannot be less than twelve per year. Transmissions such as "Cine Club" are also to be screened at least forty times a year. Both in radio and in television, in variety transmissions, the RTBf has to endeavour to give pride of place to French-language songs and to present and promote the artists of the French Community. Finally, an amount of money that is not to be less than one hundred million Belgian francs (or EURO2.5 million, indexed on an annual basis) is reserved each year for contracts for co-production, acquisition and/or purchasing of television rights concluded with independent producers from European radio and television bodies. Should the RTBf fail to fulfil all of these obligations, the contract sets out a series of sanctions based on the payment of fines "that can on no account be more than 1% of the total subsidy" paid by the French Community. As the contract stipulates, the RTBf currently operates two television channels (a general channel, *La Une* and a supplementary channel, *La Deux),* as well as five radio stations (geographical spread based on age groups and programming).

A Private Sector No Longer in Deficit

Although the CLT had long targeted Belgian audiences, the conversion of this "foreign" channel into an officially Belgian one - RTL-TVI[1]- did not immediately bring the expected benefits. At first the "Belgicised" channel had even worse audience ratings than the Luxembourg station from which it was taking over. This situation did not last long, however, with RTL-TVI eventually garnering larger audiences than public television. Financial results were another matter, however. It quickly became apparent to the CLT that setting up a specific television channel for an audience as small as that of French-speaking Belgium cost proportionally more than it could bring in. RTL-TVI being part of a foreign multinational group which sometimes paid some of the costs incumbent upon the station, the latter's own financial results were not always easy to interpret. On examination it nonetheless appears that the initial years of the channel in Belgium resulted in a loss of LUF6.7 million (EURO270,000) in 1989, a situation serious enough that the question was raised of discontinuing the operation and converting the station into a regional bridgehead of a centralised European network, located in Luxembourg. This possibility, whose appropriateness was not agreed upon by the whole CLT board, became more distant when the station's balance sheet became slightly positive in the early nineties, and has not been a real one since 1994, after the financial position of RTL-TVI really improved. In order to increase its audience, the channel began broadcasting a second generalist programme in February 1995 mainly intended for young, city-dwelling adults. While it has not achieved impressive audience ratings,[2] this station adds to the market share already in the hands of RTL-TVI.

Differences in Programme Policy Between the Public and Private Broadcasters

The cultural models carried by the public and private television channels within the French Community are not similar, which may be explained by the share of home production in each of these channels: less than 24% for the two private chan- nels in 1997, 69% for the RTBf (counting repeats). Public television also differs from its private counterpart in its ability to offer high-level magazine and educational entertainment programmes at the beginning of prime time. A sign of the permanence of the public service (but also of its ossification) is the fact that some RTBf programmes are unusually long-lived. With lesser means than the RTBf, RTL-TVI frequently proves more audacious than its public competitor. While the RTBf only began to come on the air at noon in the fall of 1996, RTL had been doing this since 1977, and broadcasting without a break from noon to midnight since 1987. RTL-TVI was the first (even before the French channels) to start broadcasting early in the morning on the weekend with children's programmes (1983).

The broadcasting of fiction constitutes the major characteristic of the private channels (and pay-TV) of the French Community in Belgium. In 1997, on these two channels, the RTBf devoted 23% of its airtime to fiction (11% in series and serials, 7.5% in films, and 4% in television films). But, at the same time, fiction accounted for 54.5% of RTL-TVI's programming (35.5% in series and cartoons, 19% in films). Since deregulation of the radio and television scene, the share of fictional programmes has noticeably increased on public television, particularly during prime time. A telefilm or a film is thus programmed during the first or second part of every evening on the leading public channel. Like the majority of general-interest channels, the RTBf also fills a part of its daytime programming with the help of fictional items. But these appear relatively seldom in these programme slots. Numerous repeats of own-production transmissions also occur, which markedly reduces the relative importance of fiction in the whole of public channel broadcasting as compared with the situation in the private channels.

On RTL-TVI, programming has always been conceived with reference to the broadcasting of fiction, and firstly in the prime-time slots. The presence of programming types other than films, telefilms and series throughout the whole of prime-time and night-time is an extremely rare occurrence on this channel, even contradicting the image that it has forged for itself. Following the example of the majority of private channels, RTL furthermore fills its essential day-time programming with series. The second private channel, Club-RTL, fulfils a complementary function in this regard. During the day, it concentrates on series and cartoons for children, and then for teenagers. The age of the target audience increases until prime-time, which centres around the showing of old films. Every evening, Club-RTLshows the

same film twice, with a popular infotainment magazine wedged in between.

In 1997, 46% of the total volume of RTBf airtime was composed of own- and co-productions, and 24% of first-showing purchase and exchange. In this second category, non-European productions accounted for 48% of the films broadcast, 75% of the series and serials, and 15% of the telefilms. Just about all of these were products of American origin. In comparison with 1996, the share taken by US productions increased significantly for films and series, but decreased for telefilms. On RTL-TVI, the number of own-production hours in 1997 represented 44% of airtime excluding repeats, as compared to 31% in 1996. In 1997, American productions occupied 77% of airtime for films and telefilms on RTL-TVI. For RTL-TVI, the proportion of European works for 1997 is estimated at 49.6%, which is slightly less than the recommendation of the TWF Directive. TVI has been progressing on this point, however.

It could be hypothesised that, culturally dominated by their French neighbour, the French-speaking Belgian television stations are incapable of offering their viewers strong-identity programmes, especially in the domain offlction. Unlike what happens in several neighbouring countries, the French-speaking Belgian is not fond of series or telefilms highlighting the countryside and culture of Wallonia or Brussels. By default, (s)he falls back on "regional" information centres which are becoming, both for private and public television, increasingly anecdotal in character, focusing on social facts with which supposedly the viewers can identify and to which they can relate with some intensity. The uninterrupted coverage of the wedding of the Crown Prince of Belgium (December 1999) handled in an "over-the-top" manner by all the television stations, is the latest and most relevant example.

In absolute terms, competition for audience share mainly involves the leading public channel and the leading private channel, followed by an outsider, France's private channel TF1. A few years ago, TF1 even represented a danger for the Belgian channels, with which it was competing for roughly equal shares of the market. Today the situation has settled down. The two public French channels, FR2 and FR3, also draw a significant number of viewers. Put together, the three large French channels have larger Belgian viewing figures between 5:00 and 11:00 p.m. than either of the Belgian channels. This situation puts French-speaking Belgium in a very different context from many of its neighbours, where one local channel, usually private, enjoys significant market domination, frequently capturing a market share of more than 30%. In French-speaking Belgium, the scores achieved by the national channels are far more modest, and much closer to each other.

Table 2: *Audience shares (adults/15+, 5.00-11.00 p.m., 1998, %)*

RTL-TVI	24.6
La Une {RTBf)	21.1
TF1	13.1
FR2	7.7
FR3	6.6
Club RTL	4.7
La Deux {RTBf)	2.7
Canal+	2
VCR	6

Source: RTBf Research Department

A small community surrounded by major countries and dominated by its French neighbour, the French Community of Belgium long sought to protect its cultural identity and its radio and television market from *foreign* appetites. This is the reason why Belgian politicians have always lobbied within international bodies, GAIT and WTO in particular, in favour of a cultural exception clause for radio and television products. Insofar as was possible, the Belgian French-language radio and television product has always been the subject of protectionist measures intended to enable the survival of the national public and private television channels, under threat from foreign channels. A case in point was TF1, which planned on several oc- casions to conquer Belgium's advertising market by beaming into this country a specific satellite signal.

The TWF Directive, which guaranteed the free circulation of pictures among members of the Union and encouraged the emergence of a European {and non national) radio and television sector, delivered a fatal blow to these protectionist aspirations. On 10 September 1996, the French Community of Belgium was found guilty on this subject by the European Court of Justice, which found that the system of prior Authorisation did not comply with the TWF Directive. Today the Belgian television market is totally open to European operators and there is no longer any obstruction to the cable distribution of their programmes. Being unable to legislate in the do*main* of Hertzian and *satellite* reception, the current lawmakers *determine* the operating conditions of the radio-TV distribution networks, still subject to government authorisation. The "must carry" and "may carry" principles are still in force. But the conditions imposing the retransmission of certain programmes have been considerably lightened.

The "must carry" principles henceforth apply to French Community programmes. Thus every cable distributor must relay all RTBf programmes, the programmes of

the local and Community television stations of the area in question, the programmes of the international stations in which the RTBf participates (TV5, Arte, etc.), as designated by the Government, the programmes of the private TV (Eu- rosport, etc.) and pay-TV stations (Canal+) recognised by the French Community. Beyond these, the "must carry" principles also concern certain other Belgian televi- sion stations: two public service channels of the Flemish Community and, should it exist, the public television of the German-speaking Community. At the European level, the "must carry" principle applies to all the programmes of those EU television stations having entered into an agreement with the French Community concerning the promotion of the cultural production in the French Community and in Europe. For other European programmes, specific government authorisation is required.

