

"After three thousand years of explosion, by means of fragmentary and mechanical technologies, the Western world is imploding. During the mechanical ages we had extended our bodies in space. Today, after more than a century of electric technology, we have extended our central nervous system itself in a global embrace, abolishing both space and time as far as our planet is concerned. Rapidly, we approach the final phase of the extensions of man - the technological simulation of consciousness, when the creative process of knowing will be collectively and corporately extended to the whole of human society, much as we have already extended our senses and our nerves by the various media."

McLuhan and Zingrone (1995: 149).

Globalisation of the media is driven by capitalism. This has meant the destruction of nationally centred cultural identity through the homogenisation of audience.

ABSTRACT

Global consumers have developed similar preferences for television networks in the same way they have for McDonalds and Coca Cola. This study looks at the effect that the consumerist explosion has had on the media and what effect the media has had on the cultural identity of its consumers. Transnational Media Conglomerates (TNMCs) are now huge multinational operations which may mean that the cultural values of audiences are becoming homogenised. This is a real threat: Time Warner, owners of CNN are now the biggest media corporation in the world while Viacom, owners of MTV, are the fourth biggest (McChesney, 1997b). Capitalism (and its effect on the mass media) may mean that a global culture is being created.

This study examines several strands of research to reach a conclusion and insight into how and why TNMCs operate within the concept of a globalised cultural sphere. It includes several case studies of how TNMCs are positioning themselves within new markets and how they are overcoming the difficulties posed by cultural identities across the globe. The economic factors surrounding these companies were also looked at through the writings of Hoskins et al. (1997) and Herman and McChesney (1997).

The methodology was predominantly through textual analysis of secondary sources. The founding theory was Marshall McLuhan's writings surrounding the concept of the global village (after McLuhan 1964, McLuhan and Zingrone 1995). This provided the scope for national identity to be studied within the context of a global culture.

The findings of this research confirmed (as expected) that media organisations are driven by the constant need to maximise profit. The audiences of the products of TNMCs have become fragmented in the face of media capitalism and complete cultural homogenisation is an unlikely possibility although there is now a consciousness of a culture at a higher level than the nation state.

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- A) Robert McChesney: 'The Global Media Giants: Nine firms that dominate the world.'

- B) Daniel Grabham: MTV: '*Same Channel, Different Beats*' from *Yurope* Magazine.

- C) Meg Carter: '*Time to Change the Record*' from *The Independent*, 21st March 2000.

- D) Viacom: '*MTV: Music Television*'.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BSkyB (Sky)	British Sky Broadcasting
CNN	Cable News Network
MTV	Music Television
STAR	Star Broadcasting Network
TNC	Transnational Conglomerate
TNMC	Transnational Media Conglomerate
UDC	Underdeveloped Country
WAP	Wireless Application Protocol

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this research was to explore the effects so-called Westernisation and to determine whether capitalism is the root cause. Have Transnational Media Conglomerates (TNMCs) destroyed national and regionalised culture to create a globalised, unified, world culture?

Globalisation hyperglobalists argue that national based cultural identity no longer exists and that this has coincided with the rise of a global standardised culture. Transformationalists argue that whilst divisions are breaking down, national governments are still powerful. Huntington (1998) describes how Western (and especially American) culture has spread across the world, imposing itself onto other cultures through TNMCs.

This study aims to examine some of the TNMCs operating within a globalised cultural sphere looking at how they are overcoming the problems of different cultural identities across the globe.

The concept of globalisation itself grows from message 'flows'. The complication of these flows during the latter half of the 20th Century has also coincided with a consolidation of media ownership and the rise of television. This study deals primarily with that medium.

Chapter One looks at television and its relationship to the development of mass culture. McLuhan's concept of the global village is also examined; is it possible that mass culture is behind a globalised culture? This chapter also studies the important concepts such as the *periphery* (usually referred to as Under Developed Countries- UDCs) and *core* as well as postmodernism, a concept which generally gives more importance to the global sphere than that of the nation state (after Featherstone 1995: 81-84).

Chapter Two seeks to find what drives TNMCs. Are these companies any different from other industries? This chapter also examines the key factors enabling these organisations to continue to compete in the next few years. The advent of niche services (mostly during the late 1980s and early 1990s) has meant that even audiences watching one network have increasingly been watching different versions of the same channel depending on where

they live across the globe. Networks have become fragmented; a concept increasingly important to the financial aims of media conglomerates.

Chapter Three looks at the activities of TNMCs in UDCs. This Chapter fully examines the concept of cultural imperialism using case studies from India and China and looking at global programmes such as Dallas. Does home-based programming instil a sense of identity and can the rejection of alien culture in fact make our own culture stronger? Chapter Three also asks whether national identity is too deep rooted to be removed. This draws from the groundwork of Chapters One and Two to fully analyse the effect of TNMCs in creating a homogenised culture.

The initial idea for this study grew from the study of Huntington's theory and also an article written on the similarities between the 'musical consciousness' spread by the European MTV networks (Grabham, 1999)¹. The study presented here acknowledges the impact of the Internet but disregards most other recent mass consumer products such as mobile phones and Internet ready gaming consoles. Certainly mobile phones are integrating with the Internet with the explosion in WAP technology (as is digital television) but it is impossible to see any effect. It is also important to mention radio (an expanding medium in the UK) as it is affordable- significant for developing countries.

Yet what is certain is that communication flows will change beyond all recognition. Smith (1990: 175) talks of a shift '*...away from the small scale community and towards a world of cultural imperialism, based on economic, state and communications technology and institutions.*' Media culture as it stands will have changed even within two years. There would be different aspects to some of the discourse in this work if it was written then instead.

*Daniel Grabham
25th May 2000*

¹ This article proposes that playing the same artists on MTV in different areas of Europe creates some kind of 'musical consciousness', popularising certain artists and marginalizing others from not being played in certain territories. It can be seen in Appendix 2.

LITERATURE REVIEW

McLuhan and Zingrone (1995) interpret the communication theory of Marshall McLuhan (see also McLuhan 1964). McLuhan's thinkings are the basis for the conclusions presented in this study. What made McLuhan's observations remarkable is that much of his work was completed before any of the technology we know and use today was even thought of. His thinkings (especially upon the creation of the 'global village') help to determine whether globalisation has meant the imposition of universally held tastes or ideals across the globe.

Various other discourses of cultural theory were including McQuail (1994) study various aspects of communication theory, providing some key insights into mass culture and its relationship to television. Featherstone (1995) was another major theoretical text relating culture to postmodernism. Huntington (1998) studies the Westernisation of culture and questions whether cultural internationalisation has made different cultural identities more aligned. Also useful in this area of postmodernism was Harvey (1989) as well as papers by Smith (1990) and Arnason (1990) in an earlier Featherstone text (see Featherstone 1990).

The understanding of media capitalism was also crucial. All the sources consulted in this area were published within the last three years to ensure that they were as up to date as possible. Hoskins et al. (1997) provide a factually centred text dealing mainly with international programme sales but it provides a good understanding of the struggle between capitalism and culture that TNMCs are faced with. Herman and McChesney (1998) and Barnouw et al. (1997) also were useful for this purpose.