No longer being able to condition foreign channel access to its market, the French Community chose, following the example of other European laws, to en- courage the development of a programming and production industry for its own ra- dio and television content. Here as well, however, past conditions intended for the exclusive support of the Belgian French-speaking market have today been replaced by much more relaxed standards. Current law requires the French Community tele- vision stations to meet a quota of original, French-language works of up to one third of the airtime allocated to European works.

The private television stations have to ensure that 20% of their programming is own-production, and must spend a set amount on external services. For at least 5% of their programming time, they must enter into French-language co-production agreements or external service contracts with individuals or companies "established in the French- language region, in the bilingual region of Brussels-Capital, or elsewhere in the European Community." According to other legal requirements, these same channels must also conclude, for at least 2% of their programming, co-production agreements or external service contracts with individuals or companies established in the same geographical areas as those mentioned above. Finally, a channel is to acquire the broadcasting rights for programmes produced in the French Community "in priority and whenever possible" from an independent pro- ducer or distributor of the French Community.

Conclusion

In June 1999, a new political coalition bringing together Liberals, Socialists and Greens dispatched the Christian-Democratic party - in power for forty years without interruption - to the opposition benches. The coalition, with the Liberals firmly ensconced in the driving seat, has not chosen to disturb the current balances, nor to destabilise the public radio and television sector for the benefit of the private sector, as was the case the last time the Liberals came to power, during the eighties.

In Flanders, it is clear that a high degree of interweaving of interests remains between the various media. This expresses itself through cross-ownership, cooperation in the field of reporting, and in advertising management. The public service managed to obtain a strong market position again. After having followed its own media policy for years, Flanders is now witnessing the growing influence of European regulations as well as an increasing presence of multinational corporations in the Flemish media market. While Flanders' cable network was extremely dense from the very beginning, its media landscape has only become differentiated in the last ten years. Most significant by far was the arrival of national commercial station VTM, which triggered many important developments within public broadcasting.

At the same time the skyrocketing channel supply is on a collision course with the *de facto* monopoly in the hands of cable companies. As long as virtually the en- tire Belgian population is dependent on cable for radio and television access, the "national" equilibrium between private and public television will be maintained. But there is no certainty that things will be the same once the Belgians choose to abandon this system that they pioneered, or when, through the development of fibre optic networks, the supply of local or international programmes begins to grow in a substantial manner.

Notes

1. The official launch of RLT-TVI took place in September 1987, with 66% of the capital being held by CLT and 34% by the major daily newspaper publishers grouped together in the Audiopresse company.

2. Its programming was consequently changed in December 1996 and it now includes very popular daytime programmes for children and teens.

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CITIZENSHIP AND MEDIA POLICY IN THE SEMI-PERIPHERY: THE GREEK CASE

Katharine Sarikakis

Abstract

The following work examines the ways in which citizenship and citizenry have been affected by the changing structure of media systems in the periphery. The paper concentrates on television policy and performance in Greece. It explores the close relation between media policy and the notion of civil society that is articulated through media policy and the reflection in it of transformations in the political and economic system. The paper looks at the historical development of television and its relation with the public, arguing that the role of the latter has been diminished ei- ther to the status of receivers of propaganda 'products' or consumers of market ori- ented programmes. The paper aims to critically examine deregulation and current media policies and their impact on the notion of citizenship and the right to com- municate.

Television: The Ultimate Medium?

One of the increasingly significant areas in the study of media systems in the era of economic and cultural globalisation is the relation between citizenship, media development and media policy. Communications in general and especially those in new, technologically advanced forms attract the attention of industrialists, academic scholars and policy-makers, not only due to their perceived immense capabilities for market performance but also due to their social and cultural implications. Perhaps the most dominant Media form in the area of mass communications is television. Although the internet and other electronic forms are argued to be the future in communications, television remains the 'absolute' medium for a number of reasons. It has the capability to appeal to a maximum combination of human senses and relate them into one experience, second only to the scenarios of virtual reality. As a medium television has a very high penetration rate much higher than computers: it

is over 99 per cent in urban areas in Greece and exceeds 92 per cent in the whole national territory, while 40 per cent of the Greek households own more than one colour television set. As a result it fulfils its 'role' as the 'people's' entertainment and information provider in an immediate way while requiring no technical skills for its use. Furthermore, because it relies mostly on visual signals and images it does not demand literacy or high educational level from its users. Still today, television constitutes the most preferred method for receiving information among the peoples of Europe with the highest rate to be found in Greece: 74 per cent of the population prefers television in comparison to 20 per cent preferring newspaper or to an extraordinary two per cent who rely on their computer terminal (EC, 1998).

A further characteristic of the importance of television as the core audio-visual medium is the technological capability to claim a direct mediation of reality. It has become the central and often remains the unique information source, while its multiplicity and accessibility creates a situation difficult to be compared with other media. Especially significant is the role of the medium in the reconstruction of the *boundaries* between private and public life and its impact on personal and common experience and culture. As Wulff (in Hickethier, 1992, p. 106) suggests, the problem of the technologically accessible reality can be identified through the parameters of time and space that become increasingly relative. Electronic communications have even more advanced technological abilities to contribute to this phenomenon, and television is 'borrowing' such advances to become a powerful multidimensional medium. Therefore it is not only the impression or understanding of reality that changes through television but also the understanding of the experience of reality. Perhaps the most powerful attribute assigned to the relation of television to the real world is the changes caused to our perception of the freedom to *deny* the mediation of reality.

Borrowing some parts of the analysis of the medium from a system theory perspective, it is possible to emphasise the links between the cultural and ontological value of the medium to the set of practices that in many ways define its character and determine the conditions of its performance. To the category of such practices belong regulatory provisions, that range from what might appear as indirect as technological standards to policies targeting media content. According to system theorists Bruns and Marcinkowski (1996, p. 19), practical tele-viewing is understood as a 'human need' to acquire knowledge about the outer, remote world, beyond biological-bodily defined boundaries, through stimulation and impressions. The whole experience of the practice of 'tele-viewing' is therefore constituted by three dimensions: entertainment, information and transcendence of one's self. The system of television, not simply its technological but also organisational structure, corresponds to those three dimensions. Meanwhile the historical change of the 'need' is connected to ever changing social conditions and their influence on the transfor-

mation of the system itself. As 'environments' of the system, in an attempt to present taxonomy of social conditions, Droste (1993, pp. 60 - 65) refers among others to politics, economy and culture. These 'environments' play a significant role in the form of the medium but also become affected by and correspond to those changes. These changes refer to the structural operation of the system and expand to areas of content and even consumption of the content. In terms of content and aesthet- ics, for example, continuity, in most cases a common expression of new media con- tent, becomes a current core characteristic of the product of the system. Continuity, called 'flow of broadcasting' as described by Williams or 'flow of programme' *(Pro- gramflu/3)* as understood by Hickethier, serves the functionality of the system, in its role to 'perform' the complexity of reality.

Development of Television in the Periphery

The significance of television has been studied extensively and from a number of different angles; there have also been studies that examine the interaction of the various stages of production cycle and consumption and factors influencing those stages. Greece provides an interesting example for the study of media with particular focus on these issues due to its historical and social dynamics. One of the main concerns in this study is the effects of two 'environments' of the system on its relation with its audience. These 'environments', political life and economy, shape the preconditions under which the medium's character has been formed. From a multitude of factors, two determinants constitute the historical framework in the study of national television: the establishment of the medium under oppressive political circumstances and the lack of local expertise.

For decades, Greece has carried the traits of the periphery such as economic underdevelopment, political instability, a general dependence upon great powers, but most strongly expressed in the form of *cultural dependency,* in many occasions ideological backwardness, such as inequality between women and men and the crude dominance of patriarchy, malfunctioning or absent welfare State. The country has been subject to turbulent political changes in modern times. For example, from 1922 (the 'disaster' of Asia Minor, the first and second Balkan wars, first and sec- ond world wars, civil wars, dictatorship) until mid 1970s there has not been a gen- eration that had not experienced war, and such experience relates to the broadest possible spectrum of social strata. Political and military conditions have been re- flected in media policies, while lived experience economic depression and totalitar- ianism down to personal-political experience of re-negotiating one's existence in accordance to or in conflict with patriarchy, has been reflected in media content. Such 'reflection' had less to do with value-neutral or objective representation of reality. It rather signifies the structuring of reality in organised musters and performs their manipulation that characterises all television programme genres, even non-fictional

ones (Sarikakis, 1997, p. 50).