Other background texts in this area included McChesney (1997b) (a guide to the nine biggest global media giants¹). Barker (1997) was also useful for a general overview of global television, cultural identity and audience behaviour. Curran and Seaton (1998) was another good founding text for this purpose, if a little narrowly focused towards the UK.

¹ See Appendix A.

METHODOLOGY

This theoretical study is concerned with two major areas of media globalisation, firstly whether it is driven by capitalism and secondly if TNMCs have homogenised cultural values and brought audiences together 'as one' across the globe.

The study uses primarily textual analysis of secondary sources but in order to put the findings into context this study is rooted in the work of various communication and cultural theorists. This was used as a framework in which to place the main discourse of the work. These included communications specialists such as Marshall McLuhan and his theories concerning the existence of a 'global village' as well as his thinkings on *hot* and *cold* media (McLuhan 1964 and McLuhan and Zingrone, 1995). The global village is a consequence of globalisation and so these works provide the main reference point for a so-called global culture and enables it to be put into the context of national identity. Cultural theory was also important and this was studied through the theories and summaries of McQuail (1994).

A variety of different case studies were also used to illustrate how cultural identity has been affected by the global media activity of TNMCs. The economic aspects of this were also studied through the writings of Hoskins et al. (1997) and Herman and McChesney (1997).

Textual analysis was used because it seemed to best reflect the theoretical slant of the study. Whilst a good empirical base may have been useful but it became clear that this was not going to be the best way forward; whilst there is statistical data about networks and their audiences, many of the main arguments in this area are exclusively theoretical.

Similarities could be drawn between the theoretical framework and the aims of and purpose of most TNMCs (Chapter Three). Through using case studies conclusions could also be reached on audience diversification and segmentation. It was also possible to determine whether homogenisation of culture is likely, and if so will it mean the complete destruction or just an erosion of cultural identities as they stand today.

CHAPTER ONE

Mass Culture to the Postmodern Global Village

1.1 Culture

This chapter lays the foundation for dealing with cultural imperialism and the possible destruction of identity in Chapter Three. Before it is possible to examine whether such a global culture has been created it is necessary to examine the basic concepts of culture and mass culture. McQuail (1994: 96) defines the *'Characteristics of Culture'* with three key elements. Firstly it is pluralistic; it cannot apply just to one person; secondly, that culture must always revolve around some kind of system or order and thirdly that it is communication which is key to the spread and continuation of a culture through both time and space.

Mass Culture takes this a stage further. McQuail again lists what he believes are its main elements; that it is recognised and is well established- that is it has the ability to proliferate. Mass culture is 'mass produced' and 'popular', but crucially it is also non-traditional and non-elite. Mass culture originated in the early part of the 20th Century and was originally frowned upon by the elites who were only interested in 'high culture' such as classical music, art and literature. Mass society theorists saw it as superior to popular culture (after Berry 2000a). Popular culture¹ such as film and popular music originated from commercialism. Consumers are brought into this commercialism; mass audiences are passive consumers whose participation is limited between 'buying' and not 'buying' (ibid.).

It is clear that technology plays a major part as well. For audiences to 'participate' in mass culture, the technology must be affordable, non-elitist and not dependent on class. It could, for example be argued that the Internet is an elitist medium due to the cost of the computer but this is becoming less of an argument.

¹ See 1.6 for more on postmodernism and 3.1 for its relationship with popular music.

1.2 Television as Mass Culture

Television is an affordable medium which plays a major part in the communication of messages within mass culture.

One of the most intriguing things about television is that it has incredible mass appeal, not only to all ages, but to people from vastly different backgrounds. Seaton (1997: 267) said that according to the Frankfurt School television shared with both radio and popular music *'the overriding concern to entertain.'* Seaton continues by saying that television impacts upon the mass culture so much that individuality is lost. Seaton cited Rosenberg (ibid.) as saying that in the area of entertainment *'...mass culture does not dispel unrest but instead exacerbates it.'* In her words people *'lose their souls'* to the film or soap opera (ibid.).

This truly is 'mass culture'. McQuail (1994) talks of the affect of unifying people in clustered groups, not just in the home, but across a nation or social stratum. It can also affect the perception of particular groups of people. He states that *'it has a capacity to unite scattered individuals within the same large audience, or integrate newcomers into urban communities by providing a common set of values, ideas and helping to form identities. This process can help to bind together a large-scale, differentiated modern society...'* (ibid. 71).

Taking events from across the globe into our front rooms changes perceptions of society. Indeed this is a major argument behind the possibility of a globalised culture. Notions can be integrated into our own society, impacting on our mass culture.

1.3 Communication Culture

As previously stated, McQuail had argued that the sustainability of cultural ideals depends on the maintained communication of messages. What this study questions is not whether communication promotes mass culture in a given society, but whether it maintains a universal cross-national idea of mass culture so that the identities of individual nations are homogenised. The

huge growth in television and other technologies means that the number and frequency of these messages is rapidly increasing. The earth is no longer completely tangible, there is a parallel world in computers and resident in the loosely termed area called cyberspace. These kinds of cultural flows have no real time or space². This has major implications for the notion of a globalised culture.

1.4 McLuhan Perspectives and the Global Village

McLuhan's perceptions of the '*global village*' (after McLuhan and Zingrone 1995 and McLuhan 1964) and the subsequent explosion in communications and technology were so far ahead of their time that at first they were not easily accepted. Regardless, McLuhan's ideas endure, still maintaining a high standing among communication theories. McLuhan had understood the potential of what he called 'electricity', even comparing it to the electric light (McLuhan and Zingrone 1995: 151). It is clear to see where his critics were founded; he seemed futuristic to some and an enemy of the print media to others (ibid. 2). His '*imploded aphoristic style*' writings seemed 'off the wall' (ibid.) and people were unable to visualise the 'electricity' revolution and therefore unable to envisage what McLuhan meant.

McLuhan was concerned with environments coupled with the power of electronic processes to change the human existence (after ibid.). He believed that communication emphasis itself has shifted from the specialist 'one thing at a time' or linear, logical sequence, to the '*all-at-once...simultaneous relations that occur when electronic information approaches the speed of light*' (ibid. 2). This is due to the '*...decentralising, integrating and accelerating character of electric process*' (ibid.). McLuhan often saw himself as a poet conceptualising the ideas for the information society. The poet W.B. Yeats wanted his audience to get involved with his writings and this is similar to the modern electronic communication processes for which interactivity is

² See 1.6

the norm. McLuhan connected such artistry to the new information age in *'The Gutenberg Galaxy'* (ibid. 5).

The idea of communications is paramount in McLuhan's work. McLuhan and Zingrone comment that 'as electrically contracted, the globe is no more than a village' (ibid. 150).

McLuhan said that his idea of the global village was *'the world considered as a single community linked by communications'* (ibid.). Indeed the 'global village' may be able to give us an infinite number of different communications but how do you go about finding the information you want when it is lost in the midst of trillions of bytes of computer data? More may be in fact less. Indeed the increased mediums for media delivery have different levels of reception affected by a variety of different factors, most notably whether it is non-elitist. For example, the Internet has hardly any regulation, but is restricted to those who can afford computers. Television on the other hand is regulated in many countries but has a large body of viewers. As McLuhan and Zingrone say, reality now depends upon how information is structured (ibid. 3). Each medium has a different way of getting the message across, hence McLuhan's *'the medium is the message'* paradox. McLuhan emphasised that 'medium' is the key factor over 'message' (ibid.).

McLuhan also surmised that there were two types of media: hot and cold. Hot Media are media such as Radio, Photography and Cinema (ibid. 161). They are high on information, low on user involvement. A hot medium is more passive than cold and *"extends a single sense in high definition"* (ibid. 162). For example a photograph is hot visually. Cool media are other technologies such as the telephone. These observations were associated with the *"different sensory effects associated with media or media of higher or lower definition"* (ibid. 3).

At first technology causes anxieties. These were reinforced by the three stages of alarm, resistance and exhaustion which developed societies have been through (ibid. 164). McLuhan and Zingrone refer to UDCs, somewhat awkwardly, as 'backward societies'. Such societies *"have experienced*

little permeation with our own mechanical and specialist culture and are therefore much more able to confront and understand electric technology”, (ibid. 165).

Indeed UDCs often have an oral culture, often compared to the culture of electricity (ibid.). These oral traditions have been eroded in developed societies and so we have to rediscover them in order to ‘cope’ with the electric age. In terms of hot and cold, the old industrial (Westernised) nations are hot and the UDCs are cool and so more active (ibid.). McLuhan and Zingrone quote Margaret Mead from *Time Magazine*. She thinks of change in UDCs as a uniformed ‘hotting up’ (ibid.).

McLuhan stated that electricity makes for an ever more tribal society (ibid. 4). The electronic process makes us desperate for identity in the ‘global village’. As stated in *‘The Gutenberg Galaxy’* the age of corporate consumerism has made TNMCs into tribal suppressors (ibid.). All globalisation seeks to make humanity whole in ‘one world’ but is actually making us more individualised with media output tailored to us³.

It makes a difference whether a hot medium is used in a hot or cool culture. Hot radio has a big effect in UDCs whereas the effect in somewhere like America is negligible (after ibid. 167). The global village has also meant that all the assets of pure written communication are under threat; global e-mail culture has meant a new level of informality for example.

What McLuhan did was to conceptualise such changes in his ‘global village’ and ring the alarm bells to make people aware of the major societal developments that he predicted would happen in the information age.

1.5 Core and Periphery

The concept of core and periphery is quite a vague yet useful idea. In the context of media globalisation we can talk about it in two different ways. In a geographic sense the core is taken to mean developed or westernised countries and the periphery as representing UDCs. The second way concerns the different forms of media themselves. Those societies with a ‘free’ media

³ This is covered in more detail in Chapter Three.

system are the core areas and this is due to Western economies being reflected in their 'cultural industries' (after Sinclair et al. 1996: 2). The periphery represents those areas which do not have such a developed system. Sinclair et al. (1996) provide a unique insight to some of these peripheral areas and their media systems and indeed some of these (mainly ex-colonies) areas are covered in Chapter Three. However some more peripheral areas which are communication starved ghettos that do not have a media infrastructure .

Mass society in Britain developed during the Industrial Revolution, as in many other now-developed societies was that of a shift from countryside to town. This shift did not mean a shift from periphery to core, but instead the core itself shifted. This is reflected in modern day globalised capitalist ventures and indeed many countries such as India are developing their own emerging cultural industries (after Ray and Jacka 1996: 95). Many mass media organisations, having saturated their traditional developed markets are now expanding into media starved parts of the undeveloped world. There is a shift taking place as the traditional core broadens. Indeed this is the basis behind the theory of Cultural Imperialism⁴.

1.6 Globalisation as a Result of Postmodernism

Postmodernism involves the merging and blurring together of concepts that were kept separate in the modernist phase. This typifies the concept of the global village. Indeed most of what existed in the postmodern was founded in the modern, for example, the mass media has its roots in the television explosion of the 1940s-60s on both sides of the Atlantic. It is interesting because a postmodernist development of the mass media is that it is a socio-economic part of *"commodity culture in a...phase of late capitalism"* (Seiter et al 1989: 8, 9).

There is no longer defined 'high' or 'low' culture. Time and space has been compressed in the postmodernism, largely due to the growth in

⁴ See 3.1.

capitalism and the growth of bodies attempting to create a world order such as the UN and the EU:

The sense of global compression in which the world is increasingly regarded as "one place" and it becomes much more difficult for nation states to opt out of, or avoid the consequences of being drawn together into a progressively tighter figuration through the increasing volume of rapidity of the flows of money, goods, people, information, technology and images.

Featherstone (1995: 81).

Stevenson (1999) says that the twentieth century has witnessed the development of a mass media upon '*standardisation, mass consumption and predictability*'. Media culture itself is driven by technology, state and economy (ibid.). According to Berry (2000a) postmodernism '*...stresses the importance of the power of the mass media for governing and shaping people's lives.*' Therefore it is a key concept to the globalised mass media.

The modern globalised society has discarded many previously held common values. There is unlimited space and no discernible place. The concept of hybridisation and mixing of cultures transnationally is postmodern by definition.

The modernist phase focused on the nation state, an idea rejected by postmodernism. Modernism was functional and efficient with clear nationalistic divisions. Arnason (1990: 209) cites Anthony Giddens as putting the '*strongest emphasis on the nation state*'.

Globalisation itself is linked to the denial and transience of cultural and national identity. Postmodernism celebrates an almost schizophrenic array of identities (after Berry 2000a). Indeed it is also the case that '*nationalism is the cultural sensibility of sovereignty*' (Arnason 1990: 210 after Giddens). Postmodernism also rejects national autonomy. Indeed the concept of

Cultural Imperialism⁵ has often been connected to the denial of autonomy with the finger often pointed towards America (Hoskins et al. 1997: 37). Postmodernism suggests the world is in a super-state period of a ever more homogenous media and a larger world and European political stage.

It is pertinent here to look at postmodernism as being linked to capitalism. Featherstone (1995: 76) states that consumer culture is a '*central feature*' of postmodernism and typical of '*...the cultural changes accompanying the postwar shift to a "late capitalist" economy*' (ibid.). Featherstone further argues that '*...postmodernism is to be regarded as the cultural logic of late, or consumer, capitalism*' (ibid. 78 after Jameson).

Postmodernism is also reflected most in anti-elitist popular consumerist culture. Television is often connected with blurred divisions of nation in the postmodern context '*...with the fragmented distracted form of viewing with the channel-hopper or MTV viewer being the paradigmatic form*' (Featherstone 1995: 77). There is now nothing unusual about a DJ remixing a classical piece⁶ or about a modern estate house having an Elizabethan front. The '*Back to the Future*⁷' films also typify postmodern cinema: the blurring of time and space. There are no limits. By very definition postmodernism seeks to merge countries and cultures just as it has merged different art forms.