Greece was one of the last European countries where television was introduced. The first call for tenders was made in 1958, in co-operation with the Italian RAI for the launching of a television station while almost a decade later, in 1966, the first ten minute news programme signalled the introductory phase of the new medium under State provision and control. The history of Greek television does not have a politically or culturally affirmative start: the launch of the medium took place during the years of the military coup d'etat in 1967. The first broadcasts, consisted of pro- grammes donated by the American and French embassies, reveal the traces of a long and continuing tradition of cultural dependence. What is now the most popular medium entered the realm of mass communication without having a secure finan- cial basis, specialised professional education, or a development plan based on de- mocratic aims. From its start, television was 'destined' to be used as an instrument for propaganda and exercise of power by small elite groups. The launch of televi- sion is *identical* with the launch of State owned television characterised by

- journalists inexperienced with the medium and the involvement of military officials
- unwillingness to study the experiences of other countries with longer television traditions
- control over the programme form and content by the political and military forces
- a production, broadcasting and organisational structure with the characteristics of a 'closed system' (Kastoras, 1990, p.107).

Some of the dominant features of the current television system such as the dependant character of the medium's form and content derive directly from that early period and continue almost uninterrupted to today. Under direct control television became politically channelled in a totalitarian manner which resulted in the creation of an image and the belief that media but especially television are inseparably associated with state control and propaganda. The change of government in 1974 and restoration of democracy did not bring the wished change in the media landscape. Even worse, instead of restoring or rather *establishing* even a mediocre form of plurality, the new government proceeded with the legitimisation of State control and propaganda over television. With the Bill 230/75, there ceased to exist any possibility for the democratisation of television. The new regulation came "above all to protect state control and propaganda, which in their turn provided for the government that promoted the resolution" (Kastoras, 1990, p. 109). According to this policy, all decisions regarding production, content, presentation and even finances and administration lay with the State.

At that time there were two television channels one of which, perhaps as crude

expression of the remains of military totalitarianism, bore the name of 'the channel of armed forces'. The channel (YENED), heavily controlled in its organisation and thematic production by the military, existed as such until 1981, when the Socialists came into power. Alone the fact that a military channel was allowed to claim prime time audience and monopolise information is an indication of two parallel dominant ideological concepts. On the one hand, it demonstrates an unbalanced and abusive power of military over civil forces and civil society, which continued to exist even well after the 'restoration' of the democratic system. On the other hand it provided the forum and official instrument for a strong appeal to nationalistic sentiments and their cultivation, in particular when significant internal and external affairs were concerned.

The dominance of the autarchic state in that realm of the public sphere penetrated by television has cultivated a negative perception of the media as will be discussed further on. It is interesting to note that 20 years after the launching of Greek television, the old patterns of etatisme continued to exist almost unchanged in substance. Even the socialist party's political programme was not put into practice during the first term. Instead the politics of 'change', the major slogan in the election campaign of the socialist party, populist politics, confused, unclear direction and demagogy delayed media democratisation for a second time. As Papathanasopoulos notes, socialist politics were confused with the exception of the manipulation of *news programmes* (Papathanasopoulos, 1995, p. 390). By that time, 1981, Greece had already become a member of the European Union (EEC at the time) having therefore decided to claim its 'western' identity, through its authorities, despite intense objections of all parties of the Opposition in the Parliament but also the greatest part of the population. Socialists, an opposition party themselves, avoided the subject after their election.

The military channel, a case of extreme State intervention, was abolished in 1981 for the launching of a second civil channel - also under State control - in order to provide more space for the promotion of freedom, and the creation of, democratic development of television. A third revision of the law (Regulation 1730/87), and with it a third chance to democratise media, was lost again since the government did not show the 'courage' to disrupt the relation of dependency (Kastoras, 1990, p. 109). According to the Greek constitution, freedom of speech is guaranteed for Greek men and women, the press is free but television is subject to State control. It would demand a major revision of the constitution therefore to change the provision related to electronic media. However, the phenomenon of some degree of State control over public broadcasters, as well as State monopoly of the airwaves, was relative- ly common in Europe until late 1980s, when the wave of deregulation and de-monopolisation took place due to technological developments.

Post-modern Times: More Players, Pictures and Words - The Same Story

As member of the EU, Greece participates in the decision making of policy formation in the EU and is obliged to comply with regulation. One of the most rapidly developing policy making areas is that of media and especially audio-visual media and new technologies, under the broad umbrella term 'information society'. One of the first instances where Greek media policy had to be redefined and harmonised according to EU guideline was the case with ERT (the Greek State broadcaster) versus the mayor of Thessaloniki. The latter won the case for breaking state monopoly in television broadcasting by setting up a local TV channel. This signalled the beginning of an inconsistent, problematic and abrupt process of deregulation while it also became the beginning of the official establishment of non-state region- al media.

The lack of a comprehensive regulatory framework in other European countries has only contributed to the increasing pressure for deregulation on the government from media industrialists together with, in particular, the conservative political opposition. The result was deregulation and lack not only of a new regulatory framework that would provide for the new electronic media but also the absence of any plan that would deal with the new economic conditions, such as the sudden opening of the broadcasting market and its social implications. The owners of the new channels are political parties, big publishing houses and other media owners and local authorities. The absence of any restrictions in the patterns of ownership and the significant delay in the implementation of guidelines and criteria for the granting of broadcasting licenses reinforced the relative closure of the system by allowing only the economically strong interested parties to take advantage of the situation and very quickly dominate the market. Within the first year, the market 'pie' was clearly reserved for the big players, a situation that has almost become polarised between private and public service broadcasters (Baroutas, 1996; AGB, 1995, 1998). It is significant that advertising revenue constituted 43.1 per cent for public service television and 56.9 per cent for the total of private broadcasters in 1990, while it dropped to only 3.5 per cent for the former and increased to an absolute 96.5 per cent for the latter within five years (Nielsen op cit. in Media View, 1996, p. 47).

Deregulation, the most important moment in the history of Greek television after its launch, did not follow a code of conduct, as in similar cases did the liberalisation of the media in Europe. Moreover it is reasonable to argue that this was the result of the combination of external transformation of media landscapes, internal pres- sure and non-policy making mainly due to the political 'vacuum' which occurred in 1989-90, after the downfall of the socialist party and the consecutive elections and temporary coalition government. Media market regulation was therefore not an opening to competition but an extension and transformation of political to econom-

ic feudalism, with the press barons to acquire more media 'land' using the press to support their claim. The process of the distribution of licenses took place under neither transparent nor accountable conditions, while instead of ensuring pluralism through the implementation of anti-concentration policies, cross-ownership was encouraged for the construction of a 'controllable' market in the hands of a few.

To the pre-existing conditions of lack of meritocracy that characterised personnel recruitment and human resources of the state broadcasters (Daremas & Terzis, 2000), the emergence of a paradox was added. This was the crude exploitation of journalists and the emergence of a journalistic 'proletariat' on the one hand and the construction of journalists and television presenters - stars on the other. The social implications of deregulation have very quickly been made obvious in television content. The deregulation phase, the first phase of which took place between 1989 - 1995, is characterised by

- significant absence of State control over the market
- disintegration of the role of the State in the area of regulation
- lack of economic and social provisions related to the protection of intellectual property, working relations and content provisions
- uncritical and unrestrained absorption of international programme tendencies
- limited investments in new technologies.

Private broadcasters imitated one another and brought very little innovation to the programme or the production structure. As a result of the non-policy strategy that Greek governments have adopted, very little provision was made to ensure the smooth operation of the system and the establishment of harmonious relations with its 'environments'. Therefore, at least in the beginning of the era of the privatisation of communications, the existing, general, measures for the protection of media workers, content as related to social values such as journalistic ethics, the protection and promotion of indigenous works and the involvement of the public in the production of meanings through the right to reply were not sufficient or adequate. Similarly there was no provision for the fulfilment of such conditions that would guarantee a degree of 'fair play' between big and smaller players.

The case of Thessaloniki local television can be understood as the start of the practical application of the regulatory regime and economic developments already underway in the rest of Europe. Bill 1866/89 opens up the way to the privatisation of airwaves by allowing local authorities and private companies to enter the communications market while the later 1943/91 provides for the establishment of regional and local television and radio station *networks* allowed to broadcast at a national and not only local level (Demertzis & Skamnakis, 1998, pp. 214-215). At this moment there are around 150 television stations broadcasting at a local and re-

gional range in Greece, but this number is an estimate of the current situation. There is no precise data to give us the full picture: some of these stations only sur- vive for a short period, others exist only as companies without broadcasting. Re- garding the content of these stations there is even less information, first evidence suggests that their news programmes mainly concentrate on local news, traditions and problems that farmers face (ibid). It is however not difficult to understand why domestic programme production is very limited with the consequence to rely heav- ily on imports especially American.

Studies of television content in European countries point out that the quality of programming suffers under commercialisation. Some of the characteristics of television content are homogenisation of products not only within the same broadcaster but across providers, neglecting 'minority' audiences such as programmes for children and increasing tendency towards the dramatisation of non fiction programmes (Kepler, 1994; Dauncey, 1996; Kruger & Zapf-Schramm, 1994). In the process of over-commercialisation following the turbulent phase of deregulation, content was one of the most obvious areas affected. 'Antennisation' (Tsaliki, 1995) of television content, taken by the dominant private television station Antenna, is the Greek version of that development. Despite the fact that public service television has been the object of State control, it remained a provider of educational and information programmes, caring for the educational and entertainment needs of those social groups that are immensely neglected such as children audiences. It is indicative that in 1996, there were 16 programme titles of reality TV shows, most of them on a daily basis. Reality shows were watched by 16 per cent to 30 per cent of the audience between 4:30 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. (MEDIA SERVICES in Epikoinonia, 1996, p. 22). Children's programmes constituted 16 per cent of broadcasting time on public service television and hardly 7 per cent on both most viewed chan- nels, Antenna and Mega Channel.

These figures compared to 60 per cent of entertainment programmes and to nonexistent educational programmes demonstrate changes in programming to accommodate the economic imperative to attract audiences quickly. One of the tactics has been for several years the repetition of films of the 'golden era' of Greek cinema in 1960s with frequency of at least one such movie every day during prime time (Sarikakis, 1997, p. 97). While those films, as well as a soap opera versions of the same thematic of those films, through programmes such as Kalimera Zoi on Antenna, provided older generations with a sense of security in a rapid changing society, one hour long news bulletins, also situated in the prime time zone, 'presented' the world through the discourse filters of nationalism and populism. Drawing upon a series of techniques that combine characteristics from different genres Greek television adopted the same formats internationally known as 'reality TV' and 'infotainment'.

Information Flow, Media Freedom or News Obsession? Elements of National 'Identity'

The paradox of the new status quo is the emphasis given to news programmes that would now occupy one third of all air time of all major public service and private broadcasters (ibid, p. 104). In prime time zone eight out of nine· parallel broadcast talk shows were political shows (Sarikakis, 1997). One of the most characteristic developments and the fastest growing genre became reality TV. Through the combination of characteristics of political talk show and investigative journalism with dramatic elements of fiction genres a false impression of reality is created, which is based on the impression that 'live' broadcasting conveys. A pseudo-sense of reality is achieved through 'directed' spontaneity of reality TV and controlled dynamic among presenters and guest speakers. But the most important, most popular with programme designers aspect is the fact that such programmes are of very low budget while at the same time the authenticity of presentation of reality is claimed. Though the latter big channels keep high audience quotas that results in the biggest market share in advertising revenue. Such has been the success of reality television that one station (SKY TV) claims to be the Greek version of a quasi- CNN. Its programmes consist of one and half hour news bulletins and low budget talk shows that reach an average of 18 hours of reality TV broadcasting time each day.

'Reality TV' used as synonym for 'live' and 'direct', allows private and increasingly state channels claim their - journalistic - authenticity and status through live broadcasts that can last hours interrupting the programme flow in times of crises. If 'live' means, permanently newly produced reality (Schmitz, 1995, p. 120), technological advances make it possible for television stations to claim the reproduction of 'reality', that provides a whole different dimension to time and space: 500 journalists were involved in covering three events that took place at the same time in Athens 1996. These three critical events were the demonstrations that led to riots during the national remembrance day of 17 November, the prime minister's admission to the hospital and protest of prisoners in high security prisons in Athens. A total of 71 hours and 11 minutes were broadcast live from four television channels, equivalent to almost three days broadcasting. This 'news-mania', which has expanded to all channels is at a first glance contradictory to the television trends of highly commercialised media systems in strong industrial countries such as Germany, France or even UK. A closer look at the historical context of such developments, however, will reveal elements of Greek national 'identity' that finds itself especially at this particular point in time in a very intense process of re-definition.

News 'obsession' or more generally seen the 'politicisation' of television (Daremas & Terzis, 2000) have their roots in two main, emotionally charged concepts, information flow and media freedom. The reasons for this can be found first in the his-

torical experience and common memory of political control over press, expressed in direct preventive (Tsaliki, 1995) censorship during dictatorship, control over television and radio by the state over 20 years. Secondly freedom of press, made explicit in its electronic form, means freedom of expression and the right to express and receive opinions a right that has been severely violated in modern history of Greece. A typical characteristic of the latter was the fact that for certain periods one's words would be enough for one to be judged, and therefore condemned (Tsaousis, 1983).

A further factor in the 'politicisation' of television is related to the character of Greek press in modern - and post-modern times. In a sense, the Greek press retains the characteristics of 'nineteenth century press' by being 'highly politicised and clearly related to party interests' (op cit. in Splichal, 1995, p. 52). The high number of newspapers, radio and television stations cannot be explained in terms of the market since very few of them are considered to be economically viable. In fact these operators owe their survival to subsidies, personal assets of their owners and loans. The reason is that the significance of newspapers lies not only in their profit making role but in their political power, since anyone who would be interested in having an influence in Greek politics would need to have either very good relations with the press or own a newspaper through which the government can be put un- der pressure, especially when party politics or market relations are negotiated (Tsa- liki, 1995). Television ownership and control follows the same pattern. As seen ear- lier, the number of national, regional and local broadcasters is not clear. What is clear though is the fact that from a financial perspective the market cannot accom- modate so many actors, since the advertising revenue cannot support all media. In- dicative is the data on viewing habits of the Greek audience: there is stability in viewership patterns in the last years, that reveal that the availability of free time re- mained unchanged (AGB, 1996; 1998). So average daily reach and daily viewing remained at the same levels. The biggest commercial broadcasters ANT1, MEGA and SKY also maintained [via] programming mix an audience share at 23, 21 and 15 per cent retrospectively. These broadcasters dominate the market and are close- ly related to party interests. Public service broadcasters are left behind regarding audiences quotas and advertising revenue but their role as PR for the government - at least through news programmes - is too valuable to risk. Private broadcasters are in an alliance relationship with a specific party, while remaining during the rest of their broadcasting time highly commercial.

The Citizen: Between a Rock and the Market Place

The significance of live broadcasting, reality TV and exceptionally long, one hour minimum news bulletins during prime time television, the political significance of the printed press and its extension to 'electronic press' and the consequent 'politicisa-

tion' of television present a core characteristic and a factor in the construction of the modern Greek identity and its relation to the role of individual as a citizen. Although generally it is neither simple nor wishful to design a concrete framework within which Greek television operates it is nevertheless possible to identify main trends and traits of media landscape, the effect of policy onto content and its relation to au- diences. The hegemony of television in the public sphere results in some identifi- able consequences on the formation of national identity and the negotiation with the role of the citizens.

Currently, private broadcasters dominate the market in the Greek television ter- ritory. Public service television had to re-define itself several times in order to attract audience, the latest instance of which is the transformation of ET1 into an enter- tainment channel and that of ET2 (renamed NET) into an information channel, that managed to monopolise national events such as sports and therefore achieve high- er shares (AGB, 1998, p. 13). PSB however provides programmes *even* for the most remote areas in Greece but also to the eight million Greeks of the diaspora. Recently linked with the Cypriot PSB, the public broadcaster (ERT) caters for a wider Greek speaking community, imitated already by satellite transmissions of An- tenna. It is reasonable to expect co-operations or *even* mergers between Cypriot and Greek private corporations in the Media field in the immediate future, although there are yet no satisfactory data as to audiences reach in the wider Greek speak- ing world. The tendency towards expansion however becomes clear when new ser- vices are considered such as pay-TV (FILMNET and SUPERSPORT), whose sub- scribers have been steadily increasing since 1995 and during 1998 and is expect- ed to increase further (AGB, 1998). Looking for new avenues to maximise viewer- ship and therefore profit and given the fact that audiences share remains stable, pri- vate broadcasters would need to either increase their share in advertising revenue and/or to expand into new markets. Both solutions are problematic to an extent be- cause the limits of advertising are not infinite while (Greek speaking) audiences can be reached only outside the Greek national territory.

Still the relation remains that of centralised production and distribution from the centre to the periphery. This centralisation is also reflected and expressed in the content of television, which although nationalising politics (Daremas & Terzis, 2000) and therefore creating a 'national' public sphere with regards social issues, it is nev- ertheless preoccupied with the centre where such political decisions are made. It is only through the gradual but not unproblematic growth and development of region- al and local media that some form of de-centralisation is taking place. This does not necessarily guarantee wider citizen participation in the making of information or pro- gramme production nor does it present an adequate condition for the safeguarding of democracy. The same applies to the fact that liberalisation of communications cannot automatically provide from the liberal point of view pluralism of sources or

sources or content. It is characteristic that although cross ownership is restricted in most European countries, it constitutes a necessary condition under Greek regulation (Tsaliki, 1995; Daremas & Terzis, 2000).