1.7 Summary

This chapter examined the impact of media capitalism on cultural values. It is clear that mass culture (of which television is a part) has a wide-ranging transnational appeal. Mass culture itself is commercialised and relies on the sustained flow of communications to exist. Technology to participate in mass communications must be affordable. Television has a cohesive effect and

⁵ See 3.1.

⁶ The discourse surrounding popular music is further studied in 3.1.

⁷ As well as blurring time and space within the actual context of the film, the two sequels to the 1985 original were made seven years later although were still based in 1985. The result was a multi-layered series of films that jumped between 1885, 1985 and 2085 and which present some of the best examples of postmodern cinema to date.

indeed this has been a big argument behind the debate surrounding a 'globalised culture'.

McLuhan's concept of the global village ties the world up as a single community. He believed in the ability of electricity to cause a revolution for the human existence even though this has meant that there is too much information available to us. Postmodernism blurring of time and space has meant that information now flows through some kind of *'homogenous cultural space'* (after Seiter et al 1989). Postmodernism also rejects the nationalistic focus of culture and the modernist idea of the nation state. Postmodernism has also affected different forms of popular such as popular music and film.

The idea of information as flowing between the core and periphery is a useful way to term the information flows which might threaten the autonomy of nation states. Globalisation itself is decentralisation.

CHAPTER TWO

Economics and Localisation: The Globalised Media

According to Waters (1995) several developments have created the idea of globalisation, most notably the emergence of a global communications industry and the influence of global financial markets. In the spheres of mass-ownership and finance, channels are becoming ever more transnational. Menon (1999) says that just eight giant TNMCs are expected to dominate the world communications industry a few years into the next century. This has coincided with many of these expanding into new previously undeveloped markets. This has had immense implications the cultural identity of UDCs.

2.1 Programming for Profit

Hoskins et al. (1997: 3) state that (after Sinclair) *'The cultural industries are those which produce goods or services which are...somehow expressive of the way of life of a society.'* Where trade in *'cultural products'* (programmes) is concerned it is still the case that participants act in their own self-interests like any other industry. Even in *'cultural industries'* concerns over profits are paramount: *'under very competitive conditions, mere survival dictates that choices between alternative courses of action be decided on the basis of which adds most to profits...rather than cultural or other goals'* (ibid. 2). Even public service broadcasters are likely to make decisions on a *'benefit-cost'* basis in order to compete with commercial companies (ibid.).

2.2 Goals of Transnational Media Conglomerates

McQuail (1994: 135) says that most large organisations in the world (TNMCs or otherwise) are of two types: utilitarian or normative. The former produce material goods or services for financial ends. Normative organisations on the other hand often aim to advance a value or condition. The mass media is in a strange position in this respect as they can have a mixture of these goals. Some media are run for a social or cultural purposes

for example, but can still be a business. This especially applies to the public service broadcasters most often seen in Europe and exemplified by the BBC in the UK.

McQuail states that a media organisation should meet the needs of its audience primarily and the state or clients only secondarily (ibid.). Whilst many mass media companies would like to say this is where their priorities lie, the drive for profit often means this is not the case. Yet as advertising revenues depend on satisfying the audience, it may well be the case that audience satisfaction is indeed a high priority.

Indeed companies may have to act in the public interest to secure their revenue. All media are still expected to perform with the public interest at heart, unlike any other business, *'contribut[ing] to the wider and longer term benefit of society as a whole, especially in cultural...matters...'* (ibid.). This is often the result of exaggerated claims by the media themselves.

There is currently a huge scramble to take advantage of the huge digital revolution that is currently sweeping across developed countries. In Britain, BSkyB (Sky) is becoming an increasingly crucial media player and by 1997 was the most profitable satellite television network in the world (McChesney 1997b). Forty percent of it is owned by Rupert Murdoch's media empire News International (Sky 2000). Its biggest draw is sport and specifically football (after Herman and McChesney 1997: 71 and Curran and Seaton, 1997: 203, 365).

Sky have taken huge steps towards making sure that digital television is available for the masses, especially when this has meant huge expense, indeed Curran and Seaton (1998: 242) also proclaim that the digital revolution is the next test for public service broadcasters. Herman and McChesney (1997: 47) question whether the BBC will be able to maintain its public service standards whilst becoming *'an aggressively commercial enterprise...its survival depends on locating a niche in the global media market rather than generating political support for public service broadcasting.'* Yet they also believe it is also a huge test for the commercial sector:

The experience with cable television suggests that a handful of genres will proliferate and the vast majority of the channels will be provided by the very largest media firms.

ibid.

2.3 Ownership is Control

As far as ownership and finance are concerned, channels are becoming ever more transnational. Ownership is now concerned with economic resources, which in the Industrial age were machines and tools, but is now technology (Morrison 1995:42). However it seems that control is what the driving force behind the thirst for finance that TNMCs have. It would seem there are three major factors governing control: broadcasting rights, the organisation's size and brand identity. Globalised media corporations are characterised by their desire to extend these in order to grow.

(i) Broadcast Rights

Sports rights are among the most sought after of broadcasting rights. In Britain the new batch of rights to show Premier League football are just about to be sold. The last deal, negotiated in 1996, cost Sky £670 million for five years. The new agreement is likely to cost the holder as much as £2 billion (Teather and Chaudhary, 2000). In part this is due to competition from other companies, most notably cable operator NTL (*ibid.*).

Without these rights Sky would have a much weaker portfolio to offer its subscribers. It is therefore crucial that they retain these rights (*ibid.*). Indeed access to see football in the UK '*...is increasingly determined by [the] ability to pay*' (Stevenson 1999: 2). The retention of these rights is also important to Murdoch on the world stage as the matches are also broadcast on his other networks including Fox in

America (after Herman and McChesney 1997:71). Indeed the ownership of rights is very important to every TNMC.

(ii) Size is Everything

Media capitalism is also about how big you are. Such is the climate of competition that in order for small media players to compete on national stages (let alone international stages) they have to become bigger.

The attempted takeover of Manchester United football club by Sky is a major case in point. The report into the case highlighted that the merger would be '*...expected to operate against the public interest*' (Competition Commission 1999). Indeed the commission has several worries about this deal:

We would expect [the merger] to influence the behaviour of BSkyB's competitors causing them to bid more cautiously than would otherwise be the case and, in some cases, even not to bid at all. This would enhance BSkyB's already strong position arising from its market power as a sports premium channel provider and from being the incumbent broadcaster of Premier League football. The effect would be to reduce competition for Premier League rights leading to less choice for the Premier League.

ibid.

The report also concludes that this would be the case even if clubs were to negotiate their own rights contracts with different broadcasters having '*...adverse effects for competition*' (ibid.). The merger would also '*precipitate other mergers*' between broadcasters and clubs leading to further reduction in competition (ibid.).