Television articulates and negotiates social problems. According to Splichal (1995), ownership does have an impact on content. Control over Greek television is shared between media conglomerates and the State without a counter-power, that of civil society and civic movements to counter balance control of the public sphere. Control of the private media landscape is exercised by five people (see Daremas and Terzis). The National Broadcasting Council (NBC) is directly con- trolled by the government: its president, members and whole administration are di- rectly placed by, and report to, the government (Articles 6 & 11 of Regulation 213). The NBC has a very weak presence while another body, that of the Journalist's Union has not proved to be particularly dynamic either, especially in cases of news content and working conditions of journalists. The current 'personality' of Greek television, not particularly different from other countries however, is constituted by 'dramas', 'happy talk' news and 'human interest' stories that appear under the jus- tification of information, while the boundaries between advocacy, information and entertainment become increasingly blurred. In a sense, therefore, citizens feel more alienated in their role since they are mainly addressed as consumers, while politics and decision-making remain the domain of financial and political elites. This phe- nomenon reinforces a situation where centres 'produce' decisions while the periph- ery 'consumes' such decisions and the debates conducted around them. (Galtung and Vincent, 1992). Open discourse to contested issues is usually allowed by a commercial medium to the extend that debates do not jeopardise corporate interests; part of such issues is the de-politicisation of gender politics (Rapping, 2000).

Some scholars however see a positive development in the acquisition of knowledge through the transformed character of commercial and public service television. Daremas and Terzis (2000) argue that the politicisation of Greek television had positive effects in the politicisation of women. Moreover, television is argued to be 'gender neutral', while the benefits from the 'nationalisation' of political issues is claimed to have provided Greek women with a certain knowledge about political issues as opposed to the impact of press over women's interest in politics. Their argument presents a series of problems however. The claim that television is gender neutral is inaccurate. Not only is Greek television *not* gender neutral but it also demonstrates very strong patriarchal features at its structural, that is workforce-productive level, and representational level. Only in exceptional cases do female journalists participate in 'serious,' usually political, programmes while the vast majority are used for decorative purposes in chat-shows, quizzes, dramas and in sexist stereotypical roles. It is characteristic that there were no female war correspondents, in particular during the Gulf war, when private television gained its audience,

with the argument that a female voice cannot possibly project the seriousness of the situation; such attitudes have very little changed until today (Sarikakis, 1997). Besides figures that appear to show simiiarity of viewing habits regarding television between men and women, uses and reasons for these need to be studied and analysed qualitatively, taking into account differences in realities in women's lives from those of male audience.

Furthermore, the assumption that television 'politicised' Greek women fails to take into consideration a series of factors. For a start, there are very limited studies on the status of women in Greece and even less studies on media uses. Secondly the definition of politics itself is very limited since it concentrates on state politics that are predominantly defined by male politicians. At the same time, it is charac- teristic that there is a total absence of gender politics or women's issues (working relations, childcare, health and education etc) from the public sphere. The latest election campaigns of the two major parties, socialists and conservatives, did not even mention such issues. Taking these facts into consideration, together with the fact that civil society is very weak in Greece (Tsaousis, 1983; Damianakos, 1987), it is very difficult to imagine how television and its representation of politics can ever be gender neutral.

It is also very problematic to claim that Greek women are not interested in politics since figures of newspaper readership reveal only a part of female politicisation and activism. It is the same argument that is used to claim that there have been no great female scientists in history when it becomes obvious how difficult it is to 'discover' them and to recognise that discriminatory structures have precluded them from recognition. 'Measuring' interest based only on readership numbers reveals habits related to newspaper readership but not to political understanding or politicisation.

Regarding content, Greek television is less than gender neutral: on the contrary sexist language, that expands to educational programmes, and sexist images of women reproduce the structures of Greek society. In that sense neither PSBs nor private broadcasters have come any further; they continue playing a negative role in the educational task to provide the public with values of equality. The citizen remains gendered, disrespected and misinformed.

Extremities in content has provoked some debate in Greece regarding trash TV containing such images as described above that range from disrespect of privacy and violations of the right to remain 'anonymous', to works that can be argued violate the human right of freedom of speech through the portrayal of stereotypical images, have not been effectively addressed by the NBC or journalist union. Psarithis, chairman of public service radio, publicly acknowledged that journalists betray the

trust of audiences because they convey no information but entertainment (Sarikakis, 1997). The journalists' association has mainly remained silent regarding pornographic and other explicit images that have penetrated television, usually with the pretence of dancing activities, talk shows and family entertainment programmes in general. Content that is offensive to a particular part of the population such as women remains uncriticised by the press, the NBC or other professional organisations.

The growth of transnational advertising and the extension of audience commodity exchange and technological dependency (Maxwell, 1995) influence the chang- ing patterns of construction of 'identities'. A strategy of the global corporate logic is to mediate and construct a semi-peripheral identity based on and directed to the consumption of 'globally available' goods, such as films, music etc. The construc- tion of semi-peripheral identities that keep a contact with the international dynamics of economy, politics and culture theoretically does, however, allow for a certain de- gree of re-negotiation of characteristics of identity. The obstacle to the development of such values that do not stand in conflict with human rights and human dignity and equality, or even such that would project a civil society, is that in the absence of the latter, individual actors as well as affected parts of the population become dis-empowered. As Splichal (1995) notes about the Eastern and central European countries, the question of the kind of counterpower civil society has at its disposal is one of the main problems related to its autonomy from the state. The same can be argued to be the case of the market. This can be seen in the fact that no consumer organisations or any civil organisations such as the women's association have ever been consulted for issues that concern citizenship and its relation to media policy. If media policy is citizenship policy (Hutchison, 1999) then the features of current Greek media policy and non-policy do contribute to the undermining of the impor- tance of the role of the public as citizens. One of the most important functions of civ- il society is the formation of citizenship information and education that is channelled in two directions, that is towards both citizens and governments. This takes place in public spheres (from the feminist critique to Habermas's notion of the public sphere) but also through the *dominant* public sphere, to which access and control concern mainly the mainstream media. Especially therefore in the case where civic move- ments appear to be weak, their media could only feed mainstream media with sto- ries and alternative opinions with great difficulty. New technological opportunities, such as the 'opening' of the airwaves to accommodate more mediated voices, do not automatically bring solutions to deeply entrenched problems of democracy in political systems and communities. It is the use of these new opportunities for edu- cation, information, participation that remains a matter of political will among gover- nors and citizens (Van Dijk, 1999, p. 234). One would be blind not to see the great changes in the character of Greek society, that is in many ways reflected in the me- dia through contradictions in the content, even in the regulatory provisions. Such

changes regard a more open, democratic society allowing criticism especially directed to two main areas: that of the nature of national identity and nationalism and the critique of a social system of deeply rooted patriarchy.

Note

Such is the pace of change in television services *in* Greece that some of the station names used in this paper will have changed by the date of its publication.

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WEST ASIAN AUDIENCES FOR SOUTH ASIAN SATELLITE TELEVISION: COSMOPOLITAN LOCALS AND NOSTALGIC EXPATRIATES

Amos Owen Thomas

Abstract

While early global/regional channels in Asia were seen as instruments of Western imperialism, they were soon followed by channels created by and targeted at sub-regional, national, or even subnational-ethnic markets. Much has been written about the impact of channels of global/regional origin on Asian audiences, but the phenomenon of audiences in one Asian subregion for television channels from another has seldom been addressed. Utilising a case-study of the pan-Asian broadcaster StarTV and the Indian-based broadcaster ZeeTV, the research investigates the viewership for these transnational channels in West Asia. It first chronicles the development of television policies in West Asia before examining the growth of South Asian television within its subregion and beyond. The limited data seems to indicate the viability of transnational satellite television targeting expatriate/migrant minorities together with cosmopolitan locals, rather than just nationally-bounded markets. These diverse audiences for satellite television in Asia also suggest that rather than being defined as West-over-East, the concept of media imperialism may be in need of theoretical reformulation in a postmodern era.

Introduction

From a media imperialism perspective, state-of-the-art communications technologies such as satellite television perpetuate the status quo of the capitalist world economy and impose a global culture of western origin. It is argued that although an increasing number of developing countries have launched satellites for domes- tic purposes, they continued to be dependent on technology and programming from developed countries. However, commercial broadcasters in developing countries are increasingly becoming major players on the regional and international stage, as

evident in Latin America for some decades and in Asia over the last decade. Yet there is little data gathered and virtually no discussion of the impact of television from one developing country on other developing countries has taken place. This paper seeks to examine the applicability of the concept of media imperialism in the context of transnational satellite television from India and its subregional audiences in South Asia and West Asia over the 1990s.