Sky revenged this decision by buying small (under 9.9 percent) stakes of various Premiership teams including Manchester United, Sunderland, Leeds and Manchester City as well as putting £40 million into Chelsea (BBC News 2000). It is indeed the case that Murdoch has become *'a lord of the global village'* (Curran and Seaton 1998: 79 after Bagdikian) with his many global media interests¹. Indeed he has only been kept out of UK terrestrial commercial television by the law; anyone holding a newspaper with over 20 percent market share is not allowed to control an ITV, radio or Channel 5 licence (Teather 2000). Indeed this may also be relaxed under a new Communications White Paper *'...paving the way for further rounds of consolidation'* (ibid.). As Teather states, *'the problem for [British] ministers is that because of Britain's lead in digital broadcasting and new technologies, there is no precedent overseas'* (ibid.). But Sky are not alone. Granada also owns a 9.9 percent stake in Liverpool (BBC News 1999a) and American cable giant NTL owns stakes in several Premiership clubs including Aston Villa, Newcastle and Middlesbrough (BBC News 1999b).

(iii) Brand Strength

The strength of media TNMCs relies on the strength of the brands which uphold it. With individual networks, perception is everything. MTV's brand name is one of the most widely recognised in the world. Parent company Viacom² also owns the Nickelodeon, Paramount and that of Blockbuster Video. Herman and McChesney (1997: 85) say that Viacom often use MTV to promote films made by Paramount. MTV is Viacom's strongest branding and the company has other tie-in devices to exploit this; Paramount produces three 'MTV Movies' annually (ibid. 86). Viacom's other brands are also huge worldwide devices which are harmonised throughout the world.

¹ See Appendix A for more information on Murdoch and News Corporation.

² For more information on Viacom's holdings refer to Appendix A.

2.4 Internationalised Networks: Localised Programming

Whilst the numbers of people watching television has leaped hugely during the satellite age, it is also interesting to note that whilst global audiences in television are increasing, audiences are being continually fragmented:

At the same time we do not only see processes of globalisation, but also of glocalisation. Glocalisation means that companies have to deal not only with world-wide considerations, but also, very expressly, with the specific rules and conditions of each country in which they operate. Glocalisation represents the need for [TNMCs] to be global and local at the same time.

Lubbers (2000).

This effect of this glocalisation is shown in the huge numbers of new niche channels becoming available as well as new localised programming from 'global' television channels like CNN, who have a specific 'CNN International' network. After all, audiences watching even the most global of events are watching them on lots of different channels. As Gitlin (1997: 11) says: '*...two phenomena have grown simultaneously.... One is conglomeration, the other is segmentation*'.

The spirit of glocalisation is embodied by MTV; the network is distributed in more than 82 countries (Viacom, 1998), MTV now utilises cultural differences between areas to their advantage by setting up local channels under the MTV brand³. Their motto is '*Think globally, act locally*' (originally by Theodore Levitt). This reflects a regional stance that the company has purposely tried to cultivate. Different areas of the world and indeed different countries have their own individual channels such as MTV

³ See Appendix D.

Nordic and MTV UK & Ireland. However this was not always MTV's position, as explained in 3.1.

For a news network such as CNN the reason behind 'specific' programming for is more obvious. Different areas have different news frames. Indeed CNN International (beamed via ten satellites to over 200 nations) has channels in Spanish for Latin America as well as channels in French, Hindi, Arabic and Japanese. (after Herman and McChesney 1997:80).

Yet what is most interesting about glocalisation is that networks still retain globalised aspects, as they are still presenting a 'product'. Programme formats as well as the overall identity and branding of a network endures. This matches Herman and McChesney's observations on the branding of MTV (1997: 85) and follows the same basic idea of continuity that McDonalds use so effectively. You can visit any McDonalds across the globe, order a Big Mac and you will get basically the same product whether you are in Athens, Greece or Athens, Georgia (after Featherstone 1995: 7 and Curran and Seaton 1998: 248). This treatment of networks makes sense in the TNMCs permanent drive for profits since some standardised programming must offset investment in localised channels.

2.5 Summary

This chapter explored the nature of TNMCs and what they need to do in order to survive and grow. Whilst the numbers of people watching television has leaped hugely during the satellite age, local audiences are being continually fragmented. Networks are also undergoing a process of segmentation. Those formerly held to be 'global' are now no longer. TNMCs are glocalising.

TNMCs are 'culture industries' manufacturing products that reflect the society in which they were made (Hoskins et al 1997:3). However as with any product they are (mostly) produced to make profit although media organisations are often expected to operate in the public interest. Even then the goal of the media organisation is financially driven (McQuail, 1994: 135). In

order to gain control in an increasingly competitive market, media organisations must secure rights to events they will spend huge amounts of money to ensure that this is the case. Ownership is continually becoming more concentrated and this has big implications for culture and identity. Each organisation is determined to get bigger, and will need to. As well as mergers, this increasingly means that companies are seeking associate and partner organisations. Brand strength such as that which MTV has is also an area which many TNMCs want to be strong in.

Indeed it is now the case that media giants are not just up against themselves but now against new players from other industries such as Microsoft and Polygram (after Liberman 1997: 137-8). After all (as Hoskins et al 1997: 2) surmise, cultural industries are no different from any other kind of manufacturer.

CHAPTER THREE *Transnationalisation and Identity*

Subtext: The globalisation of the media may be creating universally held tastes and values through similar approaches to different areas of the globe.

Cultural identity is threatened because of the so-called 'global culture' of the postmodern age. Indeed have national self-supporting cultures been removed, and superseded by one that has been, and continues to be, nurtured by communication? What has the globalisation of many television networks meant for the 'cultural imperialism' of UDCs?

Many UDCs have experienced media revolutions from a handful of TV channels (often state owned) to '*dozens of alternatives.*' As Liberman (1997: 139) points out, there is '*...a burgeoning middle class in countries such as Brazil, Argentina, India, Malaysia and China*' and TNMCs are scrambling to be at the forefront of this revolution (ibid. 140). New markets mean new opportunities to be taken advantage of.

3.1 Cultural Imperialism: A Universal Consciousness of Taste?

The concept of 'cultural imperialism' describes the effect of Western culture imposing itself onto the developing world. This is a case of periphery and core, since all the major media multinationals concerned are run from the core areas, especially America (Hoskins et al. 1997: 2).

Featherstone (1995: 87) states that it has long been an argument that a global culture is '*...being formed through the economic and political domination of the United States.*' It was assumed that each UDCs would absorb American culture and thus become 'modernised' (ibid.). Gessner and Schade (1990: 263) point out that there may have been the creation of 'third cultures' that mediate between different cultural flows. These do not simply reflect American values, but also the idiosyncrasies of local culture as well (after Featherstone 1995: 91).

The term 'universal consciousness' concerns the idea that networks

infuse their viewers with similar ideals across a global or regional network, for example on MTV this could relate to music tastes. Are audiences affected and influenced by this? MTV is one of the major players in the 'global village' with penetration into over 250 million households worldwide (Herman and McChesney 1997: 87) and the network is often portrayed as spreading an 'international youth culture' (after Sinclair et al. 1996: 25). This is often seen as the concept of Americanisation (see Featherstone 1995: 87).

Yet as far as MTV is concerned this is not actually very truthful and the company maintains that Americanisation is the last thing on their minds. Indeed the content of many of the world's MTV Networks is anything but American. The UK has its own channel as does Germany as well as the Nordic countries (Viacom, 1998). Typically such glocalisation is not for the benefit of audience but in fact is another device to make more revenue. More targeting of audience means more targeting of advertising, opening up advertising on MTV to more than simply global brands.

MTV is also typical of the postmodern age. It is noted for its trademark juxtaposing of styles of music in a postmodern confusion of time and space. Indeed postmodernism is more culturally complex than other theories (after Featherstone 1995: 80) and this merging of styles (in the same way that a monolithic mass culture would imply a similar kind of postmodern 'coming together') may mean that history (as well as time and space) is also interfered with. MTV shows such a wide variety of videos from throughout the past 20 years meaning that where TV has only just arrived, cultures can be penetrated by something deeply rooted in Western history and not related to their own. MTV may be imposing an alien culture onto new markets.

One such market is Latin America. Hanke (1999) describes the area as having a new transnational media order. Music television can be theorised in relation to multiculturalism; the promotion of an 'MTV language' (ibid.). MTV Latino is a 'localised' network embracing all of South America meaning that hybrid values had to be used. Sinclair (1996: 62) talks of '*an imaginary "Latin" audiovisual space*' which a culturally homogenous MTV Latino is a part of (Hanke 1999).

MTV Latino mediates Latin and American/European rock influences and indeed popular music itself is an interesting sub-theme of the localisation debate. Some popular music appears to have a universal appeal, and the appreciation and interpretation of the same music differs throughout the globe. Musical scenes, with their amalgamation of genres create cultural meaning, including the idea of nationalism, through the mass media. This is reflected in the work of the Frankfurt School. Herman, Swiss and Sloop (1999) use Adorno as an example of this. His critical analysis of popular music as it '*...moved through the circuits of production, textualization and audience reception was central to understanding the politics of mass culture in modern capitalism.*' Music has universal qualities and can therefore contribute to some kind of homogenous mass culture. Indeed this view is also reflected in the postmodernist forms of pop music and more importantly the music video, also applying to the trend of mixing together musical styles such as classical and dance. In fact Queen's *Bohemian Rhapsody* first picked up on this in 1975 (Weller 1997).

Juluri (1999) points to the 'Indianisation' of music worldwide, with more Indian sounds and ideas than ever before. He says that globalisation is no longer about the threat of '*foreign invasion*', but is perceived instead as the exciting elevation of India to the standards of international pop, India in this context is a 'trendy' commodity (ibid.).

This notion can be seen once again with MTV's American promos some of which are filmed in India¹. These promos depict street scenes with stereotypical Indian images such as rickshaw pullers. In one a fakir gets off his bed of nails to reveal '*MTV*' on his back. Of course, the reality of this 'exotic' culture is hugely different and poverty is common (ibid.) but these examples do show the spread of cultural ideas not from Western society.

¹ As shown in 2.3 the notion of promotion and brand identity is very important for global television networks.

3.2 Cultural Imperialism in Action.

India is also a good case study for 'Cultural Imperialism'. In 1991 India's government allowed in foreign investment for the first time coinciding with the arrival of Rupert Murdoch's STAR television in Asia (Menon 1999). STAR began broadcasting across Asia with five channels that had a potential audience reach of two thirds of the world's population (ibid.). The network also relayed the American version of MTV. Almost all the programming was in English and so in India the audience was restricted to the urban middle-classes and the small affluent population (ibid.). These elites (just 27 percent of India's population) own 77 percent of the country's 40 million televisions. Even though English and Hindi are the official languages they are only spoken by 40% of the population (Ray and Jacka 1996: 84 citing Abdi and Kak).

Yet the Westernised consumer ethic of the images excited and it seemed at first as if the networks could transcend India's disparate cultures. There was an immediate (if only superficial) impact on identity; there were new icons to aspire to (after Menon 1999). However India is very highly multicultural, having a population of *'900 million people with a great number of cultural and linguistic differences...there are sixteen regional languages and over 800 dialects'* (Ray and Jacka 1996: 83). Therefore the country is highly culturally fragmented, so when mono-cultural ideals (such as those from STAR TV) attempt to impose themselves on a long-term basis they are faced with having to adapt or be faced with rejection (see ibid. and Menon, 1999).

STAR were forced to come to terms with this after the launch of Hindu-speaking equivalent Channel X produced far better audience figures than the American MTV (after Menon 1999). MTV Asia launched, but such is the level of multiculturalism in India that MTV India was created in 1993. Having resisted Hindi programming all along, the channel now uses Hinglish- a 'hybrid language' (ibid.). STAR television has also learnt from this and has localised all its networks as competition has increased. Indeed as a result the number of satellite television homes in India is now nearly 25 million (ibid.).

It is the case that although '*...STAR has the technological capacity...to rain down the same service [across Asia]...this has been found not to make commercial sense...a service of this kind is not attractive to the broad audience it seeks, nor therefore to advertisers*' (Hoskins et al 1997: 30 after Sinclair). Indeed as Menon says '*if global entertainment is to work, it has to incorporate a respect for human diversity, and find new means of inclusive participation*' (Menon 1999).

Mainland China is also another area that Viacom has tried to infiltrate-MTV has already reached 40 million Chinese homes according to Barden (1999). Yet unusually MTV is experiencing a Chinese identity crisis. The problem is that the Chinese think 'MTV' is a wacky American name for 'music video' (ibid.). As shown in 2.3 image is very important to TNMCs and their networks. This is further evidence that transplanting Western culture has limited workability.

3.3 Global Programmes

Hoskins et al. (1997: 4) state that importing programming from a different country ('*trading in cultural products*') is a particularly sensitive issue. So-called 'cultural discounts'¹ are often levied as audiences from other nations may not be able to come to terms with the environment or situations depicted (after ibid.). Indeed these cultural products may be powerful cultural products '*essential to the preservation of a distinct way of life*' rather than mere entertainment goods (ibid. 8).

Canada has long been subject to televisual imports from the USA. Half of the programming is imported as opposed to about a third across the EU (ibid. 29) and indeed in Canada imported programmes are often more popular than home-produced fare, an exception in the developed world (Barker 1997: 229). However this has not had a negative impact on national identity. Barker

¹ A 'cultural discount' is one that is awarded because a programme would need to be subtitled or because the programme will not have the same meaning to an audience in the buying country. When Australian soap *Neighbours* is exported to the UK, for example, there is virtually no cultural discount; it is in the same language and the way of life in each country is not so far removed from each other. This would not be the case if the programme was sold to Russia for example.

(ibid. 36 after Collins) argues from this that '*...democratic political institutions can survive without the sharing of a national symbolic culture.*' This suggests that even in situations where a country is saturated by other programming, national identity can certainly remain intact: '*the position of successive Canadian governments has been that cultural industries are on a par with national defence, education and the judiciary and are vital to the preservation of national identity*' (Hoskins et al 1997: 6 after Maule).