Background

In 1991 the pioneering satellite broadcaster in Asia, StarTV began broadcasting five television channels via the AsiaSat1 satellite and soon claimed audiences in over 50 countries Asia-wide under its footprint. Quite early, it had considerable im- pact in India since a sizeable portion of its 880 million population was capable of comprehending its predominant language of broadcast, English. All but one of StarTV's initial four English language channels were soon available on India's un- regulated local cable networks. StarTV was subsequently bought by Rupert Mur- doch's News Corporation in the mid-1990s and began diversifying its programme offerings for national/ethnic markets. In 1992 a group of local and overseas Indian investors launched ZeeTV, a Hindi-language channel able to cater to both urban and rural areas of India, the latter relatively untouched by StarTV. It circumvented India's law banning commercial channels by uplinking from Hong Kong to AsiaSat1, the same satellite platform as StarTV then. In 1993 News Corporation purchased a 49.9 per cent stake in Asia Today, the parent company of ZeeTV, though by the end of the decade Asia Today had bought back News Corporation's stake. Since 1996 the former partners had been in 'collaborative competiton' for market share, but the break-up prompted speculation of intensified competition between ZeeTV and StarTV. In 1998 the flagship channel Star Plus was relaunched as StarWorld targeted specifically at the Indian market and offering a number of programmes, in both Hindi and English and made within the country (AdWeek Asia, 1998). Over the 1990s a number of other commercial television channels such as SunTV, Asianet, Udaya, Eenadu and RajTV began broadcasting in minority Indian languages. Ini- tially dependent on foreign satellites and uplinking facilities, as locally owned chan- nels they have been granted uplinking access by the Indian government (Television Asia, 1998) to reach audiences across the South Asian sub-continent and beyond, particularly into neighbouring West Asia.

A tension was feared to arise between transnational television broadcasters in Asia and the countries under their footprints. While severe restrictions may not be acceptable to multinational corporations from developed countries, considerable deregulation may be unacceptable to developing countries. Satellite/cable televi- sion was thought to be the transnational medium par excellence, and global media corporations set to dominate the cultural landscape in Asia at the start of the 1990s.

Yet it became apparent even within the first five years that domestic and regional Asian channels, whether public or commercial, delivered by satellite, cable or even terrestrially, continued to attract far larger audiences in most countries in Asia than any global or 'western' ones. This has been quite true of West Asia as in other sub-regions where Indian television has attracted considerable audiences. Discourses on cultural imperialism have long presupposed that it is of developing countries by developed countries. When the audiences for television from one nation in the developing world are from neighbouring nations or those at a distance, with or without cultural affinities, mutual or otherwise. the question that arises is whether such definitions and arguments still apply.

Alleging Media Imperialism

Whenever the cultures of core countries in the world political-economic system are dominant in peripheral countries, cultural imperialism is said to occur and this is said to be symptomatic of a dependency or exploitative relationship. Most formulations of cultural imperialism are largely based on economic dependency perspectives, but Lee (1980) attempted to re-define the more specific media imperialism as the composite of programme flows, ownership, transfers of broadcast systems, and promotion of capitalist worldviews/ lifestyles. He viewed socialist control of the media as no less acceptable than capitalist domination, and suggests that regional cooperation, creative use of the media, and the synthesis of modern and traditional media may be antidotes to media imperialism. Said (1994) finds evidence of 'Western' imperialism in Asia from nineteenth century colonial literature right down to the mass media of today. Most programmes on domestic television in Third World countries were imported because of the high cost of local production and tastes of the local elite. Whatever was produced locally was often a clone of foreign programmes and gave only a sense of pseudo-indigenisation.

Mattelart (1983) contended that transnational corporations dominate national culture and as evidence cited news and programming distribution networks, and transnational advertising agency networks. Schiller (1989) argued further that the trend worldwide towards deregulation in broadcasting results from lobbying by corporations, faced with the increased competitiveness of a global marketplace made possible by the new communications technologies. Since public broadcasting proved expensive for developing countries and was often not able to gain popular support, commercial broadcasters who were able to attract advertising revenue tended to be encouraged instead. Furthermore these new communication tech- nologies allowed the multinational corporations to bypass existing broadcasting and telecommunications structures, at least in part, and offer services on a fee-paying basis to advertisers or consumers.

A more recent dissenter from the dominant free-market view is Hamelink (1994) who questions the impact of deregulation on local autonomy in service industries, such as broadcasting in developing countries. Developing countries may either be excluded from the information age or have their cultures co-opted in the process of converting them into markets for global products. However Ayish (1992) contends that developing nations may have to rethink their authoritarian orientation if they wish to be integrated into the information-based global economy. He proposes that international communication be thought of primarily as information vital to politico-economic planning rather than as mass-media cultural imperialism. Given the ever-widening gap with developed countries, developing countries cannot afford to shut out technological change. Allegations of foreign media impact may be mitigated by emphasising their role in mediating new cultural experiences rather than determining it.

As with many others, Tomlinson (1991) sees media at the core of the cultural imperialism debate; comprising as it does the cluster of programming, advertising and news whose economics of production and dissemination is dominated by multinational corporations of the capitalist world market. Cultural imperialism is more than media imperialism since the media are not the totality of cultural experience but are merely the 'mediation' of capitalist modernity which is a form of global capitalist imperialism. Tomlinson questions who speaks for whom in the debate and asks whether Third World citizens themselves might not think cultural imperialism worth the social development which accompanies it such as clean water and good roads. So he concludes that cultural imperialism ought to be studied in terms of the wider socio-economic changes in developing countries in which the media play a role by mediating the complexity of the new culture to its citizens.

Albarran and Chan-Olmsted (1998) warn that while none of the global media conglomerates have achieved dominance in any national market, policy makers need to be watchful over consequences for competition and consumers. Herman and McChesney (1997) argue that the converging media, telecommunications and advertising industries dominated by US conglomerates comprise new missionaries of global capitalism and are a threat to national public spheres. But Skovmand and Schr_der (1992), editing a series of articles which assess the impact of transnational, largely U.S. television on Europe, reject the simplistic notion that the effect is unilateral and uniform. They further allege that public broadcasting in Europe in the past has been paternalistic itself in reflecting only the tastes of the elite, a form of in-country imperialism. Barker (1996) argues for a plural public sphere in a post-modern globalised world where the nation-state has a lesser role. Nonetheless, books on transnational television in Asia such as Bhatt (1994) and Goonasekera and Lee (1998) still tend to express concern for the erosion of cultural values and undermining of national sovereignty.

Chronicling West Asia Television

Television was relatively well-developed in West Asia prior- to the arrival of StarTV and ZeeTV, and had their own sub-regional satellite television services. However there was quite a divergence of approaches to developing and regulating television among the countries within West Asia. Kuwait was the first Gulf-state to introduce television in 1961, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) followed in 1969, though it took over two decades for television to reach its more distant emirates. Qatar introduced television in 1970 and like Kuwait began a second channel to cater to its expatriate community. Television in Bahrain began in 1973 and had by 1993 expanded into five channels and a cable pay-TV service. In Oman television began only in 1974 and utilised microwave transmissions to cover the whole country. Televi- sion in Saudi Arabia launched in 1965 was state-controlled and from 1982 consist- ed of two channels. It utilised the Intelsat to provide national coverage in conjunc- tion with terrestrial facilities. Like other West Asian countries, the Gulf states have long had cooperative arrangements for news and programme exchanges, and a common understanding on the Islamic values they would uphold (Ayish and Qas- sim, 1995).

Among the Gulf states, satellite dishes are legal in the UAE, Kuwait and Oman. In addition to a commercial station in UAE's Dubai and Abu Dhabi there were cable networks operating there (World Broadcasting News, 1993). Since there are an estimated two expatriate employees for every local Arab in the UAE, most from Asia, this audience became of interest to transnational satellite television stations (Via Satellite, 1995). The Omani government debated the cultural impact of transna- tional satellite television when it was first introduced in 1991 but approved satellite dishes, believing that systematic Islamic teaching would immunise its 1.5 million cit- izens from the more adverse effects. Despite an official ban on satellite dishes in Bahrain, six per cent of its 230,000 television households had some access to DBS television. In addition to its own five channels, the state broadcaster offers 23 pay- TV channels via MMDS which includes StarTV and ZeeTV channels (Al-Thawadi and Gallard, 1997). Another Gulf state, Qatar, initially imposed a ban on satellite dishes and opted to install a cable network to carry selected and censored pro- gramming from the transnational television channels (Straits Times, 1994). Quite unexpectedly in 1995, Qatar lifted restrictions on all media and introduced satellite channel called Al-Jazeera which revolutionised news and information programming for the whole region (Al-Hail, 2000).