Here the difference between national identity and cultural identity is clear- the former can exist even in situations where the latter has been impinged upon. The biggest genre of global programming is soaps and indeed the effect of soaps in different areas is astounding. The programme that has been most frequently studied is American series *Dallas*. It was found that responses to this programme were '*...powerfully influenced by divergent cultural frameworks and social experiences of different groups of viewers*' (Liebes and Curran 1998: 8 after Liebes and Katz). Differences in interpretations were frequent and many regarded the characters as people to aspire to, as well as representing Americans and the Western world (ibid.). Indeed it was often found that viewers more often than not 'controlled' the interpretation of the programme: '*this contradicted an over-simplistic and extreme view that TV globalisation is inducing global conformity and American cultural domination...and focuses attention on the ability of social groups to call upon collective resources in order to resist cultural colonisation through television*' (ibid.).

Stevenson (1999: 101) refers to Len Ang's study of *Dallas* which was being shown in 90 countries in 1985 and says the programme had '*...become part of a global culture*' (ibid.). In Ang's home country of the Netherlands the media blamed the 'cultural imperialism' theory. The programme '*...represents a synthetic global American culture that is representing more authentic national cultures*' (ibid.) and Ang suggests restrictions on the commercialisation of culture. However Ang's study fails to point out why the programme attracts such a large audience (ibid). Stevenson blames media hype as well as '*...the emotional feel of tragedy and melodrama with which viewers tended to identify*' (ibid.).

Yet in Japan the audience share of *Dallas* was less than 10 per cent in 1981 whilst that of *Oshin*, a Japanese serial was over 50 per cent (Hoskins et al. 1997: 33). Stevenson's reasons why people watch *Dallas* are rendered irrelevant as:

In contrast to Oshin, the suspense in Dallas arises from greed, self-interest, lying and manipulation- behaviour that might be considered objectionable and shameful in a culture that prizes loyalty, self-sacrifice and honouring one's obligations. It is possible that shows which do not conform to basic values in a culture might be rejected by that culture.

ibid. citing Cantor and Cantor.

Liebes and Curran (1998: 14) say that (after Katz) '*...media audiences are active and critical; that they respond to communications in divergent ways; and that audience autonomy is rooted in people's prior beliefs and attitudes supported by the social networks to which they belong.*' Indeed fewer viewers may watch an imported programme of the same type and quality than a home grown one (ibid.). This is why 'cultural discounts' apply. The only exception is for US film which usually demand far less cultural discount. People expect escapism when they see a film yet demand realism on television (Hoskins et al. 1997: 35).

The US may dominate (see ibid. 37) but there are also examples of dominant regional producers including India which produces films as well as a variety of television programmes for export (see Ray and Jacka 1996: 95). One of their markets is the UK and programmes are exported to Asian TV networks as well as the BBC and Channel Four (ibid. 97).

It is also becoming more and more commonplace that television programme formats are traded between countries rather than the programmes themselves. This was the case with Thames Television's *Man About the House* here in the UK, which became *Three's Company* in the US (Hoskins et al. 1997: 34). Indeed the cultural discount is extremely important as far as these and ready-made programmes are concerned:

The cultural discount explains why audiences in most countries prefer domestic programmes and why transnational satellite services, without customisation from for different national markets, have in most cases not been a success.

ibid. 35.

3.4 The Survival of Identity

It can certainly be said that such a huge volume of worldwide information available to us has resulted in national boundaries becoming more subordinate in our level of thinking. The international picture is now firmly implanted in our minds by communication culture but this does not necessarily mean that the actual structure of power and authority is devalued.

Indeed the question to ask should be 'is audience still confined by national and cultural boundaries?' After all the traditional political sphere of the nation state is being changed by global economic and political operations in the postmodern era. Barker (1997: 28) argues that it is of concern that TNMCs are circumventing the state and undermining democracy, an argument picked up upon by hyperglobalists.

Whilst many nations progressing in the satellite revolution are in a postmodern era, others are still experiencing the modernist growth of simple television. Yet more are in the position of India having been modernised by television yet almost simultaneously coming under the influence of postmodern idioms (see Ray and Jacka 1996, Sinclair 1996). Information flows may yet be the greatest inequality between rich and poor. Whilst there are major areas of superhighway in Westernised society, these areas contrast with those in the world's poorer regions: '*...despite the global reach of media technology it has not produced homogenous spaces and cultures*' (Stevenson 1999: 106 after Appadurai). Indeed this is a divide disconnected from national boundaries and influenced by TNMCs; information starved ghettos alongside

'information rich' territories. Messages are not getting through and not infiltrating major regions characterised by UDCs.

The main ideas behind national identity (an aspect of cultural identity) are deep rooted, depending on influences such as shared histories, religion and language (McQuail, 1994: 115). National identity is collective, but in order for it to survive it has to be reinforced by the passing on of ideas and concepts which contribute to it. McQuail states that McLuhan wrote of the 'retribalising effects' of television as shown in Chapter One: *'implied in this is the view that identities are drawn from the systematic and widely shared messages of the mass media'* (ibid. 111). Indeed perhaps this is a contributory factor to its potential downfall, if new media messages infiltrate a country, then old 'identity messages' messages may not penetrate as before.

Whilst global networks are starting to realise the importance of having localised services imported culture may be regionalising rather than globalising. Within the European Union (EU), there have been some attempts to regulate television on a multinational basis (see Barker 1997: 24, 28). However these have failed because even in a series of relatively 'Western' societies such as the member states there are many differences in individual culture and nationalism (as well as media landscape) that it would be extremely difficult to reach a consensus. There is little doubt that there is a lot of commercialisation of culture within European circles as well as concerns over US imports (see ibid. 48). As Barker points out this is being seen not only as working against national identity, but also against the idea of a European identity.

Yet Smith (1990: 174) states that the *'new formulation of European community depends on the fashionable notion of "unity in diversity", which suggests the possibility of cultural imperialism coexisting with vital cultural identities.'* Within the EU this would support the notion of unification in creating some kind of homogenous culture in a 'universal consciousness'. In a sense the idea of nation is similar to that of European, since they are both semi-imaginary political spheres. To many (especially in the UK) 'Europe' is not a 'real' cultural space unlike that of the nation state. Perhaps this will change when

the single currency is introduced for then man people will have something tangible that is in fact European. The European powers hope that this will change, but whatever the outcome of that in the future the fact remains that at present national identities can resist major cultural change. Indeed it may well be the case that some national identities can become more reinforced in the face of globalisation:

The bilateral interactions that occur between nation-states, especially those which involve increasing competition and conflict, can have the effect of unifying the self-image of the nation: the image or national face which is presented to the other. A growth in the regularity and intensity of contacts as nation-states become bound up in regional figurations...can intensify the pressures to form a distinctive and coherent identity.

Featherstone, 1995: 111.

So perhaps being faced with different cultures makes us more protective of what is our own and to stand up for it. This could be in the context of an influx of foreign programming but could equally apply to our confrontation with images of countries less fortunate than ourselves such as those in a war zone or famine.