Although never approved officially in Saudi Arabia, estimates of up to 400,000 satellite dishes and two million viewers were made in the mid-1990s. Owners hid them behind brick walls or under tarpaulins, while prices of satellite dishes and receivers doubled with official crackdowns (Al-Makaty, 1995). However some mem-

bers had intimated that the Saudi royal family had considerable investments in Arabic satellite television broadcasting from Europe and elsewhere in the Middle East. Later micro-transmission system was installed in the country to re-distribute regional and international channels monitored to ensure programming in line with the country's religious and cultural values. But the consequent isolation of Saudis may explain their motivation for television via direct broadcast satellite instead (Marghalani, Palmgreen and Boyd, 1998). Although religion was a major factor in the development of television in West Asia, a major stimulus in the demand for satellite television was the start of the Gulf War in 1991. As in the rest of Asia, it compelled domestic television and restricted pay-TV to compete with new free-to-air transnational broadcasters via satellite (Kumar, 1999).

To apply a typology of government policies towards early transnational broadcasters such as StarTV (Thomas, 1999), most West Asian states adopted one of 'controlled access', while Qatar and Saudi Arabia opted for 'active suppression'. Likewise, the national response of most South Asian states such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal towards transnational commercial television via satellite could be characterised as 'controlled access'. But India held to a policy of 'complacent inaction' for a number of years yet, having neither the political will nor the resources to enforce laws prohibiting broadcasts by transnational television. Rather belatedly India did devise laws to regulate the burgeoning cable television industry and acknowledge the popularity of transnational and domestic broadcasts delivered via satellite and cable. Given its dominant geographical size, location and population, India has dominated the television market in the South Asian region for decades, simply by spillover television. With the advent of commercial satellite television, India channels led by ZeeTV have come to command audiences in West Asia as well in ways and for reasons this paper will elucidate.

South Asian Satellite Broadcasters

ZeeTV. Since its launch towards the end of 1992 on the southern beam of an AsiaSat1 transponder leased from Star TV, ZeeTV has been a major catalyst for change in South Asian television. It broke even within its first year of operations and by 1997 ZeeTV had a 29 per cent share of cable and satellite households. Its success has been attributed to the mixture of Hindi films and film-related programming, serials, music shows, game shows and chat shows. Through its programmes it also popularised a creole of Hindi and Enlish called 'Hinglish' amongst a youthful market. By 1998 with a network of four 24-hour channels - ZeeTV, Zee Cinema, ZeeTV India and Music Asia, it reached approximately 23 million households in South Asia and West Asia. With ambitions to expand its operations to reach Indian diaspora in Europe and North America, ZeeTV was boasting of being the largest Asian television network (Thussu, 1999).

Other Indian Broadcasters. Since 50-60 per cent of the country is Hindi-speaking most of the stations, such as ZeeTV, JainTV, and ATN (founded by Indians from the UK) are in that language though JainTV then experimented with some Tamil and Bengali programming. There is now a Tamil satellite station - SunTV, a Malayalam satellitestation - AsiaNet, and a Kannada satellite station - Udaya - all of them appealing to ethnic cultural tastes in the southern states. SunTV and AsiaNet were used primarily to reach Tamil Nadu and Kerala states while audiences such as Tamils and Keralians in the Middle East, in Sri Lanka or even elsewhere in India were initially treated by the broadcasters as incidental. Sony Entertainment Televi- sion began in 1995 and was soon claiming a penetration of 9.9 million households. A number of these newer commercial channels had a combination of domestic in- vestors (including state governments, film-stars and politicians) and foreign in- vestors (including multinational media conglomerates and ethnic Indians resident abroad),making it difficult to categorise them by ownership.

Transborder Audiences

West Asia. Within West Asia, satellite television reception grew in 1994 to 33 per cent of all TV households in Saudi Arabia despite government restrictions. Egyptian Satellite Channel (ESC) and Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC) were the most popular channels then and there were also satellite transmissions from Arab Radio and Television (ART), Orbit Communications and Dubai TV. Since the average StarTV home had 5.8 persons, there were over 2.2 million potential viewers,most of them local Arabs, affluent and better educated. However when it came to viewership, only 60 per cent of local Arabs and 31 per cent of expatriate Arabs watched StarTV yesterday as compared with 83 per cent of expatriate Asians, possibly due to English-language comprehension (StarTV, 1995). This number increased substantially with the launch of AsiaSat2 and by early 1997 StarTV had a penetration of 388,000 homes (StarTV, 2000a). Satellite dish anten- nae were the prime means of StarTV reception though cable systems were on the increase and some StarTV programming was transmitted terrestrially from Bahrain.
!n the late 1990s, premier channels such as Star World, Star Movies as well as Fox Sports, National Geographic, Granada UK, CNBC and Sky News were offered in West Asia as the pay-TV package Star Select (StarTV, 2000b).

In the United Arab Emirates, StarTV penetration grew 148 per cent in 1994 alone to 288,790 households or 48 per cent of all TV households, though 70 per cent of StarTV homes were in the largest cities of Dubai and Abu Dhabi and 99 per cent by private satellite dishes. Of the potential 1.1 million viewers, expatriate Asians were the highest since 87 per cent of their households had StarTV and 72 per cent of them watched yesterday as compared with 58 per cent of local Arabs and 63 per cent of expatriate Arabs. Once again a StarTV/ZeeTV home had an 18 per cent

higher average monthly household income, more luxury consumer goods, better education and greater English comprehension, than other households. In June 1994, StarTV signed an agreement with Dubai Radio/felevision, the state-owned broadcaster, to develop and market jointly Arabic-language programming and an Arabic channel (Asian Wall Street Journal, 1994). By 1995 StarTV/ZeeTV was available in 75,544 households or 38 per cent of all TV households in Kuwait, an increase of 142 per cent over 1994, though it stagnated at that level into the late-1990s (StarTV, 2000a). There are no restrictions on transnational satellite television and the Kuwait government intends to compete with the market leaders, StarTV, CNN and MBC, by introducing its own satellite network. Finally in Israel, penetration of StarTV reached in 1994 at 784,000 households or 69 per cent of all TV households, made available through five major cable companies which all trans- mit StarTV along with other channels from the Astra, Eutalsat, Arabsat and AsiaSat satellites. As in most other West Asian states, penetration in Israel has plateaued at that level into the late 1990s (StarTV, 2000b).

South Asia. In India itself, StarTV/ZeeTV households numbered 10.2 million in 1994 and it was the market leader among all cable households in urban India which number 11.8 million households or 37 per cent of all TV households. As affiliated channels in the mid-1990s StarTV and ZeeTV were an urban phenomenon in India with a quarter of all StarTV households located in the six metropolitan cities of Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta, Madras and Hyderabad. Regionally, while western India had the highest penetration at 91 per cent of cable households, the south was a close second at 90 per cent. Since the average StarTV household comprised 5.9 persons, there were an estimated 60 million viewers. These were the more affluent with monthly household incomes of Rs.3,370 (US$1,100) compared with Rs.2,727 (US$900) of general TV homes, and owned more luxury consumer goods. StarTV household members had a higher comprehension of English at 49 per cent than general households at 42 per cent, and 'viewership yesterday' was over 20 per cent of all StarTV households and highest among the upper socio-economic groups. 'Viewership yesterday' was also highest in Madras, Hyderabad and Cochin in southern India where Hindi is not dominant and where the number of English-educated is probably higher (StarTV, 1995). Capitalising on the rapid growth of unlicensed cable networks and increasing liberalisaton by the government, StarTV penetration in India expanded to an estimated 18 million households by end-1999 (StarTV 2000), while ZeeTV is said to have a reach of 24 million households or some 130 million viewers within the country (Indiantelevision.com, 2000).

Among the other South Asian countries, Bangladesh had a StarTV penetration in 1994 of 204,000 or 19 per cent of all TV households, and with an average of 5.3 persons per StarTV households it has almost 1.1 million viewers. StarTV was again an urban phenomenon with an estimated 66 per cent of urban households being

television households and 36 per cent of these having access to satellite television through cable, most of them in the capital city of Dhaka and the second largest city of Chittagong. As elsewhere StarTV households were more affluent with monthly household incomes of Tk.7,787 (US$201) compared with Tk.5,576 (US$143) of non-StarTV households, and had a much higher incidence of consumer luxury goods, better educational standards and greater comprehension of English (StarTV, 1995). By 1999 the penetration of StarTV in Bangladesh had risen by a third to 305,000 households (StarTV, 2000a). In Pakistan the number of StarTV house- holds doubled over 1994 to 174,000 though this still represented a low penetration rate of three per cent of all TV households. This is in part explained by the fact that expensive private satellite dishes were the dominant means of access at 53 per cent but cable distribution at three per cent was rising. The highest penetration was said to be in the cities of Karachi (population, 11 million), Quetta and Hyderabad. However by 1999 the penetration of StarTV in Pakistan had dropped dramatically to just 10,000 households for reasons unknown (StarTV, 2000a).

From the mid-1990s ZeeTV actually positioned itself as a 'South Asian channel' and began to recognise the Indian diaspora in the Gulf/Saudi Arabia, said to num- ber up to five million then. Though its penetration matched the five-channel StarTV, ZeeTV enjoyed much higher viewership. However, these 'spill-over' audiences were initially treated as a bonus and not considered by media planners in Indian ad- vertising agencies even though they had higher spending power (Ind 01.01), per- haps because media budgets were controlled by domestic clients/agents. Although ZeeTV was aimed primarily at the domestic Indian market, it could be said to be a transnational medium since it has had a sizeable audience market of both Arabs and expatriate Indians in the Gulf states of West Asia, of Pakistanis since their lan- guage of Urdu is similar to Hindi, and even of Egyptians to whom its Hindi movie- based programming was culturally attractive. In recognition of this it set up a joint- venture in West Asia called Zee Arabia for programme production (Ray and Jacka, 1996). By the late 1990s, ZeeTV is reputed to have a penetration of some 15 mil- lion households or 70 millions viewers among non-resident Indians, a large portion of which would be in West Asia (Indiantelevision.com, 2000).

Global. There are estimated to be 16-18 million non-resident Indians (NRIs) or ethnic Indians living around the globe, mainly in Southeast Asia, East and Southern Africa, the South Pacific, the Caribbean, the UK and the USA. They are exempt from local excise and luxury taxes on their re-entry into India (Ind 02.02). Collec- tively these NRIs are emerging as major investors in India's economic resurgence and so increasingly corporate and financial advertising is being directed at them util- ising transnational satellite television (Ind 01.06). ZeeTV programming is available in Mauritius and Fiji, which have significant ethnic Indian populations, through tie- ins with a domestic broadcasters, terrestrial and cable (Ind 01.05). ZeeTV has ex-

tended its reach to Europe, the U.S. and the Far East - catering to these global Indians, otherwise known as NRIs or Non-Resident Indians (Ind 01.11). Although reaching Indians abroad is treated as a bonus, NRIs are a valuable target market since they are allowed to buy Indian export products to bring back, exempt from local excise and luxury taxes (Ind 02.02). Service industries catering to NRIs are another category of advertising on transnational satellite television, for example, finance, banking and other specialist expatriate services. Repatriation of savings and venture capital by these non-resident Indians (NRIs), placed the group as the fourth largest investors in the country behind the United States, Switzerland and Japan, and invaluable in augmenting India's foreign exchange reserves (Ind 01.06). It is therefore not surprising that for some years now ZeeTV and SET have been exporting their channels or programming to diasporic Indian channels in Europe, North America, South Africa, Indian Ocean states, East Africa and South Pacific (Stein and Sarma, 1998).

Discussion and Comment

In its early years StarTV deliberately targeted a pan-Asian English-educated elite but soon realised that even in regions which have known British colonialisation, this represented a small minority. Rather than StarTV, the engine behind the growth of satellite television in South & West Asia has been the Indian-dialect ZeeTV whose pioneering work has been emulated by the other ethnic-language commercial channels. Whether ZeeTV is to be classified as a transnational broadcaster rather than a domestic commercial broadcaster using the satellite medium to circumvent na- tional regulation is open to debate, given its ownership, mode of delivery, program- ming and audiences. Over the 1990s StarTV and ZeeTV, themselves in competi- tion, began multiplying the number of ethnic-language channels they offered in South and West Asia as elsewhere. Even the cosmopolitan-elite are said to prefer entertainment in their native dialects regardless of whether the local programme genres and formats are clones of 'Western' programming such as talk shows, quiz shows, soap operas and detective dramas. As Jacka (1994) explains, the origins of such programmes are difficult to trace and their effects are not as unidirectional as the media imperialism thesis suggests. Since television is quintessentially a postmodern medium, programme formats are borrowed from other nations and are imbued with local characteristics. The impetus for this quasi-globalisation may be attributed in large part to the dramatic increase of television air-time due to commercialisation and new technologies (Moran, 1998).

While more recent data on viewer profiles and viewership patterns in West Asia were not available, it is a reasonable assumption that expatriate South Asians continue to be a significant audience in West Asia since there has been no change in their employment trends since the mid-1990s. Unfortunately there was even less

data available in the public domain on audiences and other India-based satellite broadcasters in West Asia, though doubtless the South Asian expatriates there have by now become a valid target market segment for some Indian advertisers. Given the market potential in South and West Asia, it is rather surprising that the only independent survey of viewership for pan-Asian satellite broadcasting, con- ducted in the late 1990s, focused exclusively on East Asia (Asian A&M, 1997; Asian Media Access, 2000). One reason for this myopia is the tendency generally for us- ing Asia to refer to only those countries on the Pacific Rim, and for data to be col- lected primarily on national markets directly targeted by broadcaters rather than on transnational ethnic markets.

Nonetheless it is evident that having discovered a market among expatriate Indians in the Middle East, the new 'Indian-commercial' channels have ambitions of reaching expatriate Indians there and elsewhere. There are a number of options regarding how this might be done: making these channels available on more satellite platforms, licensing terrestrial stations to down-link programmes and re-broadcast them selectively, cooperating with cable-operators to relay the channel on a pay-TV basis, or simply making its programmes available to video libraries - the traditional cultural product source for diasporic communities globally. Programming from ZeeTV, for instance, is included in multicultural cable and terrestrial channels in the Fiji, Mauritius, Dubai, Bahrain, Malaysia, UK and the US. ZeeTV and the other commercial broadcasters are following in the footsteps of Doordarshan. The latter has long been a *de facto* transnational broadcaster itself, if only regionally, since its signals have been available in neighbouring Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka which share some cultural and language similarities with India, even if it is only of their minorities. Together these Indian-based channels may be seen as a form of media imperialism by India as the largest country in the South Asia region, perhaps more of a concern to neighbouring governments than foreign-language broadcasters like StarTV and CNN. Thus in relatjon to media imperialism, the demarcations between transnational and domestic, public and commercial, national and ethnic television broadcasting are becoming increasingly irrelevant.

As the competition between satellite channels in Asia intensifies, the targeting of the audience segments becomes essential for channel survival since pan-Asian audiences seem demonstrably not commercially viable. If there was an audience for 'western' programming on satellite television in Asia it was that of a small cosmopolitan elite which had previously acquired its globalised cultural tastes through education and travel. Asian countries with the highest viewership of transnational satellite television are those where signals are either shared via communal satellite dishes or relayed commercially by cable operators in neighbourhoods. This symbiotic relationship between domestic cable operations and transnational satellite television such as in West Asia as worldwide is being driven by programming requiring

minimal 'cultural discount' or programming with which audience segments are able to identify with culturally (Hoskins and Mirius, 1988). In a growing number of countries both within Asia and as far away as different hemispheres which have ethnic groups with cultural similarities or diasporic communities, cable/pay-TV providers and even domestic terrestrial broadcasters are utilising selected programming from these satellite channels on their multicultural channels. Most of this programming is provided by satellite television channels owned and managed by Asians, local or expatriate, rather than 'Western media imperialists', whatever that term may now be taken to mean.

In any case, research on transnational television such as those cited in this paper may lack rigour to make conclusive pronouncements on media imperialism because it fails to demonstrate significant socio-cultural change as a means of alleging adverse media impact. Such change is difficult to measure and especially to isolate from other determinants such as other media, marketing campaigns, economic affluence, political developments and urban migration. Surveying the various approaches to understanding the role of mass media, Boyd-Barrett (1982) concluded that there was a 'great need for an emphasis on micro-analysis of media impacts at small group and individual levels to engage with and illuminate the present emphasis on macro-analysis of media and multinational structures'. Transnational satellite television is often a site of discourse within the home and community over traditional and contemporary values between age-groups, socio-economic classes and gender. As such this new medium may be a positive means by which audiences transcend their ethnic group and nation-state and look to the region or even the world, in formulating their contemporary cultural identity.

Conclusion

This case study of StarTV and ZeeTV together with the wider survey of its West Asian and South Asian audiences demonstrates that the fears of governments about media imperialism by the 'West' have proven somewhat unfounded and pre- dictions by academics about the consequences of the globalisation of culture have not quite been borne out. While satellites could potentially break down political and geographical barriers to reaching consumers across diverse countries, in reality the cultural and economic boundaries of markets are far more illusive. The critique of media imperialism presupposes the primacy of the nation-state and homogeneous national cultures over globalising 'Western cultures' originating from the developed world. The historical experience of South Asian television in West Asia chronicled in this paper suggests that the same growth of transnational satellite television feared to be undermining ethnic cultures seems rather to be facilitating their revival long suppressed within nation-states or neglected by their diaspora, rather than imposing a globalising 'western' culture. Instead of cultural imperialism imposed from

without by a medium such as transnational satellite television, Asian societies manifest symptoms of the cultural eclecticism of post-modern cultures thought more prevalent in western countries and largely attributed to the impact of television media and advertising. Thus with the increasing complexity of global communications and the cultural plurality of our post-modern world, a time-worn concept such as media imperialism may be in critical need of theoretical reformulation if it is to maintain currency.

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