3.5 Summary

The concept of cultural imperialism implies that it is powerful Western societal nations who are 'dissolving' the identity of peripheral countries. Cultural imperialism itself is a top-down process that McQuail states is insubstantial due to the '*enormous cultural diversity*' of the so-called '*Third World*' (McQuail 1994: 115). Indeed it is easy to forget this diversity and just refer to the 'third world' as an anonymous other. Most TNMCs are run from the core areas (especially America) (Hoskins et al 1997) and this creates inequalities in information flows. Therefore these flows are not truly global, and so it is quite

possible that we cannot call the idea of the 'global village' a global concept either.

It was originally assumed (after Featherstone 1995: 87) that America was the dominant force in the creation of a globalised culture. Indeed as far as MTV is concerned the actual content of many of the localised channels is anything but American. Indeed '*...the belief that indigenous programming and films can make viewers better citizens is at the heart of both the economic (external benefits) and "cultural" arguments*' (Hoskins et al. 1997: 4). As in the case of STAR TV, it does not make sense to beam down the same service across a continent; glocalisation is as a result of the cultural rejection of global or even regional stations. It is necessary for the glocalised network to satisfy audiences and therefore advertisers, profit being the major concern.

It is the same with the trading of 'cultural products' whereby many programmes need 'cultural discounts' when exporting to different nations, Most US programmes do not need a 'cultural discount' when sold because worldwide understanding of English is so good. Hoskins et al. (1997: 42) cite this as being a contributory reason why the US dominates the market for 'cultural products'. Where selling programmes is a problem because of nationally exclusive issues or difficult concepts, it is often the case that the format is sold instead.

A homogenous global culture has to supersede local culture such as ethnicity. It may well be the case that identifiers such as religion are like jigsaw pieces; one collective culture of a certain religion has some members overlapped by a different collective culture such as language, thus interlocking cultures would build up to produce some kind of larger scale culture. As Featherstone (1995: 81) states '*...the world is increasingly regarded as "one place" and it becomes much more difficult for nation-states to opt out of, or avoid the consequences of being drawn into a progressively tighter figuration.*'

It is certainly true that the international scene has been firmly established by communication culture (especially within Europe). The nation state is important for economic and political reasons as well being what 'people' identify themselves with most (Stevenson, 1999). Liebes and Curran

(1998) state that the nation state is the place where '*...forces for global uniformity and exploitation can be resisted through democratic means.*' The idea of nation is so deep rooted that even bombardment with media images cannot touch it. In some areas (such as those with an underdeveloped national media) it is likely that national identity may have been weakened but this has not occurred in culturally diverse countries such as India. Indeed in the face of alien cultural ideals our own identity becomes stronger.

CONCLUSION

The first part of the hypothesis questions whether globalisation of the media is driven by capitalism. TNMCs are 'culture industries' manufacturing products just like any other industry but they are expected to operate in the public interest even though their main goal is financial gain (McQuail, 1994: 135). Ownership is becoming more consolidated as was shown in Chapter Two to hold their position in an ever changing media environment as well as withstand challenges from major players in other industries. There will surely be a period, (perhaps ultramodernism?) where the growth of networks and services will slow down. Some networks may suffer and die during this period as people reject the saturation of technology.

Television is the major contributory medium to this commercialisation of mass culture. Television itself has cohesive effects which have led to an ongoing debate concerning the existence of a homogenous global culture. Smith (1990: 175) argues that *'culture can only be continental or global.'* Is it the case that commercialisation that has meant the destruction of nationally centred cultural identity through the homogenisation of audience? McLuhan's concept of the global village means that information flows through some kind of postmodern *'homogenous cultural space'* (after Seiter et al 1989) between the core and periphery. However it is quite possible that we cannot call the idea of the 'global village' a global concept due the inequalities in these flows. Featherstone (1995: 113) refers to *'...the independent power of multinational corporations to act independently to weaken the integrity of national culture through their capacity to direct a range of flows of cultural goods and information from the dominant economic centred to the peripheries – the cultural imperialism thesis would be a strong case of this....'*

Yet it is correct to question the authenticity of Cultural Imperialism due to the 'enormous cultural diversity' of the 'Third World' (McQuail 1994: 115). It is easy to forget that this diversity is fundamental. As was shown with STAR TV it does not make sense to beam down the same service across a continent. Glocalisation (after Lubbers 2000) is as a result of the cultural rejection of global or even local networks and even though TNMCs maintain

that the motivation it is cultural, it is in fact profit that is the major concern. However there is a definite feeling that global or regional successes of popular music and other media (for example film) may be creating some kind of foundation on which a globalised homogenous culture could be founded.

Indeed it is true that the international scene has been firmly established by communications (especially within Europe). Berry (2000b) says there is now a transformationalist idea of a 'global civilisation'. It may well be the case that national self-supporting cultures have been simply superseded by one that has been, and continues to be, nurtured by communication. A homogenous global culture would have to displace local culture such as ethnicity. It may well be the case that identifiers such as religion are like jigsaw pieces; one collective culture of a certain religion has some members overlapped by a different collective culture such as language, thus interlocking cultures would build up to produce some kind of larger scale culture.

However Featherstone (1995: 107) states that when we think of a locality we should be careful not to presume an 'integrated community' and not to presume that these localities can only change through a one-way process '*...entailing the eclipse of community and the local culture.*' Indeed far from destroying national identity, mass culture may well have gone some way to strengthen it. The idea of nation is probably so deep rooted that it can survive bombardment with media images. In some areas with an underdeveloped national media it is likely that national identity may have been weakened but not in culturally diverse countries such as India. Cultural Imperialism may have gone some way to erode nationally centred ideas, but the nation state is still the place where '*...forces for global uniformity and exploitation can be resisted through democratic means*' (Liebes and Curran 1998) as well being what 'people' identify themselves with most (Stevenson, 1999). In summary the '*...domains of nation and state remain central if no longer determining*' (Stevenson 1999: 91).

National self-supporting cultures may have been devalued but by no means have they been destroyed. There is some kind of overbearing mass culture nurtured by communication- a 'global village'- but it is possible for

both concepts to act simultaneously. It is clear however that the transplanting of Western culture has limited workability and it is imperative that there is local input into channels. Cultural Identity is a delicate equilibrium that global networks are learning not to bulldoze over and instead they are complementing cultural identities and using them to their financial advantage.

Cultural industries serve a purpose within commercialised popular culture; there is a market that must be filled, inextricably entwining TNMCs with capitalism and the drive for profit. For better or worse globalisation is driven by capitalism. Cohen (1997: 59) states that *'conglomerates only become fatter for their own purposes.... Growth for its own sake is the ideology of the cancer cell'*. TNMCs only respect nationally-centred cultural identities because the homogenisation of audiences is not good for their wallets.

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APPENDICIES

- A) Robert McChesney: 'The Global Media Giants: Nine firms that dominate the world.'

- B) Daniel Grabham: MTV: '*Same Channel, Different Beats*' from *Yourope* Magazine.

- C) Meg Carter: '*Time to Change the Record*' from *The Independent*, 21st March 2000.

- D) Viacom: '*MTV: Music Television*'.